

6 December 2017

Changes to the Doctoring Team

Dr Sian Loe

Following Dr Jenkins decision not to return to practice at the end of her maternity leave at the end of December 2017 we are delighted to announce that Dr Sian Loe has already joined us and as she settles in will be taking over Dr Jenkins' patient list.

Dr Jenkins' patients should be informed of this change of registered doctor over the coming weeks however if in doubt please do ask at reception who you are registered with.

Dr Sarah Plimmer

Sadly, as many of you will know, Dr Plimmer left the practice yesterday and is taking a break from daily general practice. She will carry out the odd locum session for us but her registered patients will need to be assigned a new doctor. Most of the patients will be moved to either Dr Atab's list or Dr Swarna's list.

We are aiming to inform all the affected patients over the coming weeks however if in doubt please do ask at reception who you are registered with.

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Christmas Prescription Requests

As a practice we are about to enter the busiest time of the year for repeat prescription requests. We will process more prescription requests over the coming 2 weeks than we see in a standard month.

To minimise delays please can you consider the following:

Will your medication actually run out over Christmas?

YES: please order sooner rather than later. Please don't leave your request until the 21-22 December.

NO: are open again on Wednesday 27th December, why not consider making your request after the Christmas break.

Have you signed up to SystemOnline?

YES: please order your prescriptions electronically. It makes it much easier for us to track your prescription through the practice and complete your request around more efficiently.

NO: please do consider signing up. Just visit the practice in person with some photo ID and we can create you an account while you wait. You will then be able to order prescriptions online, see many of your current test results and book routine appointments with your registered doctor.



Have you nominated a chosen Chemist to receive your prescriptions electronically?

YES: Brilliant. Please continue to use this service! Your prescription can be tracked by the practice and/or your chemist using the "EPS Tracker" (EPS stands for Electronic Prescription Service)

Using the EPS Tracker the practice and/or your chemist can see:

1. When your prescription has been electronically signed
2. That your prescription has been sent (via the "Spine") to your pharmacist and is waiting for them to download it
3. That your prescription has been downloaded by your nominated Chemist
4. That your prescription has been dispensed.

If you have made a request for repeat medication but it is not available for collection when you expect it ask at the chemist (or your practice) for it to be tracked via the EPS Tracker. Nearly all "lost" prescriptions are found when EPS Tracker is used.

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NO: please let your chemist or the practice know which chemist you would like to nominate to receive your prescriptions electronically.

Please remember:

- You can choose any chemist; one close to the practice, one close to home, one close to your place of work, one of the postal services etc.
- You can change your nominated chemist at any time and as often as you like.
- If you have an acute problem and visit the surgery, it is still possible for your prescription to be printed so you can take your prescription with you and get it dispensed immediately.

Christmas Opening Hours



Day	Date	Opening Hours
Friday	22 Dec 2017	08:00-17:00
Saturday & Sunday	23 & 23 Dec 2017	Closed
Monday & Tuesday	25 & 26 Dec 2017	Closed – Public Holiday
Wednesday	27 Dec 2017	08:00-18:30 – Open as usual
Thursday	28 Dec 2017	08:00-18:30 – Open as usual
Friday	29 Dec 2017	08:00-17:00
Saturday & Sunday	30 & 31 Dec 2017	Closed
Monday	1 Jan 2018	Closed – Public Holiday
Tuesday	2 Jan 2018	08:00-18:30 – Open as usual

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What to do when we are closed

NHS 111 is the NHS service that has been introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services in England. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

When to use it

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.

Call 111 if:

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next

If a health professional has given you a specific phone number to call when you are concerned about your condition, continue to use that number.

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.

How does it work?

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straightaway to the local service that can help you best. That could be A&E, an out of hours doctor, the walk in centre, a community nurse, an emergency dentist or a late-opening chemist.

Calls to 111 are recorded. All calls and the records created are maintained securely, and will only be shared with others directly involved with your care.

Call 999 in an emergency. Chest pains and / or shortness of breath constitute an emergency.

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Self Help

Home Treatment

Remember that you can treat many minor ailments such as colds, coughs and indigestion by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home. We suggest you keep the following:

- Paracetamol and aspirin (children under 16 and people with asthma should not take aspirin)
- Mild laxatives & anti-diarrhoeal medicines
- Rehydration mixture
- Indigestion remedy (for example, antacids)
- Travel sickness tablets
- Tweezers and sharp scissors
- A thermometer
- A selection of plasters, non-absorbent cotton wool, elastic bandages and dressings.



Remember

- Keep the medicine chest in a secure, locked place out of reach of small children.
- Always read the instructions and use the suggested dose
- Watch expiry dates – don't keep or use medicines past their sell-by date
- Take all unwanted and out-of-date medicines back to the pharmacy

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Patient Feedback

During our reception flu clinics many of you completed a questionnaire about your experiences of our practice.

459 questionnaires were completed and returned and all have now been reviewed and the information within captured (with very able assistance from our Patient Participation Group).

Patients were asked to score the practice and were also offered the opportunity to comment.



Scoring:

Each patient was asked to score 6 questions out of 5 stars.

5 stars means "Extremely Likely"

4 stars means "Likely"

3 stars means "Neither Likely nor unlikely"

2 stars means "Unlikely"

1 stars means "Extremely Unlikely"

Question	Overall rating	5 Stars	4 Stars	3 Stars	2 Stars	1 Star
1 How likely are you to recommend this GP surgery to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?	4.5 stars out of 5	60%	34%	2%	2%	1%
2 Are you able to get through to the surgery by telephone?	3.8 stars out of 5	17%	51%	25%	5%	1%
3 Are you able to get an appointment when you want one?	2.9 stars out of 5	4%	25%	36%	29%	6%
4 Do the staff treat you with dignity and respect?	4.7 stars out of 5	74%	24%	2%	0%	0.2%
5 Does the surgery involve you in decisions about your care and treatment?	4.4 stars out of 5	56%	34%	7%	2%	1%
6 This GP practice provides accurate and up to date information on services and opening hours?	4.5 stars out of 5	53%	40%	5%	1%	0%

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Comments:

All patients were offered the opportunity to provide written feedback which 202 did. The majority of the feedback was that our patients are happy with the care given and the personal and professional relationships with our team as a whole.



Sadly the other main message received loud and clear was that while urgent/on the day needs are dealt with well and effectively getting a routine appointment is really difficult. To be honest this comes as no surprise to the practice because we are well aware of the issues around booking and offering routine appointments.

A full summary of the comments received has been shared within the practice and with our Patient Participation Group (PPG). We would be happy to share all the comments in a practice update if there is sufficient interest from patients, please do let us know if you would like to read them.

However, in the absence of a full set of comments there were certain types of comments that our PPG felt worthy of mention in this newsletter:



There was disappointment that a patient "had" to go to the community pharmacist for advice because doctor appointments were not available.

What was interesting about this type of comment was that although it was presented as a negative the patient noted that the community pharmacist solved the problem. This does then pose the question that perhaps we (patients) can use our Community Pharmacist more proactively, and not always assume that only a GP has the solution to our problem.



Likewise there was disappointment that a patient "had" to go to Minor Illness Nurse for an appointment because a suitable Doctor's appointment was not available.

Again this type of comment suggested a negative experience but the patient went on to note that the Minor Illness Nurse solved his/her issue to their satisfaction. This suggests that the Minor Illness Nurse is seeing and treating patients effectively and in a timely manner. Another occasion when we (patients) need to question whether the GP is actually the only clinician who can solve our problem.

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There were also some repeated misconceptions which we need to address such as:



***Your list is too big and that is why I cannot get an appointment;
I cannot get an appointment because you are registering people from the new developments.***

Please be reassured that our list is no bigger than it has ever been (certainly in the past 10 years) and we are not registering any patient from either of the two new housing developments i.e. Fairfields/Whitehouse Park.

Following these misconceptions about list size we presented to the PPG a summary of the list size and compared it to clinical hours provided over the past 10 years.

It is actually the case that we are **providing more clinical hours per patient than ever.**

Our clinical hours provided (Drs, nurses, pharmacist) have **increased by 19% over the past 10 years.**



This increase is actually being delivered in a climate where **funding for general practice has reduced.**

10 years ago 10% of the NHS annual budget was spent in Primary Care.
It is now 8%.

Nevertheless there is still work to be done to improve access.

Much of our clinical time is used by a relatively small number of patients with complex needs and so we are working with a neighbouring practice, the CCG and NHS England to see if we can come up with some clever and better ways to support those complex patients thereby freeing up access to all our other patients.

In the meantime we would encourage all our patients to question whether the GP is the only person who can solve an issue or;

- Whether self-care may be appropriate;
- Could advice from the community pharmacist (where you don't even need an appointment) solve a problem?
- Might the paediatric nurses (accessible via the practice) be better placed to assist you with your child's health needs?
- Should your first point of contact be with our Minor Illness Nurse?

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Season's Greetings

So all that remains for this last newsletter of 2017 is to wish all our patients a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year from everyone at the practice.

