

**Re: Accessing services during the Covid19 pandemic**

Dear Patient

We have made some changes to how we provide services since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic. We are writing to you as our records show that you have some degree of hearing loss and we would like to ensure that you are aware of how you can access our services and what we have put in place to meet your needs.

**Getting in contact with us**

We are asking all patients to phone us first if they need to make an appointment and have suspended our use of online booking of appointments to allow us to asses patients for symptoms before they are seen face to face. As a person with hearing loss you may find contacting us by telephone challenging or impossible. To help meet your needs we have set up a number of systems you should find helpful.

We have set up a phone that you can use to text us to get in contact to request an appointment or ask for some advice. The telephone number to text is: 07718 480 717. You can text or WhatsApp this phone and the receptionist will respond to you via text.

We also have a new online electronic consultation service called eConsult that is available on our website. This system allows you to fill out a simple online form to get advice and treatment within 1 working day. Go to <https://www.staffahealth.co.uk/> for more information. This system will give the clinician most of the information they need to be able to advise you and sometimes this means you won’t need to see or speak to a clinician in person. They are able to text you back to explain the next steps.

You can also get in touch with us any time via our email address: admin.staffahealth@nhs.uk, however if you have a clinical problem try using the eConsult system as this is a much more effective method for outlining your symptoms or problem for the clinician.

We are also able to support any phone calls you might make through RelayUk if you use this service.

**Being seen face to face**

Most face to face consultations we are having with patients are over the telephone for now, however we are able to offer video consultations with all the clinicians. This may help those of you who need visual cues, such as lip-reading and facial expression, for communication. If you need a consultation and this would be helpful please let reception know and they will ensure the clinician sets the consultation up for you over video.

If you need to be seen in person, because you need to be examined or you need a test or procedure our staff members will be wearing PPE which includes a mask over their mouth. This can make communication difficult for people who rely on lip reading. If this is the case and you are not being seen for a Covid related problem you may ask the staff member to temporarily remove the mask and communicate with you through their clear plastic visor at a distance if necessary. Staff are also able to type messages to you on their computer screens to help communication if needed. If you need to bring someone with you to support you at an appointment this will of course also be acceptable.

Finally, we want to ensure that you feel able to contact us for anything you need at this time so if there is anything else you would like us to put in place to support you please do not hesitate to contact us via any of the methods above.

 Staffa Health