

ROOKERY MEDICAL CENTRE

DISABILITY PROTOCOL AND CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

This document provides the basis for the Practice in assessing the needs of its disabled patients, or those with mobility or other requirements to ensure that their access to services is, as far as practicable, maximised.

New Patients

The Practice website will contain a section for those patients with a disability outlining the facilities available at the Practice and their ease of access to the building based on the findings of the Access Audit (below).

Disabled patients will be advised on new registration that they may telephone the Practice on arrival if they require any assistance in accessing the building or its services. Staff will be trained in the appropriate way to help with wheelchairs, partially or non-sighted patients, or those with other special needs.

Training and Skills

The Practice will regularly offer courses available, for example equality and diversity or chaperoning patients, and will support staff willing to attend these.

Accessible Information Standard (NHS England)

Conforming to the Accessible Information Standard, part of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is a requirement for practices in England as of **July 31, 2016**. It has been put in place to ensure people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss are able to access and understand any information or communication support they need. The practice works to ensure that patients and service users, and their carers and parents, can access and understand the information they are given.

This includes making sure that people get information in different formats if they need it, for example in large print, braille, easy read or via email. The practice will also make sure that people get any support with communication that they need, for example support from a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, deafblind manual interpreter or an advocate.

The practice will:

- Ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs.
- Record those needs clearly and in a set way.
- Highlight or flag the person's file or notes so it's clear that they have information or communication needs, and how to meet those needs.
- Share information about people's communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so.
- Take steps to ensure that people receive information which they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

Patient Facilities

The Practice will:

- Provide large font Practice leaflets (when requested)
- Ensure that staff are aware that there are means to ensure that patients with hearing difficulties are able to communicate with doctors
- Ensure signage is clear and non-obstructive
- Allow guide or other assistance dogs into the premises
- Provide a range of appropriate chairs with to assist elderly or disabled patients in standing or sitting. If these are found to be difficult to negotiate there will be chaperones available to assist
- Offer private room facilities for patients who may have communication, reading, or writing difficulties
- Provide a member of staff who will take time out to explain the facilities available at the Practice for those with sight difficulties
- Allow disabled patients to make appointments by unusual methods, e.g. text messages, on line booking, or letter. The Practice will respond to these requests using the method most appropriate to the needs of the patient.

Checking and Recording

The Practice will audit its facilities on an annual basis or at significant changes to the premises (see below).

The results will be kept on the Practice's computer drive and will be available to any disabled patients who wish to see them and comment on them.

GUIDE DOGS / ASSISTANCE DOGS / HEARING DOGS POLICY

Introduction

It is unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability, and "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services are now required. This includes adjustments to physical features of premises to overcome physical barriers to access for people with disabilities, and facilitating such visitors to use services.

The nature of general practice is such that guide dog / hearing dog ("assistance" dog) access is common and desirable. The purpose of this policy is to set out a few simple principles for dogs on the premises. It is not intended to cover the use of assistance dogs in relation to employees of the practice, which would encompass a wider range of disability employment law considerations.

General Considerations

- The practice welcomes assistance dogs. This includes dogs in training where a "walker" is in control of the dog rather than a disabled owner.
- The practice will manage the presence of assistance dogs without recourse to the owner and will pay particular attention to infection control and housekeeping whilst dogs are on the premises
- Physical contact with a dog by clinical staff will be resisted during consultations or examinations, and whilst a general surgery is in progress
- Hand washing or alcohol hand gel will be used by staff after any physical contact with a dog, whether during a consultation or not
- Care will be taken by clinical staff to identify other patients in the surgery list for that session who have been identified as potentially being adverse clinically to the presence of dogs. This will include patients who:
 - are allergic to dogs
 - are immunosuppressed
 - are phobic to dogs
 - have another medical reason.Consideration will be given to allowing them to wait, or be seen, in an alternative room.
- Cleaning staff will be advised to pay particular attention to a room known to have accommodated a dog that day
- In the event of an incident involving a dog, a significant event record will be created where necessary.
- Owners of assistance dogs will be given the opportunity to "tour" the practice and the grounds with their assistance dog.

As part of the high level of training an assistance dog receives, there are unlikely to be any incidents giving rise to special concern, and the following aspects of these dogs on the premises are likely to be standard behaviour for these animals:

- Dog will remain on a lead and in close contact with the owner
- The dog will usually lie quietly with the owner when waiting to see a clinician and is trained to behave well in public places
- Dog is unlikely to foul any area not within its usual habit and is trained to go to toilet on command, and will be well-groomed (minimal loose hair)
- The dog will be in good health, physically fit, with vaccinations and care programme up to date
- The dog will wear a special identifying harness and collar tag

RESOURCES

[Equality and Human rights Commission - Making reasonable adjustments](#)