

Unvaccinated Patients and Mask Wearing Policy

Date of Policy: 01.02.2022

Review Date: 01.02.2023

Written by: Chantal Woodham

Responsibility of: All staff

Covid Symptoms

Both vaccinated and unvaccinated populations can transfer COVID and be symptomatic and asymptomatic. In general, our unvaccinated population will shed greater viral loads, but this may also apply to vaccinated patients who are immunocompromised or particularly unwell. With wider vaccination and the delta and omicron variant we are also seeing greater numbers of patients presenting with abdominal pain, gastroenteritis, fatigue and sometimes without any respiratory symptoms.

- Follow PPE guidelines and clean surfaces/hands between patients.
- Please regularly wipe high touch areas – desk, keyboard, door/toilet WR surfaces etc. regularly during the day.
- Please ensure your workspace is clean on exiting the room. These measures will decrease the chance of sharing COVID should we be infectious.

Red stream Patients are patients with respiratory symptoms. These patients will be:

- Encouraged phone consultations
- To be seen in vehicle
- If approved by doctor, patient to be seen in Treatment Room #2 with appropriate PPE.

Principle of Care - Patients entering PMC who are not vaccinated.

Unvaccinated patients and visitors represent a clinical potential risk to themselves, practice staff and other patients

To minimize this risk the, following practices are required:

Where possible unvaccinated patients are triaged **before they arrive** in the Practice and their vaccination status confirmed. If the patient is unvaccinated or refuses to say, then they should encourage a tele consult in the first instance to manage their medical problems remotely.

- If a face-to-face consultation is requested by the patient or is considered clinically necessary, then we will arrange for the patient to be seen. This clinician may or may not be the patient's regular GP.
- The patient should be treated according to practice procedures and appropriate precautions taken including:
 - waiting outside the practice in their vehicle or on a seat outside the building until the Doctor/Nurse is ready to see them.
 - the use of appropriate PPE by clinical staff interacting with the patient.

- The clinician will meet the patient and direct them to the consultation room.

Principles of care- Patients who refuse to wear a mask:

Patients who refuse to wear a mask (or have an exemption), may not be identified until they reach the practice. These patients should be managed by:

- If they present without a mask, they should be asked to wait outside.
- The patient can be assessed outside (subject to privacy considerations), or they need to be offered a telehealth consult to manage their medical problems remotely.
- If a face-to-face consultation is deemed necessary, or the patient refuses the telehealth consult, then the patient will need to be seen by a clinician, who may or may not be their usual GP.
- The patient should be treated according to practice procedures and appropriate precautions taken including:
 - waiting outside the practice in their vehicle or on a seat outside the building until the Doctor/Nurse is ready to see them.
 - the use of appropriate PPE by clinical staff interacting with the patient.
 - The clinician will meet the patient, triage and make a plan for consultation whether this is in the vehicle or bringing the patient into a room.

The Practice is entitled to make an appropriate charge for the extra work required for both situations detailed above, however PMC will not charge patients for the extra consultation time.

Notices for patient procedures are displayed on the front door and on the website.

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