

## TRINITY MEDICAL CENTRE

### SMS TEXT MESSAGE POLICY – Patient information

Mobile phones provide an avenue for communication between the Surgery and its patients. The immediate delivery of SMS messages gives it an advantage over other forms of communication. Text messaging has wide accessibility.

There are a number of scenarios in which an SMS message be very useful:

1. Appointment reminders
2. Flu vaccination reminders
3. Child immunisation reminders
4. Making patients aware of changes to clinics or services in the Surgery
5. Opportunity to receive feedback on Surgery services
6. Informing patients of test results or other information relevant to their care (please see further information below re. Special category data\*\*)

The usefulness of text messaging depends on having reliable data. We will check mobile telephone numbers as often as we can but **we ask that patients let the surgery know as soon as their mobile telephone number changes**. Mobile telephone numbers can be updated by calling reception or talking to the receptionists in the Surgery. Let us know as soon as a mobile telephone number has changed.

Communicating with patients: the Surgery will send SMS texts to the mobile telephone number that has been provided. *Patients are responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone number given to the Surgery is correct, up to date and appropriate to be used for all communications that the Surgery may need to make.*

#### **\*\* Special category data**

Information such as test results (this includes any results, not just those relating to sexual health tests) or details of medication (ie. information which is specific, sensitive and individual to one person) will only be communicated via SMS messaging with additional consent provided by the patient, this additional consent is recorded in the medical records, if you as the patient no longer want to receive test results via SMS you will need to inform the practice.

#### **Opting Out**

We understand that some patients will not want to receive SMS text messages from the Surgery. We ask that patients carefully consider the advantages of receiving these messages before choosing to opt-out. If you do choose to opt out please inform our receptionists or the health professional you are seeing.