

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

December 2017, 26



Hello, Welcome to another edition of the Patients Newsletter.

Staff Changes

We are happy to report we have no staff changes ☺

Dr Andrew Devlin writes.....

Hello, I'm Dr Devlin and I've been working at the practice since August. I trained in Newcastle and am originally from Jarrow. I have a special interest in cardiovascular disease with particular interests in heart failure and arrhythmias. I work one day a week in Community Cardiology at Grindon Lane Primary Care Centre and another 3 ½ days at the practice.

In my spare time I watch a lot of cinema, keep fit and seem to spend a lot of time on home improvement. I realise a lot of patients will already know me as I'm a little late in doing this| so if we've already met apologies for the late introduction. Importantly, we also have our first child on the way in December so if I'm not around then you all know why!

Taking Antibiotics.....

You may have seen a recent campaign on TV or heard it on the radio about taking antibiotics?



Taking antibiotics encourages harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them. This puts you and your family at risk of a more severe or longer illness.

Remember if you're feeling unwell antibiotics aren't always needed

How to look after yourself and your family: if you or a family member are feeling unwell, have a cold or flu and you haven't been prescribed antibiotics, here are some effective self-care ways to help you feel better:

- Ask your pharmacist to recommend medicines to help with symptoms or pain
- Get plenty of rest
- Make sure you or your child drink enough to avoid feeling thirsty
- Fever is a sign the body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you or your child are uncomfortable as a result of a fever
- Make sure to use a tissue for your nose and wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading your infection to family and friends

When antibiotics are needed

Antibiotics are needed for serious bacterial infections including:

- Sepsis
- Pneumonia
- Urinary tract infections
- Sexually transmitted infections like gonorrhoea
- Meningococcal meningitis

Please pick up a leaflet from Reception or go to www.nhs.uk/keepantibioticsworking for more information

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.

Can't get an appointment?

If you found it hard to get an appointment recently, you may be interested to know that during September, October and November 514 people did not turn up for their appointments - this is 85 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours of valuable clinical time which was wasted and that could have been given to others needing to see a doctor or nurse.

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

Text Messaging

During September 2017 we started to use a text message appointment reminder service. Could you please ensure we have your up-to-date mobile phone number. If you do not wish to receive texts from us please let one of our receptionists know.

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
Saturday - closed
Sunday - closed

Prescription ordering

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

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

During the holiday period please ensure your pharmacy is opening so you can collect your medication.

****Important Prescription Information****

We get thousands of prescription requests each week. Each medication request needs to be checked and signed by one of the GPs. This takes a long time.

If you forget to order your medication and request them to be signed for the same day, it means that the GP who is dealing with emergencies that day has to take time to check your prescription and sign it.

This can delay important and clinical urgent treatment for very ill patients.

There are many ways to order your prescription to make sure you get it on time - by phone, at the front desk, through your pharmacy, by post or online.

Please be respectful of the surgery staff, also patients who need urgent clinical care. Please order your prescription 48 hours in advance.

Dr Birrell writes.....

Dear Patient

I'm sure that you can appreciate that doctors are busy people. Occasionally we are dealing with life and death decisions. Our jobs are made more difficult by last minute urgent prescription requests. We are turning urgent requests around by 8.30am the following day. The only prescriptions that we are

happy to turn around by 5pm on the same day are listed below:

Salbutamol (Ventolin)
Contraceptives
Morning after pill
Palliative care drugs
Insulin
Epilepsy drugs
Epipens (adrenaline)

Thank you for your patience.

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.

Sunderland GP Extended Access Service

This is a service ran by your local GPs accessed from 5 health centres by appointment only (appointments are booked by your usual GP practice). The 5 health centres are Southwick, Riverview, Houghton Primary Care Centre (not the Health Centre), The Galleries, Pallion.

The service opening times are Monday - Friday 6pm-8.30pm, weekends 9am-5.30pm, bank holidays 10am-2pm.

Christmas Raffle

This year the proceeds of the Christmas raffle will go to "Supporting Crisis"

1st prize is a large Christmas hamper, 2nd prize is wine and chocolate, 3rd prize is a tin of luxury biscuits.

The raffle will be drawn on Wednesday 20th December 2017 - thank you for your support.

Fables of Christmas, Claire writes.....

Did you know?...

Traditional Christmas puddings should be made with 13 ingredients to represent Jesus and his disciples.

A child born on Christmas Day will have a "special fortune"

Wearing new shoes on Christmas Day brings bad luck!

Boxing Day is giving "boxes" of presents to the people who have worked for us during the year.

Advent calendars are a tradition which arose in Germany in the late 1800's and soon spread throughout Europe and North America.

A countdown to Christmas - originally were from the Hebrew bible. These days the calendars hold chocolate offerings in shapes of teddies, baubles, trees, houses, birds etc.....with no religious context

Future Closures

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

Thursday 21st December 2017: 12noon - 2pm
Wednesday 17th January 2018: 12noon - 6pm
Wednesday 7th March 2018: 12 noon - 6pm

For medical attention during this time please ring NHS 111.

