

Dr M H Darch & Partners

at

TOTTON HEALTH CENTRE

Newsletter Spring 2008

Dr M H Darch - Senior Partner

**Dr S J Godfrey Dr C G Alveyn Dr S P Gaunt Dr M A Falle
Dr H J Fleet Dr C E M Johnson Dr D T Booth**

Mrs I S Pilgrim (Business Partner)

Associate Doctors: Dr H Everitt Dr C A E Simon

With Dr. Darch now firmly established as senior partner, time moves on and the challenges of providing good community care to our patients remains a hard, but stimulating task.

The last six months have been busy for us all in the Health Centre. You will have noticed the government has been increasingly vocal in their criticism of GPs and the provisions of general practice. As far as our practice is concerned, we strenuously deny the charges levelled.

Despite the government's criticism, we feel we have been able to maintain an efficient and proactive practice team who strive to deal with the challenges posed each day. We believe we always do our utmost to maintain high standards of care.

We hope the information in this newsletter will continue to keep you abreast of our latest initiatives and changes within the practice.

We have a very committed team of doctors, nurses, reception and administrative staff, whose aim is to provide you with a full range of medical services. We hope this holistic approach to your medical care provides a good service to you and your families.

Tel: 023 80 865051



Our Annual Patient Survey 2007

OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE PRACTICE - 83%

Towards the end of last year, our patients were asked to complete a questionnaire about the service and care that they received at the practice and once again, we were encouraged by the results achieved. Patient expectations are, quite understandably, high and our survey results go some way to proving that we are making the very best endeavours to meet these demands.

The survey aims to question patients about their whole experience when making an appointment, getting seen by the doctor or nurse, the overall attitude of the staff and the responsiveness of the service we provide.

Particular areas where patients felt we did well are listed below:

The marks are above the national average and are scored out of a 100.

Treatment by receptionists?	78
How quickly you get to see any doctor?	80
How well did the doctor listen to what you had to say?	86
How much did the doctor involve you in your care decision?	84
How did you rate the doctors care and concern for you?	87

There is always room for improvement and we are aware of this. Our opening hours and your ability to get through on the phone in busy periods remain difficult areas. We are constantly reviewing our access policies and many of you will have noticed that we have already made changes to our telephone system.

Thank you to everyone who took the time and trouble to complete the questionnaire. It has certainly been helpful in reinforcing the message that as a primary care team, the service and care we provide is generally appreciated and thought to be of a high standard.

You have our assurance that we will continue to review our service to ensure we maintain that high standard.

New new new
Patient Information System

Look out for the new Patient Information System which is located in the Waiting Room!

Thanks to a very kind donation from ASDA of a large flat screen TV and generous donations from the "Friends of Dr. Darch & Partners", we have been able to install a Patient Information System in the Waiting Room.

The system has been devised to keep you up to date on the latest developments here with our appointment system, the many varied services we can offer such as travel clinics, chronic disease monitoring clinics, nurse led triage clinics, telephone consultations with your GP or the nurse, to name but a few.

The Patient Information System has been designed to complement the information provided on our website, not replace it – so, don't forget to keep checking www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk

We will also be using the system to introduce you to the staff who work here too – some of whom have been here for many years, others have joined more recently. Please take the time, whilst waiting for your appointment, to look at it. We are, as always, very keen to get constructive feedback on this or, indeed, any of the services we offer here at Totton Health Centre. Written feedback is particularly helpful for our consideration.



Access to your GP

As the patient survey has illustrated, our patients are generally very pleased with the service we offer. However, we are not perfect and some people are not able to access appointments when they wish to do so.

As you may be aware, there have been recent negotiations between the Department of Health and GPs to try and make access more convenient for patients. Whilst we, like many other practices, have some real concerns regarding the government's proposal, we do want to offer our patients the best access we practically can.

To this end, this practice has proposed a plan to the Primary Care Trust to provide extended hours, pre-booked appointments, at times when we feel (from feedback received) our patients will wish to access them. It is envisaged this new service will commence from early July. When final negotiations with the PCT are complete, details will be placed on our website – www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk . The plan will, however, be kept under review to ensure the extended hours opening is efficient.

PLEASE NOTE THAT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES OCCURRING:-

- 1. OUTSIDE OF OUR STANDARD MONDAY TO FRIDAY WORKING DAY OF 8 A.M. TO 6.30 P.M.**

and

- 2. ON A SATURDAY OR SUNDAY**

WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEALT WITH BY THE OUT OF HOURS SERVICE.



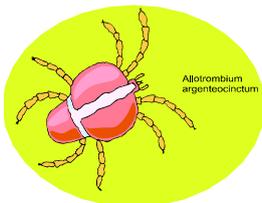
Minor Illness Management

Many conditions are self limiting and will get better on their own. Often, symptoms will resolve themselves after a few days and it may be that immediate medical attention is not necessary.

The GPs and Nurses at the practice are very happy to give advice over the phone. We will, of course, see you if we think that this is needed, or if there is doubt about a certain problem. However, a telephone consultation may be all that is required to give necessary reassurance and advice. This may save both you and the medical staff valuable time and leave appointments available for more urgent conditions.

The practice nurses run a clinic daily to help manage patients with relatively minor illnesses. This can prove efficient and helpful for certain conditions:-

- + Blocked ears
- + Earache
- + Conjunctivitis
- + Urinary Tract Infection
- + Insect and animal bites
- + Sore throat
- + Vaginal Thrush
- + Sinusitis
- + Impetigo or skin infections
- + Ticks



Seasonal Health Tip

Tick bites

are relatively common in the New Forest; only a minority lead to someone contracting Lyme disease. Remember:-

- Wear appropriate clothing in 'ticky' areas
- Inspect skin regularly and remove any attached ticks
- Remove ticks by gently gripping as close to the skin as possible with, for example, tweezers and pulling steadily away from the skin
- Creams, jelly or oils to cover an attached tick are not recommended
- Antibiotics are not routinely recommended after a tick bite
- A spreading red rash around the bite site 5-15 days after the bite may need medical attention

Health Centre Tips

To make the practice run more smoothly, there are often small items of information that are useful to know to help you access the service you require more efficiently.

- **Getting through to the practice on the telephone**

Monday mornings are by far our busiest time.

Please do not telephone for a routine appointment on Monday mornings; telephone later in the day or, if you can, on another morning.

- **Travelling abroad?**

Book a telephone appointment with the travel nurse as soon as you know you are travelling to check whether immunisations are needed or if travel advice is required.

- **Repeat Prescriptions**

Please would patients who are on more than one regular medication try to request all the drugs they need at the same time. If the medicines are 'out of step' with each other, please let your usual doctor know; they can easily sort this problem out for you.

- **Blood Tests**

The demand for blood tests is increasing. Unfortunately, even though we have a newly appointed phlebotomist, Jackie, these cannot all be done in the surgery. Blood tests can be done at Lymington Hospital or at Southampton General Hospital – details are on your blood test forms.

- **Hay fever Prescriptions**

You do not need a doctor's appointment for your annual hay fever medication. If you have had the scripts before, please drop your written request into the surgery or discuss it with your doctor by booking a planned telephone consultation.

- **Sun Burn and Health Risks**

Remember that sun burn can be harmful to your skin. Melanoma is a skin cancer that is thought to be related to excessive sun exposure over time and can occur in relatively young adults. A family history of melanoma is also a significant factor. Any changes in a mole may be significant – please report these to your doctor. Remember, sunscreens do prevent sunburn – use them liberally to prevent problems.



Thank you to "Friends" of Dr. Darch & Partners

Each year we are fortunate enough to receive many donations from patients.

We always endeavour to use the money wisely on equipment that will benefit, in some way, the majority of our patients.

During the past two to three years, we have received sufficient donations to purchase two electronic examination couches for the treatment rooms, ear syringing machines, an otoscope (for checking ears), a dermatoscope (to check skin lesions) and COPD meters for each consulting room (equipment for checking respiratory illness).

A big "thank you" goes to all those people who have so kindly donated money.

If you would like more information on "the Friends", please contact the Practice Manager.

CURRENT SURGERY OPENING TIMES

Surgery Opening Hours

Monday – Friday 8.30 am. – 6 pm.

(Except Monday lunchtime 1 pm - 2 pm.
when we are closed for staff training)

Emergency on call Doctor

available from 8 am. - 6.30 pm.

Home visit requests

please phone before 12 noon

Blood or other test results

please phone between 9.30 am. – 12.30 pm.

Repeat Prescriptions

require 48 hours to be processed. We do not accept prescription requests over the telephone unless the patient is infirm or elderly

TEL: 023 80 865051

www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk