



Abbey Notes

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Anje shows off the lower counter available

Access all areas

FUN-LOVING pharmacy assistant Anje was only too pleased to get in the picture when we were looking for illustrations for our article about accessibility, which appears over the page.

Not only is the Abbey Medical Centre lucky enough to have a pharmacy right next door, but the pharmacy offers a lowered counter for people in wheelchairs. Anje is always happy to help.

New doctor is named

THE surgery will have a new doctor from October 1 this year. He is Dr David Cavanagh, who will work three days a week at the Abbey Medical Centre. Dr Cavanagh has been a GP for some time. We hope to bring you more details when he joins the practice.

Let's try not to waste resources

IN the news at the moment is confusion over the new out-of-hours 111 service which has replaced NHS Direct.

There are also fears that accident and emergency departments may reach breaking point when winter illnesses and accidents add to their workload.

We would like to help by repeating some information already on display in the surgery foyer in English, Urdu, Simplified Chinese, Polish, Czech and Arabic.

The basic message is that if it is not a 999 emergency but you need help fast then call 111. You will be asked some questions to assess your symptoms and directed to the best local service. You may not know this, but each time an Abbey patient attends A&E, a bill varying from £57 to £119 is charged to the surgery.

In a recent three-month period, 24 of our fellow patients attended A&E inappropriately. This meant more than £1,300 of our GP budget was wasted.

Inappropriate means attending with flu-like symptoms, cough and cold, headache or earache, all of which could have been dealt with at the surgery or by out-of-hours services.

If you need to see a doctor you can ring the surgery for an appointment or register to make appointments online. If the surgery is closed and you feel you need medical attention, you can ring 111, except on Thursday afternoon, when our surgery has been traditionally closed to patients. Your call will at that time be diverted to the Nottingham Emergency Medical Service (NEMS) from 12.30pm to 6.30pm. NEMS also take your calls between 8am and 8.30am each day.

Since the beginning of this year, the surgery has been sending out a short survey to patients who attend A&E to see why they were there and what happened. A stamp addressed envelope goes with it and in the New Year there will be a report on the findings.

Who's who at surgery? Facts behind faces

What is your name? Helina Cummins

What is your role at the Abbey Medical centre? Receptionist

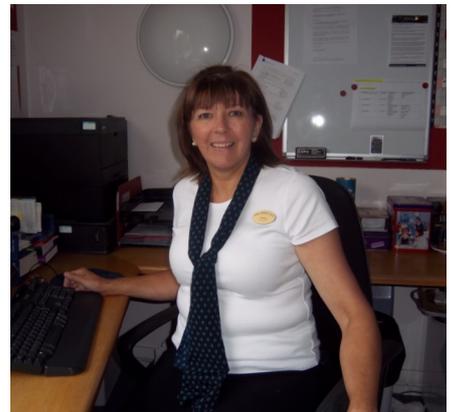
How long have you worked there? Nearly 11 years

What do you like most about your work? Dealing with the patients and trying to help.

What are the things that most annoy, irritate or just plain bug you? Nothing really.

How about your life outside the surgery? I am married with three grown-up children and three grandchildren. We are a very close family and I am busy with them all. I help to look after my grandchildren.

Walking is a hobby. I used to love horse-riding and had my own horse but I would be in the QMC if I tried that now.



Receptionist Helina Cummins



Notices have Braille translations beneath



There is a loop system for the hard of hearing



Guide dogs are welcome

Accessibility will be on the agenda

ACCESS for the disabled is an important issue for the Abbey Medical Centre.

As you may have noticed, the surgery tries to cater for disabled people with a loop system for the hard of hearing, notices in Braille for people with sight difficulties, a low bell at the door to the surgery for people in wheelchairs, clear wheelchair access to all doctors and nurses, a disabled lavatory and disabled car parking space and ramped access to the building. There is even a lowered counter in the neighbouring pharmacy for people in wheelchairs.

Details of how accessible the surgery is appear on the website of Disabled Go, who carry out audits of all practices.

The issue of access for the disabled will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Patient Participation Group on September 18, at 6.30pm.

If you have any ideas about areas you feel could be improved, you can either come along to the meeting at the surgery or contact group secretary Sue McNab on 0115 9221294 or by e-mail at susanmc-nab@hotmail.co.uk

And finally...

Patient: Doctor, doctor, I've had a stomach ache since I ate some cheese.

Doctor: Did it smell funny when you unwrapped it?

Patient: I was supposed to unwrap it?