

## **Covid – 19 March 22<sup>nd</sup> update**

The Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners has mandated that all New Zealand GP practices reduce face-to-face consultations by 70% effective Monday 23 March at 8am.

The reason the College has decided on this approach is that we must protect our vulnerable patients. Information received from Italy tells us that doctor waiting rooms contribute significantly to the spread of COVID-19. We need to reduce the number of sick and vulnerable people gathering in our practices and healthcare centres.

In order to comply with this mandate, our front door will now be locked. All contact with Te Ngae Medical Centre will now need to occur by telephone. You will be contacted by either administration or nursing staff, and a decision will be made as to whether a nurse can address your needs, whether a phone or video consultation would be appropriate, or if a face-to-face encounter needs to occur.

The Urgent Drop-In Clinic will now run via phone triage by one of our nurses. If the nurse determines that a face-to-face consultation is required, please wait in your vehicle until contacted by Te Ngae staff for further instructions. A reminder, the Urgent Clinic is for single problem urgent consultations only.

Many non-urgent, routine appointments including screening may need to be deferred for the time being.

The lab service at Te Ngae Medical Centre will temporarily be on hold during this pandemic. Please use the downtown lab at 1225 Haupapa St Rotorua, 7am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-11:45am Sat.

We will be running flu jab clinics over the next 2 weeks for fully funded patients only (over 65s, pre-existing health problems, pregnancy). This year we will be doing the flu vaccine in your car, if it is possible. We will have a coned off area in front of the Medical Centre where you can park. Please bring a support person with you so they can monitor you for the standard 20 minutes. Please call to book an appointment.

We appreciate your patience, cooperation and support during these challenging times. We will continue to endeavour to deliver excellent health care to you and your loved ones.

The Te Ngae Medical Staff