



November 2017

Welcome to our Patient Newsletter, which we hope you will find informative and useful.

PRACTICE NEWS

Dr Sarah Rowley joined the practice as a salaried GP in August and has become a valued member of the team. Sister Matthews has been on sick leave since September but hopes to return to work in December. We will continue to have additional nurse support until the New Year and we apologise for any difficulties you may have experienced while trying to book nurse appointments.

We have been joined by a new member of the Admin Team—Helen Alcock joins us from another surgery and will be involved with data collection and reporting. She is already proving to be a very valuable asset to the practice.

Dr Tattum has reduced the number of sessions he works from 1st October. He will now only be available on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Dr Kostakopoulou now only works Monday—Thursday.

IF YOU USUALLY HAVE A FLU VACCINATION AND HAVE NOT YET BOOKED AN APPOINTMENT PLEASE DO SO AT RECEPTION. For patients who are more vulnerable—those with long term conditions it is important to have the vaccination as early as possible so that you build up immunity to any flu viruses in the environment. You may still get flu even if you have had the vaccination but you will recover from this much more quickly.



Electronic Prescription Service. (EPS) This service is available to all patients. If you have not already signed up to use it please ask at reception. You can order your repeat prescriptions via your nominated Pharmacist and collect them directly from there instead of having to visit the surgery.

By using this service we are able to save time in practice to deal with more important work and it is estimated that for every 33 million items converted from paper to EPS, the NHS saves an additional £1 million

The NHS is still in crisis both locally and nationally. We need your help to support your local hospital and the Practice. There are small ways in which this can be done and we would kindly ask you to consider these before calling the surgery: Your Health is your responsibility

We cannot chase up hospital appointments. You will have the information and contact details to do this yourself. If you are unable to get through on the telephone we will have the same problem. We do not have a direct line into the hospital to bypass the main switchboard and we too will have to sit in a queue to ask the questions you can ask.

Likewise if you are expecting a follow up appointment and have not received one in the time line you expected please contact the hospital department yourself quoting your Date of birth, and hospital number if available. This should be on correspondence previously sent to you.

We can only expedite appointments if there is a clinical need and your condition has deteriorated since first referral. Expedite letters for any other reason are simply ignored by the hospital as they are totally overwhelmed by the volume of appointments being requested and cannot meet demand. This is why often first appointments are a considerable time after your referral.

CONTROLLED DRUGS—a number of patients have queried why prescriptions for controlled drugs have to be signed for. This is a legal requirement so that we have proof that we have issued the prescription to the right patient or their nominated representative. We realise this can be time consuming but it is for practice and patient safety. If you have a nominated Pharmacy collect your prescription please remind them to ask for any controlled drug item that needs collecting otherwise this can delay the dispensing of these items. Thank you for your co-operation.

Common Problems your pharmacist can help with

It is estimated that 50 million visits to the GP are made every year for minor ailments such as coughs and colds, mild eczema and athletes foot. By visiting your pharmacy instead you could save yourself time and trouble. Instead of booking and waiting for a GP appointment, you can visit your local pharmacy any time—just walk in.



Pharmacy First is a scheme available for children and people who don't have regular repeat prescriptions and who are suffering from a common ailment. Your local pharmacy can offer expert advice and medicines for a wide range of common ailments without the need to visit your GP. No appointment is necessary but you will need to give the pharmacist your NHS number, or your child's NHS number to receive advice and, where appropriate, medicines free of charge.



We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our patients a happy and healthy Christmas.