Here’s to a happy and healthy 2013

W e hope everyone had an enjoyable Christmas break and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for 2013.

We must also say a big thank you to all our patients for the cards and presents that you so generously gave to the staff and doctors.

A new year is a great time to make a fresh start so if, for instance, you made a resolution to stop smoking then come in and see our nursing team, who are trained to find the best programme for you.

Looking forward, one of the commonest problems that we hear about is the difficulty people have in making appointments to see the GPs. It is very hard to get the balance between acute problems, that need to be sorted out as soon as possible, and less urgent appointments. At the same time, we also try to accommodate workers, carers, patients with transportation difficulties, patients who work away from Torquay and students and, as you might imagine, it is very difficult to devise a system that suits everybody.

However, in an effort to do so, we have early morning surgeries, which can be booked in advance, starting at 7:30am. We also encourage patients to sign in for our ‘Waiting Room’ service where they can request repeat prescriptions and make appointments up to two weeks in advance, on the internet.

Over the Christmas period we tried a system where the doctors routinely spoke to the patient before they were given an appointment. This meant that simple problems could be sorted out over the phone, thereby freeing up appointments for people who needed face-to-face time with a doctor.

Needless to say, we would appreciate any thoughts – good or bad – you might have about this initiative. The best way to communicate with us is through our email address, brunel.torquay@nhs.net, marking your correspondence for the attention of Dr Haugh.

Although we have only one telephone number [01803 312233], we have eight lines working off it between 8:30am and 9:30am when we do our utmost to answer the phones as fast as we can and deal with everyone in a speedy and efficient way.

W e welcome new patients who live within our practice area.

All newly registered patients will be asked to complete a health questionnaire and are offered a consultation with the doctor.

Medical treatment is available from the date of registration. Please contact reception on 01803 312233 should you require further information.

Facelift is put on hold

O UR surgery at Shiphay has been expanded and now boasts several new rooms, all with easy access for our patients including the disabled.

We had been hoping to spend some money decorating both the exterior and interior of our surgery at St Marychurch. Indeed, this had been a priority for this year but unfortunately we discovered that the chimneys required immediate and urgent repair.

Work has now commenced but the redecoration has been delayed. We can only apologise that our patients and staff at St Marychurch are having to use a building which is in need of a major facelift!

Register for our surgery

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Medical treatment is available from the date of registration. Please contact reception on 01803 312233 should you require further information.
Let us know your opinion

WE would love to know what we can do to improve our service to you and how you perceive our surgery and staff.

To help us with this, we are setting up a virtual patient representation group with members undertaking occasional email surveys on topics from opening times to the quality of care received and are looking for volunteers from as broad a cross-section of the community as possible, eg young people, workers, retirees, people with long-term conditions and people from non-British ethnic groups.

If you would like to get involved then please complete the form which is available via our website or, alternatively, contact a surgery.

Try out our health pods

HEALTH pods are now available at all of our practice sites – and, better still, you don’t even have to have an appointment booked to take advantage of this service!

Just call in today and ask one of our friendly receptionists for a token and their help on how to use the machine if you need it. The health pods will provide you with details of your height, weight, blood pressure, pulse and a small smoking questionnaire all on two handy print outs.

You are more than welcome to keep one of the print-outs for yourself – all we ask is that you hand one print-out to our receptionist with your name written on it so that we can update your medical records.

Support such a huge help

Brunel Patient Support Group assists patients in getting to appointments, as well as with shopping and befriending visits.

It also raises funds to provide things to make life easier for patients and staff. In the last 12 months, it has bought electronic couches for Babbacombe and St Marychurch surgeries and it is currently fundraising for the new stair lift at St Marychurch.

For more info on how to get involved or to use the service please contact co-ordinator Julie Gibbes.