

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2017

Welcome to the latest issue of our Practice Newsletter, which we hope you will find useful and informative.

Life these days for most of us is hectic and often rather stressful. Life at the surgery is no different and we are busier than ever, as we see record highs of new patient registrations. If you are new to the practice please be aware that it could now take up to a week to get you on the system. We are seeing anywhere from 5-20 registrations a week! This is therefore equating to a lot more work and we appreciate your co-operation in these busy times.

Whilst appointments are mainly available from 8am every morning, we are still finding a number of patients missing their appointments without informing us they are not attending/running late. Since August this year we have had **174** missed doctor appointments, **50** missed nurse appointments and **70** missed blood test appointments! We have also had **142** missed telephone call slots with the doctor. If you have pre-booked a call and know you no longer need the slot **please call reception** to cancel your call and free it up for another patient who might need to speak to a GP more urgently.



If you know you are going to be late for your appointment please call Reception who will do their utmost to reschedule your appointment to a more suitable time.

Telephone calls are an alternative way to contact your GP and are offered to those patients who just need advice, can't get to the surgery or have ongoing health issues that they can discuss with their GP without necessarily seeing them. You can usually pre-book your telephone call for a day that suits you. Call slots are booked for 12noon every day and there are a limited number per GP. **If you book a call please call Reception at 12noon to confirm you are waiting for the GP to call you back.** If you do not call us at 12noon we will not get the GP to call you back. We have noticed that sometimes half the patients allocated in the call slots have not called back, therefore wasting both time for the doctor and patients who then have to wait to the following day to speak to someone.

Greeting message

We are in the process of changing our opening message on the telephone. This is to advise you on the phone that our receptionists **will** be asking what your visit is for when you call to make an appointment. This is to book you with the correct clinician, as we have both Doctors and Nurse



Practitioners' that could help with your health issue. Everything that is said on the phone to the receptionists is confidential and we pride our practice on keeping this in everything we do.

Staff updates

We now have two nurse practitioners in the practice - Peta as many of you are aware (who works every morning) and now Fiona. Fiona was currently covering Becky on Maternity Leave, but since we have welcomed Becky back, we are pleased to say that Fiona is now a permanent member of staff and will be both Nurse Practitioner and Practice Nurse. She will hold two different clinics throughout the week so you will be asked what you need to see her for to be booked correctly.

We are sad to say that Jo (Diabetic Specialist Nurse) will be resigning from her role at the end of December. She has been with the Practice 17 years and would like to thank you all for your stories that have made her smile over the years. She will however be continuing to help out on Saturday clinics but Tuesday clinics will stop come the New Year.

We are currently facing staff shortages at Reception so would like to politely ask patients to not call for test results at lunch time. We understand that sometimes this is the only time to call but there may only be one receptionist covering and she may not have time to go through results. *If your call is not urgent please either call after 10am or after 2pm.*

Christmas opening times and repeat prescription deadlines

Opening times:

Monday 18th – Friday 22nd – Business as usual

Monday 26th and Tuesday 27th – **CLOSED**

Wednesday 27th – Friday 29th – Business as usual

Monday 1st Jan – **CLOSED**

Tuesday 2nd Jan – Business as usual



Christmas and New Year
Opening Hours

Prescription deadlines:

Before Christmas – Wednesday 20th December

Before New Year – Thursday 28th December

Unacceptable behaviour

We value and care for our staff. We would ask that they are treated with courtesy and respect. Any individual not complying with this request will be asked to leave the practice and may be removed from the Practice List. We do not accept **any** form of violence towards our staff.



Referrals

There has been more of a demand for referrals over the last couple of months. With registrations gradually increasing, so is the number of referrals. We cover both NHS and Private referrals depending on Patients' request. All referrals are processed in date order (regardless if they are NHS or private) unless the Doctor has requested urgently, which will then take priority.

Patient access

Have you downloaded the latest Patient Access App? You can register online to view your medical record, request repeat prescriptions, see immunisation history and check blood test results – all from your phone or computer! If you would like to register please go to: <https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk/>. You will be able to register on the website which will tell you to bring Photo ID to the practice for your application to be completed. Feedback from patients using this app already is that it is a lot easier to get results without having to bother the doctor and you can request repeat medication without having to fill out a form! So why not give it a try?



Surgery Automatic Doors

As you may have noticed our front door is broken. The middle door to the foyer is still automatic and still requires you to push the button to exit the building. Unfortunately our front door is no longer automatic so please use it like a normal door. The door was broken due to patients not seeing the automatic door sign and pulling the door manually therefore resulting in the sensor breaking.



Up-to-date Patient Information

It is very important that we have your correct details filed on record. If you have changed your mobile number/ email address or even address, please inform Reception so we can update the system. If you have moved outside of the Crowthorne area you will need to re-register. We are asking all patients over the age of 16 to provide their mobile number (unless we have permission for parents to speak on their behalf).

Community Navigator

Community Navigators are local volunteers who help people find their way to activities, services or organisations which they would enjoy, find useful or benefit from within the local community.

Our Community Navigator is called Monica. She has clinics here at the surgery on Thursday early afternoon. If you feel like you would rather a phone call with her she can do that too. She has both face-to-face appointments and telephone calls. Everything you speak about is confidential and if she can't help you she can put you in touch with someone who can.

If you feel like you would benefit from seeing her or speaking to her on the phone, please make an appointment.



Local Acupuncturist

Toni is a local acupuncturist, where she delivers traditional and comprehensive acupuncture treatments to a wide population, inside and outside of the NHS setting, for a variety of health conditions and complaints. Her primary focus is on restoring balance, health and well-being to all. By combining Traditional Chinese Medicine approaches with extensive Western Medical knowledge, she provides individually tailored holistic treatments to suit you.

Having worked within NHS hospitals across the South-East and beyond for over twenty years her profession has been as a Radiotherapy Radiographer specialising in Oncology and Cancer Care. Over eighteen years ago Toni trained as an acupuncturist, after becoming interested in the philosophies and impact this approach can have to health and well-being.

To contact Toni Hennings BSc. Lic Ac MBACc

Web: www.crowthornehealth.co.uk

Tel: 01344 588 885

Stop Smoking Clinic

Here at the practice we have our own stop smoking clinic held with our very own Sheila. Sheila is a qualified Stop Smoking clinician who can help you quit for good. She has clinics here at the surgery on a Wednesday but can see you at a different time that suits you if needed. She has a very good success rate and she will put her time and effort in with each patient to make sure they hit their goals.

So why wait until the New Year to quit? Book an appointment with her now! You don't even need to be a patient here! If you know someone who could do with Sheila's help and guidance please get them to call Reception on 01344 773418 and book with Sheila direct.



KEEP WELL THIS WINTER

Antibiotics Don't Cure Colds/Flu

It is estimated that 5,000 deaths are caused every year in England because antibiotics no longer work for some infections and this figure is set to rise with experts predicting that in just over 30 years antibiotic resistance will kill more people than cancer and diabetes combined.

Antibiotics help ward off infections during chemotherapy, caesarean sections and other surgery. They also treat serious bacterial infections, such as pneumonia, meningitis and sepsis, but they are being used for everyday viral infections, such as colds or flu, where they are **not effective**. Taking antibiotics encourages harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them.



Most antibiotics **do not** work for: Colds, Flu, Vomiting, most coughs, most ear infections, most sore throats, most diarrhoea and most cystitis. The doctor will not give you antibiotics if you have a virus as they are not effective.

Norovirus:

With the weather getting colder common flu and bugs are on the increase. The sickness and diarrhoea bug (Norovirus) is back and although very unpleasant it usually clears up by itself in a few days. You're likely to

have norovirus if you experience: - suddenly feeling sick, projectile vomiting or watery diarrhoea. Some people also have a slight fever, headaches, painful stomach cramps and aching limbs.

The symptoms appear one to two days after you become infected and typically last for up to 2 or 3 days. If you experience sudden diarrhoea and vomiting, the best thing to do is to stay at home until you're feeling better. There's no cure for norovirus, so you have to let it run its course. You can always go to a pharmacy if you

Diarrhoea and vomiting?



There's no specific cure for stomach bugs such as Norovirus
Going to your GP puts others at risk of infection. Treat symptoms at home



stay hydrated



take paracetamol



prevent spread



stay at home for two days after symptoms clear

#EssentialKit

need advice.

To help ease your own or your child's symptoms:

Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration. You need to drink more than usual to replace the fluids lost from vomiting and diarrhoea – as well as water, adults could also try fruit juice and soup. **Avoid giving fizzy drinks** or fruit juice to children as it can make their diarrhoea worse. Babies should continue to feed as usual, either with breast milk or other milk feeds. **Take paracetamol** for any fever or aches and pains and get plenty of rest.

Both paracetamol and ibuprofen are available as a liquid for children, and can be given from the age of about three months.

Norovirus can spread very easily, so you should wash your hands regularly while you're ill and stay off work or school until at least **48** hours after the symptoms have cleared to reduce the risk of passing it on. Visiting your GP surgery with norovirus can put others at risk, so it's best to call your local Pharmacist or NHS 111 if you're concerned or feel you need advice.




KEEP CALM
AND
LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

The only time to get medical advice is when your baby or child has passed 6 or more watery stools in the past 24 hours, or has vomited 3 times or more in the past 24 hours, - if your baby or child is less responsive, feverish, or has pale or mottled skin, - if you or your child has symptoms of severe dehydration, such as persistent dizziness, if you are only passing small amounts of urine or no urine at all, or reduced consciousness. **Babies and elderly people have a greater risk of becoming dehydrated.**

If you have bloody diarrhoea or your symptoms haven't started to improve after a few days or you or your child have a serious underlying condition, such as kidney disease, and have diarrhoea and vomiting you do not need to see a GP. Our Nurse Practitioner can deal with this so please make an appointment to see her instead of seeing the GP.

Stay Well This Winter

Keeping seasonal coughs and colds at bay by asking your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet and how to help you and your family get through the winter season.

Many over-the-counter medicines (including paracetamol and ibuprofen) are available to relieve symptoms of common winter ailments such as cold, sore throat, cough, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache). **Always seek advice from your pharmacist at the first sign of a cough or cold before it gets more serious.**



Keep Warm This Winter

The Met office has advice on getting ready for winter. This includes suggestions for practical things you can do to prepare for winter weather, including cold, ice and snow, high winds and flooding.

Follow these tips to keep you and your family warm and well at home:

If you're not very mobile, are 65 or over, or have a health condition, such as heart or lung disease, heat your home to at least 18C.

Keep your bedroom at 18C all night if you can – and keep the bedroom window closed during the day. You may prefer your living room to be slightly warmer than 18C.

Babies should sleep in rooms heated to between 16C and 20C.

If you're under 65, healthy and active, you can safely have your home cooler than 18C, if you're comfortable,

draw curtains at dusk and keep doors closed to block out draughts and get your heating system checked regularly by a qualified professional.



Check On Friends and Family

Check up on older neighbours and relatives, and those with heart or respiratory (breathing) problems, to make sure: they're safe and well, are warm enough, especially at night, have stocks of food and medicines so they don't need to go out during very cold weather.

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council or call the Age UK helpline on 0800 678 1174 (8am-7pm every day). You can also contact Monica our Community Navigator for help if needed. If you are concerned that the person may be suffering from hypothermia, contact NHS 111.

Charity Update

As most of our patients know we currently are raising funds for two different charities – My Cancer My Choices and DASH Charity - both completely different but both very worthy of us raising awareness about them.

My Cancer My Choices is a local based charity that is situated in both RBH and Brants Bridge. It is a volunteer led service offering you a range of complementary therapies in a calm, peaceful and welcoming environment. We have been able to raise a wonderful **£900** so far due to the sale of second hand books in the foyer.

Our second Charity is DASH Charity. 'Domestic Abuse Stops Here'. They are based in Slough and help families who unfortunately have nowhere else to go due to difficult circumstances. We have been raising funds for them since August and are pleased to announce we have been able to give them **£250** due to the sale of our handmade cards at Reception.

Thank you so much for your continued contribution to these and helping us make a difference.

Thank-you for reading, we hope you found this very informative.

We wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and a wonderful New Year. See you all in 2018!

