

HERRINGTON MEDICAL CENTRE PATIENT NEWSLETTER www.herringtonmc.nhs.uk

Feb/March 2017, 23



Hello, Welcome to another edition of the Patients Newsletter.

Staff Changes

During February we said goodbye to Dr Stephen Katebe, and hello to Dr Ziad Roujouleh.

We also welcomed two apprentices - Francesca Dodds and Gabrielle Kay.

Health Campaigns

February, March and April's health campaigns are:



February:

- *Tinnitus awareness*
- *World Cancer Day*
- *OCD week of action*

March:

- *Ovarian Cancer awareness month*
- *Nutrition and Hydration week*
- *World oral health day*

April:

- *Bowel Cancer Awareness month*
- *Parkinson's awareness week*
- *World autism awareness say*

Medication reviews and sick day rules - do you know what medicines you are using? - Dr Birrell writes.....

Do you know what medicines you are using?

You may have noticed, on the right hand side of your paper prescriptions, it used to tell you when your medication review was due. Now that many people get

their medicines directly from the pharmacy, unfortunately, we don't have the same ability to tell you when your medication review is due. If you would like to know if your medication review is due please check with a receptionist when you order your medicines.

Our practice pharmacist, Ambreen, can do your medication review with you. Please make a phone appointment with her or, alternatively, with your usual doctor (or nurse practitioner) to talk through your medicines. You can also make a face to face appointment.

We should do a medication review every year. We often do a medication review without you knowing. Either during a consultation, or when we are (electronically) signing one of your prescriptions. But we would like *your* help to improve your medication reviews. So you need to know what the perfect medication review involves.

You really should know what each of the medications is for, and how to take them. Ideally, each prescription should tell you what problem you are taking each medicine for, and when and how to take them. If medicines have not helped you, or are causing much in the way of side effects, it is often sensible to stop them, or change them after a discussion with one of us.

If you are taking certain medicines (the DAMN drugs) you should know the "sick day rules". These medicines can harm your kidneys if you keep on taking them when you are poorly with vomiting, diarrhoea or a fever. If any of these symptoms continue for 24 hours or more, not only do you need to let us know if you are not improving, but you also need to stop these certain medications temporarily. These are called the DAMN drugs. D for diuretics, such as bendroflumethiazide, indapamide, frusemide. A for ACE inhibitors and their family, such as lisinopril, ramipril, losartan and candesartan. M for metformin. N for Non steroidal anti-inflammatories, such as

ibuprofen and naproxen. Ask us for a copy of the leaflet of the sick day rules and please make sure that we have recorded, that you have a copy of this leaflet.

Tinnitus awareness week February 6-12th 2017 - Dr Katie Owles writes.....

Tinnitus awareness week is a campaign to raise public awareness of tinnitus. Tinnitus is a perception of sound in the ears when there is no corresponding external noise. It is often described as a ringing but can be anything from whooshing to buzzing to humming. It is not necessarily continuous.

Anyone can get tinnitus. I'm sure a lot of you that are reading this have experienced the occasional high pitched sound in your ears that spontaneously arrives and then disappears. You may well have temporarily had ringing in your ears after you've been out listening to loud music. There is nothing wrong with this and it is very common. However, some people reading this may have tinnitus a lot of the time and it's not uncommon to find it a frustrating symptom. You are not alone, 10% of the population are in the same boat as you.

There are things that can help with tinnitus so it is important that you speak to your GP about it. It may help for your GP to identify what is causing your tinnitus. Sometimes the cause of tinnitus is simply down to hearing loss or exposure to loud noises or recurrent ear infections. It is also well recognised that stress and anxiety can make tinnitus worse too. However, sometimes we simply are not sure what is causing tinnitus. In some circumstances you may need a referral to see a specialist particularly if the tinnitus is just in one ear.

What can be done? Firstly, tinnitus can improve on its own accord. If tinnitus is due to hearing loss then hearing aids can help. Another way to improve tinnitus is by using sounds to mask the noise. Considering stress and anxiety can exacerbate tinnitus, it is worth speaking to your GP about ways in which to manage this. Last but by no means least, The British Tinnitus Association is an excellent organisation that has a free helpline and website with support and guidance on tinnitus.

www.tinnitus.org.uk

Helpline- 0800 0180527

If you suffer from tinnitus, during tinnitus awareness week the British Tinnitus Association want

you to upload a video of up to 10 seconds of how tinnitus affects you. See website for details.

SHARP - Sharp Advice & Resource Project:

Do you need advice on benefits? Have you got problems with debt or managing your money? Sky high energy bills? SHARP can help.

SHARP offer free independent advice and appointments are available in a range of community settings within Coalfields, Washington and Sunderland East.

They are based at 17 Beatrice Terrace, Shiney Row, Houghton-le-Spring DH4 4QW

Telephone: 0191 385 6687

www.shineyadvice.org.uk

enquiries@shineyadvice.org.uk

Advice Line: 0300 123 1961

Advice E-mail advice@sineyadvice.org.uk

SHARP centre is open Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Calling all Ex-military Personnel



We are currently dating our practice records and encouraging those who have served in the military for at least one day, reservists and families of those serving to let us know. This is so we can help ensure that we aren't missing any opportunities to correctly signpost to advice and services, either now or in the future.

We would appreciate you completing a short questionnaire available from Reception. *Please note: the information obtained will be kept confidential*

Bowel Cancer Screening

We are promoting the importance of bowel cancer screening. Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK. The aim of the Bowel Screening Programme is to discover bowel cancer at an early stage. The sooner it's caught, the easier it is to treat.

A number of patient will be invited to take part in bowel screening; it involves a simple test that you conduct at home. For these reasons, we encourage you to consider participating in the bowel screening programme should you be invited.

Whether or not to take part in bowel screening is your choice, so you should read the information materials sent with the screening invitation to help you decide.

If you have not received your screening pack or wish to have another one sent out to you, please phone 0800 707 6060.

If you're not sure how to complete the test itself, and have access to the internet, this link will give you further information:

<http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/bowel/publications/kit-instructions.html> or speak to one of our practice nurses who can show you how to complete the kit.

Sharp (yellow) boxes

Some of you may need to return used yellow boxes for your sharps. Could you please ensure that the boxes are *locked and your name is clearly visible* on the box when you hand them back to Reception.

Samples

We have had incidents recently when sample bottles have been left on Reception desk with no name or date-of-birth on them. These samples will not be sent off for testing as we don't know who they belong to. Please do not leave your sample unlabelled on Reception and ensure your details are clearly marked on them.

Zero Tolerance

Our staff are here to help you and they should be able to do their jobs without being physically or verbally abused. They have the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times. Most people respect this.

Any patient, or their representative, found to be abusing our staff in person or on the telephone may be asked to leave the practice and may be removed from the practice list.

Abusive and offensive behaviour will NOT be tolerated.

Patient Participation Group

The practice is keen to hear your views about the services we provide, and also any thoughts or ideas you may have for possible future plans and initiatives. These are discussed at our quarterly



meeting and due to recent retirements we have a small number of vacancies available.

If you are interested, would you please leave your name and contact details at the Reception desk and the Practice Manager will be in touch.

Self-check-in

This is situated on the left wall as you come into the waiting room. If you would like to use this method and are unsure how to, just ask at reception and we will assist.

Fund raising

Any paperback novels will be gratefully received to help us with our fundraising efforts.

We are arranging an Easter raffle to support 39th St John's scout group.

Thank you all for your support.

Can't get an appointment?

If you found it hard to get an appointment recently, you may be interested to know that during November, December, and January 489 people did not turn up for their appointments - this is 81 ½ hours of valuable clinical time which was wasted and that could have been given to others needing to see a doctor or nurse. 210 of these missed appointments were by men, the remaining 279 by women.

If you cannot attend your appointment, please let us know so that we can give it to someone else.

Hearing Loop

If you need to use a hearing loop, please ask at Reception - we have this facility available for our patient's use.

Opening times

Our doors open at the following times:

8.20am - 12 noon, 1.30pm - 6pm Monday - Friday
8.30am - 12noon Saturday
Sunday - closed

Prescription ordering

You can order prescriptions over the telephone at the following times:

9.30am - 12noon, and 1.30pm - 6pm Monday - Friday
8.30am - 12 noon Saturday
Sunday - closed

On-line facilities through our website

We are pleased to announce that you are now able to book a GP appointment, request repeat medication, amend your personal details, view your immunisation history, and view your allergies/adverse reactions.



To be able to do this you can go to our website www.herringtonmc.nhs.net and click on one of the buttons which are down the right-hand side of the homepage. This will then take you to the "Patient Access" page where you can register to be able to use the on-line facilities.

There is also an app which is now available for patients who already have an account.

Ringling for test results

If you have investigations or tests carried out during a hospital attendance it is their responsibility to inform you of the result. We are responsible for tests and investigations done at our request.

We will try, where possible, to provide the result on behalf of the hospital if they are unable to but results can take longer to reach the Practice. Please do not get upset with Staff if the result is not returned within the timescale suggested by the hospital.

Local Urgent Care Centres

The three Urgent Care Centres in Houghton, Washington and Bunnyhill accept both walk-in patients and also via NHS111 for all minor injury and illness issues. Their opening times are:

10am - 10pm weekdays

8am - 10pm weekends and bank holidays

X-ray Facilities

The x-ray facility at Houghton Primary Care Centre and Bunnyhill Primary Care Centre will now close at 5.30pm as of Monday 10th October 2016.

Future Closures

The practice will be closed during the following for essential staff training:

Wednesday 8th March: 12 noon - 6pm

Wednesday 10th May: 12noon - 6pm

For medical attention during this time please ring NHS 111.

Bank Holidays:

Friday 14th April: CLOSED

Monday 17th April: CLOSED

Monday 1st May: CLOSED

Monday 29th May: CLOSED



For medical attention during these times please ring NHS 111.