

FARNHAM ROAD PRACTICE

Issue 41

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THE NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENTS OF FARNHAM ROAD SURGERY
AND WEEKES DRIVE SURGERY

New Telephone System

Our new telephone system went live on 2 May! The new system will give us more lines and a queuing system when calling in to the surgery. Whilst we will now have one system for both sites, the telephone numbers remain the same (01753 520917 and 01753 693535). We hope this will significantly improve access by telephone and the experience for those calling the practice.

We welcome your feedback.

Please note calls may be recorded for training and monitoring purposes.

Comings...

We have had a few staff changes over the last couple of months. Receptionists Jess and Lisa have joined us. We also have a new trainee Dr Aylett who is with us for four months.

...and Goings

Receptionist Jas and Elaine have left us. Also nurse Kerry.

Releasing of On the Day Appointments is Changing

Following work with our Patient Participation Group we have agreed that from Thursday 1st June 2017 we will release all of our on the day appointments at 08.00, for both morning and afternoon clinics at our Weekes Drive and Farnham Road Surgeries. We will no longer hold back the afternoon appointments to be released at 12.30 for that day. We hope that this will improve access to appointments and reduce the need to contact or come to the surgery in the late morning to get an appointment. Patients who become ill during the day and need to be seen can telephone the surgery and a clinician will phone them back to assess how we can best help them (which might be to give them advice, arrange for a prescription or admission to hospital or for them to come to the surgery for an appointment).

Paramedics Joining Our Multi-disciplinary Team

Following the success of our trial, from later in May we have more Paramedics joining our team of Nurses, Clinical Pharmacists, Physician Associate, Doctors and our existing Paramedic. Our Paramedics will undertake most of our home visits and see patients as part of the multi-disciplinary team in our Acute Care Clinics.

Patients Participation Group

A date to remember 29th June

The surgery is holding an Awareness Day on the 29th June to inform patients about the very active Patients Participation Group. Members of the group will be available to answer your questions and tea or coffee will be served.

There are many ways we help the practice, not by just attending meetings. We spend time talking to patients in the waiting room and listening to their ideas and suggestions. These are taken to our regular meetings which are attended by Doctors and the practice manager.

It is not a forum for personal complaints and grievances, but a platform for positive change.

Two projects we are presently involved in are identifying carers', and raising money for blood pressure machines for the waiting rooms.

We always welcome new members. Please come along on the 29th June and meet us.

SELF-CARE - Knowing when it is safe and appropriate to care for yourself

One of our GPs was brought up in the West of Ireland and he doubts if he saw his GP ten times during his childhood. Nowadays it is not unusual for some to see their GP ten times in a single year. The average number of visits to the GP per year in Slough is six, and demand for appointments is rising; that's not counting all the other contacts people have with their practice seeking information, advice, prescriptions, letters, reports, results and treatments.

Also rising is our population in Slough - we have one of the highest increases in population in England. The number of GPs is not increasing anything like as fast. General Practice nationally has been deprived of funding for the last ten years. The imbalance of rising demand and inadequate resource is already making it difficult to give high quality care to those who *really* need it. Much can be done to ease the problem - and we need your help to ensure this happens.

We recently reviewed over 200 patients seen in emergency surgery sessions in the past six months. **32%** actually needed to see a GP that day. **53%** were not urgent. **49%** of the consultations were avoidable if patients knew more about how to care for themselves safely, and **11%** needed information only. These numbers mean that if more of our patients learned where to obtain reliable health information, and received good advice about when it is safe and appropriate to look after themselves, together we could transform the practice's capability to do a great job protecting those who *do* need our care. We invite you to read on and see what you can do to help us help you.

The best health websites:

www.patient.info - provides the same information as GPs provide to patients during a consultation.

There's a symptom checker, you can search by letter, by category, get patient information leaflets, information about medicines, find out about patient support organisations, visit hubs on diabetes, depression, etc., read about all the common and possible health conditions and topics.

medi-health.info - provides clear medical information that can be browsed alphabetically, explains definitions and likely causes well, deals with what investigations and treatments are best, and gives simple advice on how to help yourself in the first instance.

www.nhs.uk - provides a Health A to Z of conditions and treatments, has over 100 topics in its Live Well section, has excellent sections on Social Care & Support, Money & Benefits, Carers' Rights, the Latest Health News, and a section on locating help close to where you are.

www.childhealthslough.com - a Slough CCG site dealing with the most common childhood illnesses from age 0 to 5 years, with information available in Polish, Punjabi and Urdu. It has clear and simple advice for a range of household accidents (falls, burns, choking, cuts, bumps, bruises, head injury) and on child obesity, Vitamin D, Immunisations, Ten Tips for the first year of life, and information on the Ten Most Common childhood illnesses. There are links to 20 other useful sites, including www.diabetes.org.uk. and the fantastic www.nhs.uk/change4life site that has great information on healthy eating.

Armed with the above access to information, there really is a wealth of information at **your fingertips**. Useful health apps include the Choose Well, the Smokefree and the BMI Tracker apps.

In the review referred to above, 20% of people came to see the GP with Cough, 16% with Abdominal Pain, 9% with Skin Rash, 7% with Back Pain, and 6% with Vomiting & Diarrhoea. So the next newsletter will deal with Cough as a starter topic .