

### ***New Triage Service for patients.***

You have probably heard by now that the NHS is under strain, with longer and longer waits to be seen in A&E and ambulances queuing to deliver patient into hospitals. General practice is also under pressure with six practices in Oxfordshire already closed due to unmanageable workload.

Here in Faringdon the White Horse Medical Practice is doing everything it can to cope with this pressure, by trying to sustain a safe, caring and responsive service for patients. Triage is the word for screening patients to decide how urgently they need to be seen. Some people need to be seen urgently – within just a few minutes – while others are quite safe to wait, perhaps to see a doctor of their choice, or to have an appointment that fits around their week's timetable.

Telephone triage has been introduced at the practice to try and achieve this. Every patient ringing in for a doctor's appointment will speak to one of the GPs or nurse practitioner first and we will try and gauge the urgency of the problem. We can see patients almost immediately if their problem is so urgent it would be unsafe to wait. Most patients can be seen within a few days. If a patient prefers to wait for a specific GP or to book a future appointment that can be done too, up to a month forward.

We appreciate that this new system will take some getting used to. Please bear with us, as we think it will offer a better service for all patients.



**Dr Simon Cartwright**

The White Horse Medical Practice