

# Frequently Asked Questions: Improving Access to Urgent Appointments

Effective from 2 June 2025



## What's Changing at Church Lane Medical Centre — and Why

We're excited to let you know about some important changes to the way we handle **urgent and same-day appointment requests** at our surgery, starting **2nd June 2025**.

We've listened to your feedback — and we know how frustrating it is to call day after day for an appointment. Our new system will:

- **Prioritise urgent care based on clinical need**
- **Reduce the 8am phone rush**
- **Minimise the need to keep calling back**

This new system ensures you receive the **right care, at the right time**, with less stress.

## What if my appointment request isn't urgent?

No problem! Non-urgent appointments can be booked directly through our reception team (as a guide, anything that can safely wait more than 5 days). You can also book appointments with nurses, healthcare assistants, pharmacists and our physiotherapist.

## How will the new system work for urgent care appointments?

Rather than the receptionist booking you an appointment they will take a few details about your symptoms and then pass these on to a trained clinician who will review your request. Based on clinical assessment you may be offered:

- A same-day appointment
- An appointment within 1–5 days
- Advice or a referral to a more suitable service (like the pharmacy or physiotherapist)

All requests received **before 12noon** will be responded to on the **same day**. Requests after this may be either assessed by the duty doctor or added to the list to be assessed the next morning. You won't be asked to ring back the next day! The receptionist will advise you of what happens next at the time of requesting.

## What kind of questions will I be asked by the receptionist?

You'll be asked about your symptoms, how long you've had them, any changes, and any concerns you have. Try to be as open and honest as possible—it helps you to get assessed and prioritised quickly. We understand some issues can be sensitive but our reception team are trained in asking appropriate questions and are bound by strict **confidentiality agreements**.

## How do I request an appointment?

Either by phone, in person or online via our website:

[www.churchlanemcscunthorpe.nhs.uk](http://www.churchlanemcscunthorpe.nhs.uk) → Click “*Request Appointment*” (available from 2<sup>nd</sup> June onwards) on the home screen which will take you to another page which is powered by AccuRx. Here you can select “**admin query**” which is suitable for fit notes, prescriptions, referrals or “**health query**” which is to request an appointment. You will then complete a short form which will come through to our Urgent Care Team for action.

## Do I still need to call at 8am?

No! Appointment requests are reviewed by a senior clinician throughout the day. There's **no need to rush to call early**.

## Can I still walk into the surgery to make an appointment?

Yes. In-person requests are treated **the same** as those made by phone or online. Your details will be passed to the urgent care team for assessment before the next steps are agreed.

## Can I choose which clinician I want to assess my appointment request?

There will be one specific senior clinician assessing appointment requests each day, however if they determine you need to be seen, we'll do our best to offer an appointment with your preferred clinician (where possible).

## Why am I being assessed instead of booked straight in with a GP?

- Patients see the **right clinician** for their issue
- Urgent needs are dealt with **faster**
- Manage demand effectively
- We make the best use of our team's skills and availability

## Who will I speak to during the assessment?

You may hear from a **GP**, an **Advanced Practitioner** or another **trained clinician**. Reception staff may also contact you to confirm details or book an appointment.

## Will I be seen the same day?

If your need is **urgent**, yes. Otherwise, you'll may be offered a later appointment, receive advice or a referral to another suitable service (e.g. pharmacy, physiotherapist, etc.) — all based on clinical judgement.

## How will I know what is happening with my request?

You'll be contacted by **phone or text** after your request is assessed (whichever you prefer). If requested, a **booking link** can be sent to schedule your appointment — perfect for those who need flexibility.

## What should I do while I wait to hear back after assessment?

Keep your phone nearby and make sure it's on and the volume is up. Please indicate any times that you are not available to take a call when requesting an appointment. If you don't hear back as advised, call the surgery.

## Other than a GP, who else might I be asked to see/speak to?

We have a **highly skilled team** available to help:

- **Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs)** – Can diagnose, treat, and prescribe
- **Sexual Health/Women's Health Nurses** – Support for contraception, menstrual issues, menopause and HRT
- **First Contact Physiotherapists (FCPs)** – Assess musculoskeletal issues and offer treatment, referrals and joint injections
- **Clinical Pharmacists** – Medication reviews and complex prescribing support

## How will this new system benefit patients?

We know change takes some getting used to — but we believe this will work better for **everyone**.

- All requests (phone, online, in-person) are given **equal priority**
- A **senior clinician** reviews all requests — not reception staff
- Better access to urgent care when it's needed most
- No more 8am phone battles
- More efficient use of our skilled team
- You won't be asked to **call back another day**

## Can I still book an appointment online?

Yes — but during the first few weeks of the new system, **online booking will be temporarily paused**. This helps us balance emergency and routine availability.

## Need Any Help or Have Questions?

We're here to support you. Please speak to any member of our team if you need guidance.

**Thank you for your patience and support as we improve how we care for you.**