

A Message from Dr. Bedard

Dear Patients,

In these new, strange times, we have reorganized our approach to primary care delivery. Mr. Jaustin Dufour has kindly agreed to manage a Facebook interactive page, which is good because I have no idea how to properly navigate social media. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

COVID-19 remains a serious threat to approximately 20% of the population. We understand it is a nuisance to 80%, but a good proportion of our clinic work involves the 20%, and we will take the necessary measures to protect the vulnerable. Enclosed spaces have shown to be the best way to catch COVID-19, particularly in health care facilities.

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How do I contact the clinic?

You phone [\(705\) 859-2170](tel:7058592170).

This was the norm pre-walk-in format. There is no safe way to function as a walk-in, so you need to phone the clinic.

This is the safest, most efficient method to ensure service, as we will then triage, or rank by severity, the calls that will be returned. We are usually able to respond the same day, but if the concern is triaged low, it may take longer. This allows the staff to determine who can be effectively serviced by phone, who needs to be brought into the clinic, and when that is to safely occur. The booking clerk has a spreadsheet format that minimizes patient contact. We have been exploring alternate modalities of care delivery that maximizes outdoor provision. Winter will prove a challenge.

Question: How do I access COVID-19 swabbing?

We offer asymptomatic and diagnostic swabbing.

Tuesday is a booked, drive-through clinic at the Assiginack Arena.

The hardest part of this is the computer and all the labels. We need to print these out before the clinic, so pre-booking is necessary. We offer this also to non-patients in our area for the holidays. We need to enter your demographics into the computer, so again, a call to the clinic is necessary.

Question: How do I access cryotherapy?

Call [**\(705\) 859-2170**](tel:7058592170).

We have limited availability and need to concentrate service provision as the liquid evaporates quickly. This also allows us to continue the service free of charge (uncommon in Ontario) for the time being.

We will do this outdoors as much as possible.

(For those who find treatment outdoors barbaric, you are going to be disappointed. I remain convinced that the outdoor care provided during the Spanish flu, is the way to go, but you have a choice in health care providers.)

Question: How do I get a travel grant?

You may be surprised to realize that this is a benefit provided to the patient by the insurance agent (OHIP). We don't administer this.

It is ideal if the patient gets the travel grant from the specialist and then submits to the clinic for our part to be completed. If it is not filled out properly, the bureaucrat returns the form, and much time is wasted.

A drop box will be installed in the office vestibule. Blank travel grants will be provided in the same area.

Question: I have an urgent medical matter, how do I reach you?

You don't. If you have an emergency, **go to the emergency room.**

Our accessibility and office-based tools can not and should not replace the emergency room. We are not offering emergency services. This is unsafe.

If unsure, call Telehealth ([+1 866-797-0000](tel:+18667970000)) for guidance.

Question: I have diabetes (or congestive heart issues, or any chronic condition) how do I manage my condition?

Big changes coming on this file, because the pandemic is showing how we can manage such conditions even more efficiently. We already know roughly what we need to do with your conditions over the year.

A clinic, within a clinic, will be running in the background.

Our nurse Marsha Moggy is the director of the chronic disease and health promotion program. In conjunction with the MD/NP, she will be doing case management and arranging necessary testing appropriate to the condition.

You will be approached directly for your issues, and once the results are obtained, an interview either by phone/zoom/or in-person (as required) will take place with the MD/NP or both, to review the matters.

If any health issues arise, you simply contact the clinic ([705\) 859-2170](tel:7058592170), and your call will be triaged and addressed accordingly.

Question: Are there any benefits to the patient in this new model?

From my perspective, I believe there is.

It may surprise the reader how much can be accomplished with this format. Our strength as a rural practice of 1600 patients, is that we have known most of you for a long time. Between Joanne Mellan, Marsha Moggy, and myself, we have 100 years or so of combined clinical experience.

Zoom will be a great way to service snowbirds remotely when the world rebalances, and it can be a good way to keep in touch with those who don't like winter travel.