One Problem Per Consultation policy

We have a 'One Problem Per Consultation' policy
We kindly ask that all patients try and stick to our 'One Problem Per Consultation' policy.

The main reason for this request is for clinical safety.

We know that getting an appointment with the doctor is sometimes difficult and that some patients 'save' their problems and present them to the doctor at the same time, with or without a list. We also know that the clinician may run late. All of this increases the tendency for patients to present multiple problems to their doctor/ANP at one consultation.

Each appointment is only 10 minutes long. Ten minutes
is not a lot of time, even for just one problem, e.g., 1 minute to get to the doctor's room and sit down, 3 minutes to tell a history, 3-4 minutes to perform a targeted examination, 2 minutes to explain, advise and treat. There is no time left in the ten minutes to write up notes, fill out forms, dictate referrals or speak to other team members for advice.

Presenting the clinician with multiple problems means that there is a real increased risk that mistakes will be made and things to be missed as the clinician may be inclined to rush, particularly if other patients are waiting.

One of Primary Care's main purposes is to detect serious diseases early. Presenting multiple problems to the clinician, not all of which may be serious increases the difficulty of this task – it is like finding the 'needle in a haystack. Doctors cannot see huge numbers of patients with multiple problems and continue to practice safely and effectively. A stressed doctor will struggle to be a good and safe doctor.

We do consider that GP appointments are a limited resource and we would kindly ask that such a service be used with care and consideration.

Therefore please do not be offended if the doctor asks you to rebook for your other problems. We are working in your best interests to keep you safe.

We would always encourage patients to book double appointments if there are multiple problems that need discussing.