

THE ARLINGTON ROAD MEDICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER



February-March 2019

In January alone there were a total of...

135

missed appointments

These figures equate to 25.5 consulting hours wasted in one month. This is equivalent to one of our clinicians having booked appointments back to back from 08:30-13:30, Monday to Friday for one week and not one single patient turning up!

If you no longer need an appointment you have booked, please have the courtesy to cancel it.

You can cancel appointments at any time of day or night by...

- **Phoning the Surgery and leaving a message.**
- **Logging into your Online Services account.**
- **Replying CANCEL to your automated SMS appointment reminder.**

Forthcoming Closures

The Practice will be closed from **12.30** on **Tuesday 12th March** for a regional meeting of all local GP's.

Should you require urgent treatment or advice during this closure, please call **NHS 111 by dialling 111** on your telephone keypad.

We will also be closed for a Staff Meeting between **12:50 – 14:10** on **Wednesday 6th March**

Should you require urgent treatment or advice during the Staff Meeting, please telephone **0300 55 55 252.**

What? Jump the queue?!

We are pleased to announce that after a long period of time without a self check-in screen in our reception area, we have now purchased a new machine that works very well with our current computer system.

So, if you are queuing at reception simply to tell us you are here for a pre-booked appointment, please feel free to bypass the queue and check yourself in at the screen situated opposite the reception desk – the check-in screen will inform you where you need to wait.



Thank you



We would like to express our thanks to all who kindly gave Christmas gifts to the Doctors and Surgery staff, it is very much appreciated. We wish you all health and happiness for 2019.

Dr Miriam Malak

Some of you may have already met Dr Miriam Malak who did some regular locum sessions for us towards the end of last year. We are delighted to announce that Dr Malak joined the team permanently in January as a Salaried GP.



Dr Malak's regular days are Monday and Wednesday.

New Registrar

Dr Rachael Fearon, joined the Practice on 2nd February as an additional registrar. Dr Fearon is in her 2nd to last year and will be with us for two months. We welcome her to the Practice team.

NHS Health Checks

Have you received an invitation for an NHS Health Check but not got around to contacting us yet to make an appointment?

You can now make these appointments online if you are registered for Patient Online Services.

Dr Ben McFadden

Dr McFadden's wife is currently unwell and undergoing treatment. This has recently necessitated in him taking some leave at short notice.

Dr McFadden hopes to keep his absence from the Practice to a minimum but, depending on Mrs McFadden's progress, he may need to take further time. We are sure you will understand and empathise with his situation.

Cervical Screening - Online Booking Now Available

Week commencing 21st January was Cervical Cancer Prevention Week. Awareness was raised at the Surgery through our waiting room TV screens and as a Practice we focussed on ways to encourage women to attend for Cervical Screening (smear test).

We realise women may have a number of reasons why they put off booking their smear test, but cervical screening saves 5000 women's lives a year in the UK. Cervical screening is NOT a test for cancer, it is a screening test to detect changes in the cells of the cervix at an early stage. These changes cause no symptoms. However, if left untreated they can, in some cases, develop into cervical cancer. In England screening starts at the age of 25 and ends at 64.

Please don't ignore your invitation. It takes just a few minutes, but could save your life.

Continued overleaf...

How to book your appointment – you can either speak to one of our receptionists who will be able to offer you a range of appointment times with one of our nurses. **Alternatively, if you are registered for patient online services, you can book your appointment online** – there are a range of times available online but if none of the times are convenient for you, please speak to one of our receptionists who will be able to offer you a wider range of times.

New Year's Resolution already gone up in smoke?

Are you trying to quit smoking? Don't feel you have to do it alone. For help and support contact **One You East Sussex** on **01323 404600** or at <https://oneyoueastsussex.org.uk/services/quit-smoking>

Many pharmacies, including Arlington Road Pharmacy, also offer Stop Smoking support. Appointments can be made and are carried out in the privacy of the Pharmacy consultation room.

Smoking damages your body in many ways. From the day to day effects on your heart and your breathing, to longer-term smoking-related diseases such as heart disease, cancer and stroke. Your smoke can harm your family's health, too.

No matter how long you've smoked for, quitting can help improve your health straight away.



Right Person First **O**ver the past couple of months we have gradually introduced the principal of 'Right Person First' otherwise known as Care Navigation. For more information about the idea, please see our November 2018 Newsletter which is available on our website.

To summarise, the Partners at the Practice have asked our reception staff to ask patients who are requesting appointment if they wouldn't mind sharing with the receptionist a little bit about why they need to see a doctor. When we are feeling unwell, our first port of call is often to book an appointment to see our GP. However, there are many other professionals and services working closely with your GP who may be able to help you better, and quicker. By telling the receptionist why you would like to see the GP, she may be able to offer you an alternative service, that would be more appropriate which will save both you and your GP time.

The majority of patients have been happy to share information with our receptionists and there have been a number of successful instances of care navigation. If you would prefer not to share your problem with the receptionist we fully respect that, we just ask that you politely decline. Remember our staff are not being nosy and out of choice would rather not ask you why you need to see the GP, they are simply carrying out the request of the Partners who are trying to make sure we all make the best use of the resources available to us.





Adding Information to your Summary Care Record

All patients registered with a GP practice in England, will already have a Summary Care Record (SCR), unless you have previously chosen not to have one. This contains information about the medicines you are taking, allergies you suffer from and any adverse reactions to medicines you have had in the past.

Information about your healthcare may not be routinely shared across different healthcare organisations and systems. You may need to be treated by health and care professionals who do not know your medical history, for example in an A&E Department. Essential details about your healthcare can be difficult to remember, particularly when you are unwell or have complex care needs.

Summary Care Record with Additional Information:

Having a Summary Care Record with additional information can help by providing healthcare staff treating you with vital information from your health record. This will help the staff involved in your care make better and safer decisions about how best to treat you.

Authorised healthcare staff can only view your SCR with your permission. The information shared will solely be used for the benefit of your care.

You can choose to share additional information that includes: your illnesses and health problems, operations and vaccinations you have had in the past, how you would like to be treated (such as where you would prefer to receive care), what support you might need and who should be contacted for more information about you.

If you do wish to have the additional information added to your SCR, please ask for a form at reception to complete and sign and we will process this for you.

Extended Hours

We mentioned in our November 2018 Newsletter that Evening and Weekend GP appointments would soon be available in Eastbourne. This service is now up and running.

Who is the service for?

Any patient who is registered at a local practice and would like to pre-book a routine appointment outside of normal surgery hours, eg. evenings or weekends.

How do I book an appointment?

Phone your usual GP Practice during the normal working day and ask for an Extended Hours appointment.

Will I be seen at my own practice or by my own doctor?

No, there are currently 3 hubs offering appointments...



Park Practice, Eastbourne · Old School Surgery, Seaford · Pebsham Surgery, Bexhill-on-Sea

A number of local GP's are contributing to the service so, for example, if you are seen at Park Practice, that doesn't necessarily mean it will be a Park Practice GP that you see. Continued...

Will I know which Doctor I will be seeing?

Yes, our reception will be able to tell you where to go for your appointment and which doctor you will be seeing.

Will the Doctor I see have access to my notes?

Yes, you will just need to give permission for this when you book the appointment with our receptionist.

Is this service the same as or instead of the Out of Hours GP Service?

No, this service is for routine pre-booked appointments and can only be booked via your own GP Surgery. You should not try to attend one of the hubs without an appointment. If you need an urgent appointment when your GP Surgery is closed, you should phone NHS 111 to access the Out of Hours GP Service.

#IMPROVINGCAREFORYOU

Repeat Prescription Processing Time

Many of you may have already read the article in our November 2018 Newsletter about allowing enough time for re-ordering your repeat medication. However, a significant number of patients are still not allowing enough time and are expecting both the Surgery and the Pharmacy to turn their request around urgently.

If you are collecting your prescription from our reception desk, please allow 2 full working days, from time of request, before collecting from us.

If you are collecting your prescription from your nominated pharmacy, please allow 7 working days, from time of request, before collecting your dispensed medication from the pharmacy.

If you missed the article in our November newsletter, this can be viewed online at www.arlingtonroadsurgery.nhs.uk.



Pharmacy Collection Days

Boots Pharmacy now only collect prescriptions from us on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Please bear this in mind when allowing enough time for ordering your repeat prescription. Thank you.



Many of you will be familiar with Hazel Winter, who has been a Dispenser at Arlington Road Pharmacy from its commencement. Hazel knows the Pharmacy inside out and has been committed to running a smooth service for patients but has suffered the frustration of working under constantly

changing management, where ideas and methods have suffered inconsistency. Traditionally a pharmacy manager tends to be the Pharmacist which probably works well where the pharmacist is in post over a long period of time. However, there have been a number of Pharmacists filling the post which has led to the inconsistencies that have affected customer service.

Hazel has now taken on the role of Pharmacy Manager and is therefore now responsible for the smooth running of the Pharmacy and its processes, regardless of whether they have a permanent Pharmacist in post or are working with locums.

Hazel is enjoying the challenge and we have started to see some improvements and look forward to seeing the progress Hazel makes in her new role.

Hazel is keen to promote some of the new services that the pharmacy are offering such as Medicines Usage Reviews and the New Medicines Service. You may be offered a review of your medications with the pharmacist – this is not to change your medications but an opportunity to ensure you understand what your medications are for, when you should be taking them, any side effects you have or should be looking out for. The review takes place with the pharmacist in the private consultation room.

Other services available at the Pharmacy are...

Blood pressure checks – no appointment necessary.

Stop smoking advice and support – appointments are with Hazel and last around half an hour.

Please note, whilst the Pharmacy is not managed by the Surgery, we do meet regularly and give feedback on any issues that we are aware of.

Please direct any complaints and concerns you have to Hazel, Pharmacy Manager. If you feel your complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, please contact Day Lewis Head office on 0208 256 6205.

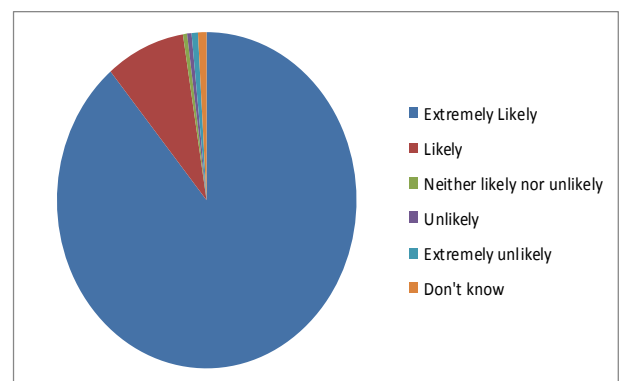
Both good and bad feedback can also be given via NHS choices and via the Buzz Box at the Pharmacy counter.

Friends and Family Summary for 2018

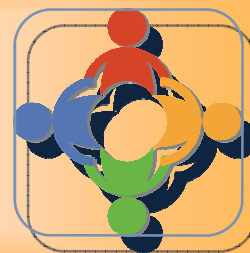
Thank you to all of you who completed the Friends and Family Test (FFT) throughout 2018. We really do value your feedback.

The chart opposite collates the data for the whole year and shows that an overwhelming percentage of our patients, who completed the survey, feel they would recommend us to their family and friends.

Remember you can complete the FFT on paper, online or by text message.



THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER



March 2019

This newsletter is prepared by the Arlington Road Patient Participation Group (PPG). The PPG consists of a group of patients whose aim is to make a positive contribution to the services offered to patients at the Surgery. The PPG meets every 6 weeks; every other meeting they are joined by representatives of the Practice Staff.

Items in this newsletter are of personal interest to members of the PPG who feel the information contained therein may be of benefit to other patients. The content is not necessarily endorsed by the Practice.

Patient Participation Group - AGM Elections

At the Annual General Meeting of the PPG on 6th November 2018, the following officers were elected:

Chair:	Diane Caird
Vice-Chair:	Jenny Ballard
Treasurer:	Diana Westgate
Minutes' Secretary:	Ken Russell-Pollock
Secretary:	Cécile Stheeman

Magazines

If you have any reasonably up-to-date glossy magazines, would you like to donate them to the surgery for the enjoyment and interest of patients in the waiting rooms? (No freebies of trade/store magazines, please.)

We would like to share with our fellow patients a really useful and enlightening article found in the Which? Magazine by one of our members...

Which?

What your GP says... and what they really mean...

We've interviewed 15 GPs to get their tips on how you can get the best from your GP

Surgery.

With the average GP consultation lasting only 10 minutes, there's no time to waste on miscommunication.

To get the best from your appointment, you need to understand what's going through your doctor's mind when you walk through the door. So we interviewed 15 doctors to find out what you can do to help your GP.

From clearly articulating what you need from your doctor to avoiding small talk, read on to find out what your GP says, and what they really mean.

We've also teamed up with the Royal College of GPs (RCGP) to produce a patient leaflet that includes useful advice and resources for getting the best from your GP.

“What's the appointment about?”

Whether you speak to the surgery receptionist or – increasingly – a GP triaging potential appointments, you're likely to be asked this question.

The old-fashioned view of receptionists acting as guard dogs to keep you away from your GP is outdated. Try to think of them as your ally in finding the person most skilled to help you.

As one GP explained: 'I see between 30 and 40 patients every day, and a good 10 to 20% of them I didn't need to.' By clearly telling the receptionist or the GP what your appointment is for, they can ensure there are fewer wasted face-to-face appointments.

“Is it urgent?”

And don't hate them for asking 'is it urgent?'. It may be the question that many of us dread when we ring for an appointment, but we're likely to be misinterpreting what's being asked.

The receptionist does not expect you to be the judge of how serious your illness is. That's the GP's job. They are really asking if you're OK to wait for the time it takes to get a non-urgent appointment.

“How are you today?”

When your GP asks this, they're not making small talk. What they really want to know is the main problem that will be the focus of the consultation.

Include a summary of why you're there in your first sentence.

Don't be afraid to give a recap too. If you're at the surgery for a follow-up on test results, give a 10-second précis of why you're there (for example 'I've been feeling very tired, and so you organised tests to rule out anaemia').

One GP said: 'Patients seem to think that we've had half an hour to read their whole 50 years' medical notes, and we haven't. We've literally opened the notes and called them in.'

“What do you think's going on?”

No, the GP is not expecting you to don a stethoscope and diagnose yourself. Instead they're seeking to understand any ideas you've developed about what might be wrong, and any worries you're having.

You are also an expert, in your own symptoms and health, so the GP is consulting you to help

crack the case (think: 'I've got a cough and a fever', rather than 'I think I might have a chest infection'). Avoid vagueness ('a really bad headache') and try to describe how it is feeling.

It helps if you can establish a chronology – what order things happened in, and over what period of time. This can help GPs rule out some things and point to others.

A useful question the GP might ask is when you last felt well. Avoid too much extraneous detail ('it started on a Friday night when I was watching Gogglebox...'). But do say if big life events may be affecting your health.

“What were you hoping I'd do?”

This is not the GP's way of telling you that they haven't got a clue. They are trying to understand what expectations you have so they can best meet them. Are you looking for reassurance, treatment or just acknowledgement?

Tell the GP what you're hoping and expecting from the consultation (Reassurance? A certain medicine? A private referral?). Speak up if you're worried you may have something serious. If you don't talk about these issues, you'll leave without an answer to your main questions.

Treat your consultation as a shared discussion and let the GP know what's important to you. For example, you might be prepared to take a drug with certain risks if it means alleviating your symptoms.

One GP reflected what many told us: 'You'll often hear it from relatives, who say, "Dad came to see you, he's really worried that he's got multiple sclerosis or something", when you know that isn't a possibility... but as they haven't brought it up themselves, you haven't been able to allay their fears.'

It's ok to suggest treatment ideas. If you've read about a new drug that you'd like to try, write down some of the specifics of what you've read to share with your GP.

But remember that many drug trials are reported by the media at very early stages (sometimes even during animal trials) and long before they're available for NHS use.

“So, just to recap...”

By the end of your appointment you should have agreed a way forward, and it's the GP's job to make sure you're happy.

But it could be helpful to repeat back what's been discussed and agreed, as well as the next steps (for example, 'I think what we've agreed is that you're going to do X, and I'm going to do Y?').

The GP should also do what's known as 'safety-netting'. Here the GP makes sure you know what to do if, for example, things get worse or you get certain symptoms. This is the time to check that you understand this and ask any questions (for example, 'what should I do if...?'), or check the possible side effects of any medication.

“Let us know if you're not happy”

You're perfectly within your rights to see another GP if you're not convinced by what you're being told. You can change your GP or surgery if you're not happy.

You can also complain, but do think about sharing your concerns first with the GP or practice manager before escalating things to a body such as your local Clinical Commissioning Group (in England, or equivalent bodies in other parts of the UK).