

Children's & Young People's Diabetes Service: *Clinic Care after Covid* (15 April 2021)

Summary

- As Coronavirus restrictions are lifted there are more opportunities for face-to-face clinical contact.
- The Greater Glasgow & Clyde Children's and Young People's Diabetes Service (GGC CYPDS) has had to make changes to how and where routine clinics and teaching programmes will be delivered.
- Some clinic areas remain out of use due to Coronavirus activity, and alternatives have been sought.
- A "First Floor Diabetes Clinic" has opened at the West Glasgow Ambulatory Care Hospital, (WGACH).
- Glasgow *and* Paisley "Under 14s" and "Transition" clinics will now be provided at this new facility.
- IRH clinics will remain at Inverclyde, and provided *twice* monthly (Fridays), instead of once monthly.
- From May 2021 *half* of all routine diabetes clinics will be face-to-face, and *half* remote (by video).
- Clinics will be tightly scheduled to minimise overlap. Please ensure you attend at the appointed time.
- Only one carer should attend clinic with a patient whenever possible, and all should wear a mask.
- Remote clinics will be AttendAnywhere (NearMe) consultations, unless a telephone clinic is requested.
- Face-to-Face appointments will take 60 minutes, with two thirds of the time spent in consultation.
- Remote appointments will take 30-40 minutes, as measurements and testing are not required.
- Please upload device data and Glucose diary information as this greatly assists clinic efficiency.
- Pump and CGM training programmes have resumed but individual teaching sessions replace groups.
- This process requires current appointments to be cancelled *but* new appointments will be made.
- New appointments will usually be sent within 4-6 weeks of the proposed new clinic date/time.

For further details please see: http://www.ggc-youngdiabetes.org/hot_topics.html

Discussion

Coronavirus has profoundly affected us all, and many will have been ill with Covid-19 or known others affected. Our sympathies are especially with those who have lost loved ones during this difficult time.

We have all had to adapt to the many changes caused by the pandemic. We in the Diabetes Service have done our best to maintain access by allocating more staff to answer telephone and email messages, and changing how we deliver care, with the safety of patients, their families and staff our greatest priority.

We have worked steadily over the last 12 months to redesign our service, believing personal interaction with our patients and their families to be vital to good diabetes care. However, in-person clinics must be delivered safely, and we have also seen benefits from providing "remote" clinics, using video and telephone. We therefore aim to combine the many advantages of the old with the exciting possibilities of the new.

As lockdown lifts, we will now offer a combination of face-to-face *and* remote clinics, making most of both appointment types. We will resume regular in-person clinics, when the usual measurements and tests can be completed, but for every face-to-face clinic scheduled we will also provide a clinic by video (or by telephone, if requested). We aim to see patients 3-4 times each year, dependent upon available staffing resource.

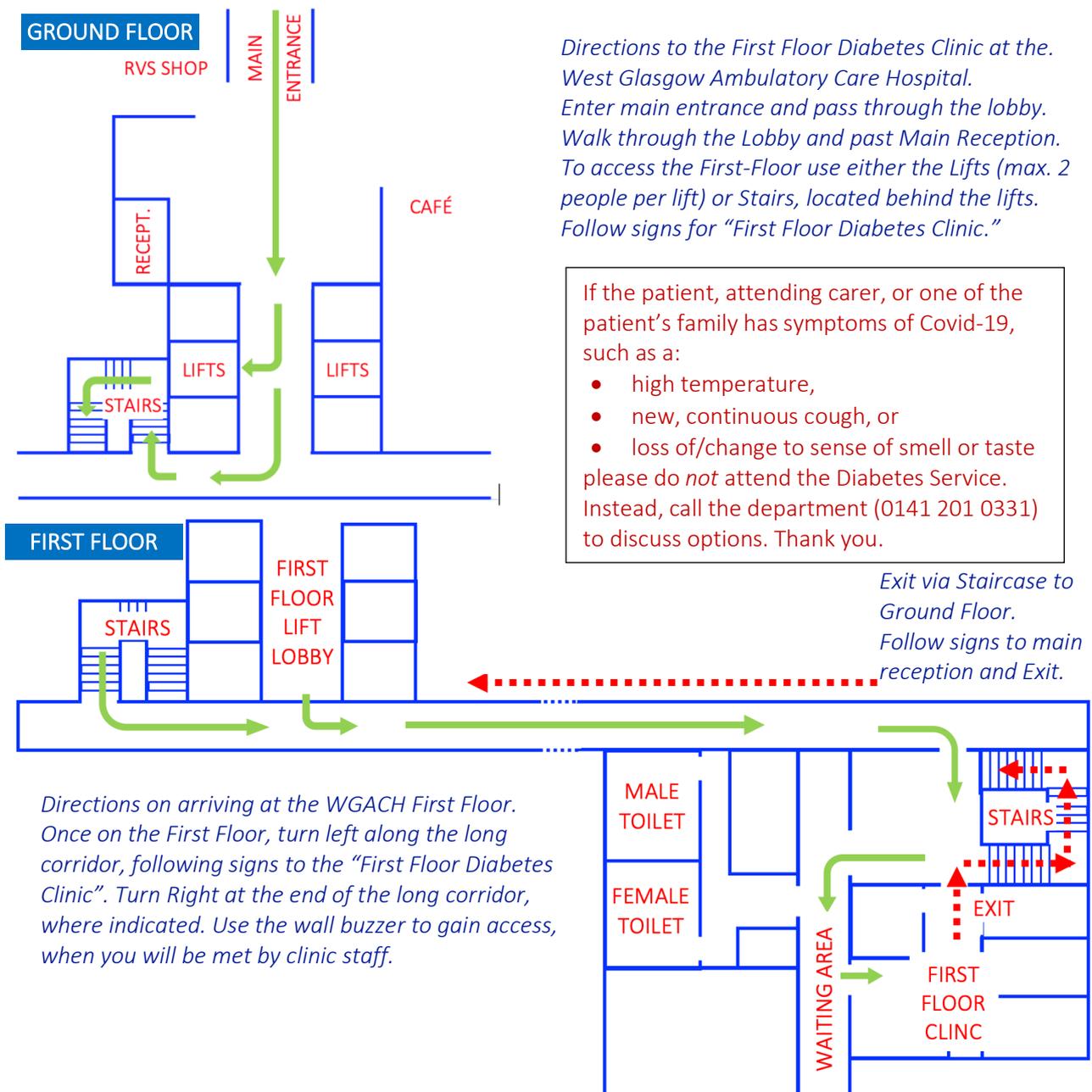
We also aim to restart our Pump and Continuous Glucose Monitoring training programme. We used to provide successful Group Teaching courses before the pandemic but now expect to resume with patients and their family on an individual basis. However, our program has changed to provide 2 training sessions per week to make up for some of the lost opportunities, dependent on staff availability.

Where will clinics take place?

Face-to-face clinics will now be held at two sites - **West Glasgow Ambulatory Care Hospital** (the old Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Yorkhill) and twice monthly at **Inverclyde Royal Hospital**, Greenock (Ward L North).

Unfortunately, the RAH Paediatric Diabetes clinic site is now used for Covid-19 care. The WGACH 6th Floor clinic is also unsuitable for regular clinics, with up to 24 patients and their families attending. The area is a confined and busy space, there are lifts for access and all must approach the clinic using narrow corridors with only a single entrance and exit. Adequate and safe social distancing is not possible.

Routine WGACH clinics will now be held in the recently developed **"First Floor Diabetes Clinic"**, providing social distancing for **Greater Glasgow and Paisley patients**. Access is by stairs or lift, with a separate entrance (via the first floor) and exit (via a separate staircase to the ground floor) as shown below.



What sort of clinics will be offered?

Routine Clinics

We will now provide four different clinic types, with **half of our clinics delivered “face-to-face”** and **half as remote or “virtual” clinics**. Routine clinics will be scheduled in the following order:

1. Annual Review Clinic (ARC) - Medical Face-to-face clinic, *followed by...*
2. Remote Clinic 1 (RC1) - Medical Remote video clinic, *followed by...*
3. Multi-Disciplinary Clinic (MDC) - Nursing/ Dietetic Face-to-face clinic, *followed by...*
4. Remote Clinic 2 (RC2) - Medical Remote video clinic, *followed by ARC, and so on...*

Details of clinic types are outlined below. A medical consultant will attend each “Annual Review Clinic”, as well as providing “Remote Clinics” by video. Nursing and Dietetic staff will provide a “Multi-Disciplinary Clinic” another “in person” clinic. To maintain safety for all those attending face-to face clinics, we ask that:

1. **No more than one carer** to attend each face-to-face clinic consultation.
2. **Face masks** are to be worn by all patients and their carers at all times, until further notice.
3. All patients to **please upload device data** (Libre, CGM or pump) *no later than the day before* clinic.
4. If using a **blood glucose diary** please have this completed and up-to-date.
5. A **“first morning” urine specimen** (collected on first waking on the day of clinic) be provided.
6. Please **do not attend** if you have any **symptoms of Covid-19** but call to inform the Diabetes Service.

Children & Young People’s Diabetes Service Routine outpatient appointment schedule:

	Annual Review	Remote Clinic 1	Multidisciplinary	Remote Clinic 2
Type	Face-to-face	“Near Me” / “Attend Anywhere”	Face-to-Face	“Near Me” / “Attend Anywhere”
Location	WGACH or IRH	Virtual ¹	WGACH or IRH	Virtual ¹
Seen by	Consultant	Consultant	Nurse or Dietitian	Consultant
Duration	Approx. 60 minutes ²	Approx. 40 minutes ²	Approx. 60 minutes ²	Approx. 40 minutes ²
Tests	HbA1c Height Weight Blood Pressure Urine test Annual Blood tests	None ³	HbA1c Height Weight Blood Pressure Urine test Annual Blood tests ⁴	None ³
Accompanying Adults	1 Adult ⁵	Not applicable	1 Adult ⁵	Not applicable
Please ensure	Data upload at least <i>24h before</i> clinic ⁶	Data upload at least <i>24h before</i> clinic ⁶	Data upload at least <i>24h before</i> clinic ⁶	Data upload at least <i>24h before</i> clinic ⁶
	Enough time so all tests may be taken. ⁷	Not applicable	Enough time so all tests may be taken ⁷	Not applicable
Next clinic is Remote Clinic 1 ⁸	... Multidisciplinary	... Remote Clinic 2 ⁸	... Annual Review

1. Remote clinics will usually be **delivered by video**, but a telephone clinic may be requested, if required.
2. Appointment times will be **tightly scheduled** to minimise patients’ waiting time.
3. **Home HbA1c tests** may be used, with samples returned to laboratory by post or via local GP surgery.
4. **Screening blood tests** may be taken at Multidisciplinary Clinic if not collected at Annual Review Clinic.
5. Current guidance is for **one adult only** to accompany patients, reducing total numbers at clinic.
6. **Data upload** before clinic ensures information available for review, improving clinic effectiveness.
7. If time not available before clinic, patients may be **rescheduled for Annual Review tests** at a later date.
8. **Remote Clinics 1 and 2 are identical**, only differing in the type of clinic scheduled before and after each.

Although Annual Review and Multi-Disciplinary **face-to-face clinics will be 60 minutes duration**, the first 20 minutes of the clinic appointment will be used to take measurements and routine screening tests needed for good patient care. We continue to ask patients to **upload their device data at least 24 hours before attending clinic** (from blood glucose meter, Freestyle Libre or Continuous Glucose monitor and Insulin pump), and to **bring first-morning urine specimens**. If having technical difficulties with uploading a device please seek advice from the manufacturer in order to resolve this issue.

Due to intense strain upon the hospital system at the height of the pandemic, we unfortunately also had to cancel a significant number of clinics. Many of our medical staff were involved in caring for those seriously ill with other conditions, and so were unavailable to attend clinics booked many months earlier. Team staff were also either on sick leave, self-isolating or shielding. We regret the inconvenience this will have caused many of our patients and families but appreciate you will understand that how often we see clinic patients depends on patient numbers and the resource available.

To lessen future disruption, we are also trialling a **new method of making a clinic appointment**. Rather than being given a future clinic date and time on leaving clinic, we instead will place patients' names onto a "hold list". As the time of the next clinic approaches, we will better know staff commitments, and only then will an appointment be issued. This should avoid frequent clinic cancellations, other than for acute emergencies and staff illness. This requires **all existing clinic appointments to be cancelled**, but **new appointments will then be issued no later than 4-6 weeks before the proposed clinic date**. Wherever possible we will leave the date and time unchanged but, if this is unsuitable, we will provide another appointment.

We have also had to adapt to the Panda Centre at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley, being used for the care of adults. To compensate we have **expanded capacity at the West Glasgow Ambulatory Care Hospital** (where the Children's and Young People's Diabetes Service is based), to provide a **new "First Floor Diabetes Clinic."** All Greater Glasgow *and* Paisley area patients will now be seen on the one site, and we apologise that this will require travel over greater distances for our former-RAH patients. However, we will also now deliver *half* of our clinics remotely, easing at least some of the burden of travel. Our **Inverclyde Royal Hospital clinics will continue**, but our clinic there will now twice monthly, compared to once monthly before lockdown.

Children & Young People's Diabetes Service Routine outpatient appointment schedule:

CYPDS CLINICS	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
09:00 – 13:00		WGACH Children's Clinic IRH Transition Clinic ¹	WGACH Children's Clinic	WGACH Children's Clinic WGACH (for Paisley patients) Transition Clinic ²	IRH Children's Clinic ³
13:00 – 17:00	WGACH Transition Clinic				

All clinics are held at the WGACH unless otherwise indicated.

1. IRH Transition Clinic – once every 3-4 months, depending on patient numbers. Held at IRH.
2. RAH Transition Clinic – once monthly, depending on patient numbers. Held at WGACH.
3. IRH Children's Clinic – on First and Third Fridays each month. Held at IRH.

Transition clinics

Transition Clinics to prepare young people for transfer to Adult Diabetes Services have been organised along similar lines to those clinics for our younger patients. As previously discussed, we have sought to ensure we can continue to provide these vital services, with the great majority of such clinics now being provided at the **West Glasgow Ambulatory Care Hospital**. Young people preparing for being seen at one of the five Greater Glasgow Hospitals will be seen at a Transition Clinic held at WGACH, as well as those due to transfer to the Adult Diabetes Clinic at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley. However, the Paisley patients will have a

separate clinic on the WGACH site, while those attending the IRH Transition Clinic will be seen with our adult colleagues at Inverclyde Royal Hospital.

Transition Clinic locations:

Young Adult Diabetes Services	Transition Clinic Name	Location	Day & Time
Gartnavel General Hospital, Glasgow	Greater Glasgow Transition Clinic	WGACH	Monday afternoon
Glasgow Royal Infirmary, Glasgow	Greater Glasgow Transition Clinic	WGACH	Monday afternoon
Inverclyde Royal Hospital, Glasgow	Inverclyde Transition Clinic	IRH	Tuesday morning
New Victoria Hospital, Glasgow	Greater Glasgow Transition Clinic	WGACH	Monday afternoon
Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow	Greater Glasgow Transition Clinic	WGACH	Monday afternoon
Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley	Paisley Transition Clinic	WGACH	Thursday morning
Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow	Greater Glasgow Transition Clinic	WGACH	Monday afternoon

Device Training & Other Teaching:

The need to suspend our Group Teaching sessions resulted in suspension of our routine device training programmes, but we are now resuming device training on a patient-by-patient basis. Our capacity was greatly increased when able to see 4-5 young people and their families at a time, but we are now looking to have two individual pump starts weekly, meeting with patients as often as our staffing resources allow.

Other teaching, training and patient reviews will usually be provided in the **Diabetes Service, on the 6th floor of the WGACH**, but other arrangements may be confirmed with you by service staff. We may also offer to use video consultation for some training, depending on the topic and circumstances. Thank you.

Final comments

We have always sought to provide the best possible care within the constraints of the lockdown and with the resources available. We realise challenges and difficulties have been experienced by all, but our proposed changes are intended to continue delivering high quality care as safely and effectively as and where possible.

Thank you for your patience over the last year, and with the new clinic system we have proposed. We look forward to continuing care for you and your family. Your comments are welcomed, and we will provide a "Frequently Asked Questions" section on our website (www.ggc-youngdiabetes.org) to help provide answers for any of your queries or concerns. Please also download our service app for the latest updates.

With kind regards, on behalf of all of us here in the Diabetes Service.

Yours sincerely,

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Web: www.ggc-youngdiabetes.org

App: Healthzone UK (GGC Child & Young People's Diabetes Service; set-up instructions on our website).