

Practice Newsletter – April 2010

Latest news from the Nursing Team

We would like to wish Chrissie well as she commences her maternity leave and we look forward to meeting the new arrival later in the Spring. It will also be farewell to Christie who is retiring in May after a long and happy career in nursing.

An update on the annual 'flu jabs...

We vaccinated 69% of our eligible population against seasonal flu between Oct 2009 and February 2010. Thank you to all those of you who attended one of our clinics.

Appointment system

We would like to thank you for your patience during the recent changes we have made to the appointment system. We, like other surgeries in Guildford, Haslemere & Farnham, have seen a significant and unexplained increase in demand over the past few months from patients requesting to see a doctor. Initially during the peak swine flu season, we introduced a successful telephone call back system as many enquiries could be managed over the telephone and those needing to be seen were offered an appointment. However now that the season has passed, we have introduced some new changes which include:

- Pre-bookable telephone consultations with a doctor e.g. for medication reviews, discussions regarding recent tests or x-rays, referral requests
- 1 week book ahead appointments
- 48 hour book ahead appointments
- Same day appointments
- Internet appointments (start & end of day)

Any messages left via reception for a doctor to telephone you back will be dealt with within 48 hours, so you are encouraged to book into a telephone consultation slot to guarantee a call back time. We are constantly reviewing our appointments system to accommodate the high demand. Our telephone lines open

at 8am and we have a receptionist answering each incoming line. We know it is frustrating trying to get through at peak times until your call is answered in turn, but we would like to remind you to respect our staff as they deal with your enquiry as the Practice has a zero-tolerance approach to verbal abuse and such incidents are reported to the Practice Manager.

Patient Focus Group

We are looking for a wide range of patients to join us in a regular forum where we would like to share ideas that we have as a Practice; gather your views on the services we offer and work together to discuss constructive ways to locally address common issues facing GP surgeries. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact feedback@fairlands.co.uk

Medicines wastage

Did you know that £8million of NHS money is wasted in Surrey alone each year through medicines being requested and not used? Very often the drugs are requested by patients "just in case" often before their previous supply has run out, especially around bank holidays. The most commonly wasted drugs are antibiotics and those used to treat asthma, high blood pressure, pain & the cardiovascular system. Studies have shown that 70% of unused medicine is due to medication being stopped or changed by the doctor and 21% is no longer used due to adverse effects experienced by patients. Unfortunately Pharmacies are not allowed to use or donate returned drugs even if they are unopened, so please remember to only request what you need, when you need it and help save the NHS money. Just imagine how that £8million could have been spent in the NHS. If you would like to discuss your medication with a Doctor, please book a telephone appointment.

Pill prescriptions

Please note that contraceptive pills are **not** available on a repeat prescription basis. Before your next pack is due, you will need to book an appointment with Kristyn or Carol, the Practice Nurses or a doctor. This check will need to be repeated every 6 months before obtaining your next prescription.

Weight management

The weight loss advice that the Practice Nurses offer at Fairlands & Normandy is limited and based on making healthier lifestyle changes. If you would like a more comprehensive approach with regular consultations we would like to suggest that you try one of the well-known commercial programmes which have meetings throughout the local area to help you carry on the good work!

A change in the treatment of ear wax

Recent long-term studies have show that ear syringing is not only potentially dangerous due to the trauma involved in the process, but it can actually be avoided if a few simple steps are followed.

Impacted wax can easily be managed if the following steps are carried out for **up to 3 weeks** with olive oil into the affected ear(s):

- Drop 4 to 6 drops (or as directed) into the ear both morning AND evening
- Remain lying down with the 'oiled' ear uppermost for at least 10 minutes to allow the wax to soften

Prescription requests

You are able to request repeat prescriptions in several ways:

- By letter (enclosing a SAE if unable to collect from nominated pharmacy or the Practice)
- By fax to 01483 598767
- By completing a request form from reception
- Via the internet if you have been issued with a password (see above)

Please note that we are **not** able to accept telephone requests for repeat prescriptions.

If you notice a note stapled to your prescription requesting that you have a

medication review, please book a telephone appointment with your doctor, as this important review does not have to be conducted in a face-to-face appointment.

Urine tests

If bringing a sample to the surgery for testing, please ensure that it is accompanied with a request slip detailing why the test is required and who has requested it. The receptionists are often handed samples which are unlabelled and the nurses will not test them if a request slip is not enclosed.

Private services at Fairlands

We continue to offer a range of independent practitioners who work out of the surgery. Please ask at reception on details of how to book an appointment with them.

- Alex Nash (chartered physiotherapist)
- Donna Varns (osteopath)
- David Weiss (acupuncturist)
- Deborah Rockell (chiropracist/podiatrist)
- Imogen Woods & Lesley Hepburn (Counsellors)