



Watership Down Health - Access and Communication in 2025

We are a people team supporting you as a person. Our vision is '**to work in partnership with our patients and communities to improve health and well-being**'. The way we work has adapted and we do our best to get it right (mostly). We know it's been complicated and there have been many changes in recent years, especially since the pandemic. We have all benefited from the digital advances, but like you, we value human interaction and seeing people in person.

There has been so much in the national press about access to GPs. As a team, we pride ourselves on being accessible. However, due to the increasing demands and pressure on the NHS and other public services, we have felt the need to state the obvious, that '*we are human too*'. We thought it would be helpful to share some ideas on access and communication and we'd value your feedback too.

Overton and **Kingsclere** sites are open during the core hours of 8am – 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

Oakley surgery is also open for most of the week and the opening hours are advertised through our web site at: www.watershipdownhealth.com. Please be aware that with running three sites during times of staff sickness, we may need to amend the hours at short notice.

We encourage everyone to have full access to their **medical records**, to enable you to stay 'on top of things' and of course order your prescriptions in a timely manner and follow up on results, care plans and referrals when necessary. The on-line services that provide this interface are relatively new and often technical issues occur which are out of our control; the companies are also developing their systems, and this can mean that information is not always available.

Continuity of care is really important, especially for those people living with complex physical, mental, or social problems. We have made a renewed effort to prioritise continuity of care for those people where it really matters, by encouraging you to see your Named GP. It really helps to see the same clinician through an 'episode of care' too, even if it is not your Named GP. Most of our appointments can be booked in advance and will be tailored to suit your needs (face to face, telephone or video).

Watership Down Health also provides appointments which are part of what is known as **Enhanced Access** scheme. We do this with our Primary Care Network (PCN) colleagues at Tadley Medical Partnership. Enhanced Access appointments take place outside of core hours i.e. 6.30pm to 8pm Monday to Friday and is covered by Watership Down Health on a Monday and Tuesday evening, Tadley Medical Partnership on a Wednesday, and Thursday and both practices alternate Fridays and Saturdays. These appointments can be booked via reception.

We provide a **daily Triage system** for those people who need an appointment or advice within the next two weeks and for those who need *Urgent/On the day* care. Our **Triage team** will review your care needs based on the completion shared in an electronic triage request form. This information helps the team to prioritise and sort the health query through a number of means, which may include an appointment with a member of the team. The completion of the information needed can be done by the patient or the receptionist helping the patient on the phone.

The definition of 'urgent' has definitely shifted since the pandemic and at times it feels like we are being asked to be the NHS equivalent of 'Amazon Prime'. Our team is adapting and growing to meet the increasing expectations of us for *urgent/on the day* care, whilst not neglecting the other (often not visible) services we provide and people we care for. To deliver high quality care, we prioritise safe working conditions for our team, which means that we review the workload and working conditions regularly. We want to ensure that Watership Down Health remains a great place to work now and in the future.

Digital options for communication have increased significantly and they are helpful tools for managing your health. The NHS App allows you to access a range of NHS services, including ordering repeat prescriptions, booking appointments, viewing test results, and accessing your medical records. You can download the NHS App on your phone or tablet, or using a web browser at <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>

We may communicate with each other personally by text (AccuRx), generic email hiowicb-hsi.watershipdownhealth@nhs.net, via NHS App, or via our [website](#). These communication forms are convenient and practical for most of us. None of the digital messaging options offer an urgent response service. We aim to respond in three working days. Please use the same polite tone for the digital formats as you would do in person. Our Practice also has a [Face book page](#) and Instagram account for our communities.



Here is a **Quick Reference Guide** to the best ways to access some key health services:

- **General NHS advice:** visit NHS 111 (<https://111.nhs.uk/>) or call 111. The 111 service is manned by trained staff who will assist you to get the help that you need, including a GP or minor injuries appointment, if required.
- **General routine appointments:** Call the surgery or send a query in via the Website.
- **Soon (with in 2 weeks) and Urgent/On the day appointments:** call the surgery and our triage will review your request based on the information shared in a Triage request form (shared via AccuRx or completed via reception)
- **Repeat prescriptions:** order using the NHS App (<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>), the Watership Down Health website (<https://watershipdownhealth.com/navigator/request-a-repeat-prescription/>) or by filling out the Repeat Prescription slip that you receive with your medication and giving it to the pharmacy. Repeat prescriptions take up to 5 working days to process.
- **Test results:** check using the NHS App (or equivalent) or call the surgery after 10am. Results of tests which have been requested by the practices are usually available within a week. If the test was organised by a team in the hospital, please liaise with them for the results.
- **Advice for parents:** the Healthier Together app and website provide great advice about children's health (<https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/>)
- **Pregnancy advice:** Badger Notes helps you and your midwife to keep your care record updated <https://www.badgernotes.net/>
- **General enquiries for Watership Down Health:** you can use the Contact Form on the Watership Down Health website (<https://watershipdownhealth.com/navigator/contact-the-practice/>) or call the surgery after 10am.

We value patient feedback. Thank you to everyone who takes the time to complete a 'Friends and Family test' feedback and for the multitude of cards and best wishes (and cakes). Patients can also complete the Friends and Family survey via our web site at: <https://watershipdownhealth.com/nhs-friends-and-family-test/>. Please give us the opportunity to rectify any concerns as soon as they arise.