



Swallowfield Medical Practice Newsletter - Spring 2014



We'd like to hear any feedback you might have on our Newsletter including any suggestions for articles. Please email us at ppg.smp@nhs.net

Staffing Update

We are delighted to welcome Dr Samantha Wild to our Practice. Dr Wild joined us in January 2014. She has extensive experience in general practice and has particular interest in diabetes and palliative medicine.

We also welcome our new Practice Nurse, Sister Meryl Tautz. As well as general practice nursing duties, Sister Tautz will be our lead nurse for respiratory conditions. A current staff member, Alison Breslin, is also undertaking training as a Healthcare Assistant (HCA). It won't take too long for them both to be fully operational but ask our patients for some consideration while they get up to speed.

There are also several new faces in both the dispensary and reception teams as new members of staff are being trained over the coming weeks - again please bear with us during this time.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Did you know that we run outreach CAB 'clinics' here at the Practice? If you need advice from the CAB or would like to talk to someone in confidence about legal or financial issues please contact Reception. They will be able to advise you when the next clinic is and make an appointment for you to speak to an advisor.

PRG Survey Results

The Patient Reference Group (PRG) is an important vehicle by which the Practice accesses patient views to help it improve services. Earlier this year the PRG was surveyed to understand how they access a GP, obtain repeat medication and their views on NHS111.

Findings:

We found that around 50% of respondents prefer to make appointments via Reception (phone or visit), whilst the rest use either Patient Partner 30% (the telephone system) or Vision Online 20% (the web based system).

85% of all respondents were aware of the Duty Doctor service and nearly 90% found it good or very good. However only 50% of respondents were aware of the evening surgeries, although 90% of those who had used it found the service good or very good.

Of those respondents who require repeat prescription 88% ask for repeats by email or web service. 78% of all respondents knew of the availability of remote prescription/medication collection points.

Awareness of NHS 111 was 76% but only 25% of all respondents had used it. Opinions on the service were mixed with half finding it good or very good and a third rating it as poor.

What Now?

This information will be used to target improved patient awareness so that patients get access to a GP or their repeat medication as swiftly and easily as possible. The findings on NHS 111 will be fed back. Full survey results can be found on the Practice website www.swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk under Patients Matter.

If you would like your say please register for the PRG via this website.

Keysafe

If you have a keysafe please would you keep the Practice updated of any changes in numbers - this will prevent any delays should it be necessary for a healthcare professional to have access.

Travel Vaccinations

Going away somewhere exotic this summer? Please remember to arrange your travel vaccinations at least 6 weeks before you go. Just call Reception on 0118 988 3473 to book an appointment with a nurse to discuss your requirements.

Blood tests

I need a blood test - what should I do?

When the Doctor asks you to book an appointment for a blood test they will tell you whether it is a fasting test or non- fasting test. Please pass this information to Reception so that they can make you the appropriate appointment with an HCA or Phlebotomist. We always save some early slots for people who need to go without food.

If you are asked to fast, **do not eat** anything after 10pm on the evening of the test and only have water to drink after that time. Do take your medication as normal. We

would encourage all patients to drink plenty of water and to come well wrapped up as this will help to make the veins more accessible.

Patients having tests for the **Warfarin Clinic** need to make their bookings before 11am.

The Phlebotomist/HCA will take your blood and send your sample to the pathology lab for analysis. The results should be back with us in 7-10 days and the Doctor will check them. You can phone Reception for your results (please phone after midday). However, if the Doctor feels they need to see you he/she will ask Reception to contact you - initially they will telephone you so it is important that you keep your contact details updated. If Reception are unable to contact you they will send you a letter.

Hayfever



The Hayfever season starts in Spring and is an allergy to tree, grass or weed pollen, a fine powder that can cause nose, eyes and sinuses to become swollen, irritated and inflamed.

Here are some suggestions which may help your symptoms if you are affected:

- ✓ Wear wraparound glasses to help stop pollen getting in your eyes when you're outdoors
 - ✓ Change your clothes and take a shower after being outdoors
 - ✓ Avoid walking in grassy areas especially in the early morning, evening and at night when the pollen count is highest
 - ✓ Avoid cutting grass
 - ✓ Keep car windows closed. You can buy a pollen filter for the air vents in your car
 - ✓ Avoid drying clothes outdoors, if possible, to help stop bringing pollen into the house
 - ✓ Try to stay indoors if possible when the pollen count is high (over 50)
 - ✓ Don't keep flowers in the house
 - ✓ Damp dust regularly
 - ✓ Vacuum clean regularly with cleaner which has a high efficiency particle filter
 - ✓ Don't smoke or let other people smoke in your house
- For medical advice talk to your GP or local Pharmacist

Foodbank

There is now a 'Foodbank' receptacle beneath the reception desk. This scheme is being run by volunteers from the Trussel Trust through the local Church. Their aim is to provide emergency rations to people in the local area who are in need. Please leave any donations of non-perishable goods in the green bin. For further information please visit: www.wokingham.foodbank.org.uk

YOU ASK...about Prescriptions...

Q: *What shall I do if my medication is due to run out whilst I'm on holiday?*

A: We are able to issue repeat requests before you go on holiday, so you will have your medication to take with you. Just let us know in plenty of time and do the same thing if you are due to run out during public holiday times such as Easter and Christmas.

Q: *How many days tablets should I have left in the packet before I order some more?*

A: You shouldn't wait until you run out completely before you re-order repeat medication. It is a good idea to keep at least one week's supply in hand in case of weather or other emergencies. You also need 3 working days' notice in order to receive your medication or prescription so you should ideally re-order when you have about 10 days' supply left.

Are you happy with the service you receive from Swallowfield Medical Practice? Why not leave a comment on the NHS Choices website. This is a national website offering comprehensive information on healthcare services in your area.

Useful Numbers and Contact details

Main Line:	0118 9883134
Appointments:	0118 9883473
24hr Automated System:	0118 9769606
Dispensary:	0118 9883459
Fax:	0118 9885759
Website:	www.swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk

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