

Skerryvore News

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TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONSULTING ROOM

If you have visited the surgery over recent years you will probably have noticed the growth in the number of computer bits and pieces cluttering our desks...are we secretly playing computer games between appointments? Actually no - surprisingly it is to do with providing good patient care.

What benefits are there?

One clear benefit is that the computer can help double check our prescriptions; there are thousands of potential reactions between different medicine combinations and the computer gives us warnings of problems that might not be obvious at first sight. The computer system has also got neater writing than most GPs (surprising but true!) which does help the chemist. As we develop the system we will be able to include more prompts for ourselves so that we are reminded of the many minor routine things that are easily forgotten. We are also able to access medical resources on the Internet; articles from recent medical publications and authoritative guidelines can also be a great help. All of this is no substitute for clinical judgement but is very useful.

What are the possible problems?

Well, sometimes the technology doesn't work and we have to go back to good old-fashioned pen and paper. This is becoming less common but it will be some time before paper records disappear completely. Some people find computers in the consulting room a distraction. As long as we don't let it dominate a consultation we shouldn't lose the personal feel of a consultation. Indeed it can free up time that in the past would have been taken up by writing out prescriptions (if you can hear above the noise of the printer!).

LAST YEARS FLU CLINICS

Over 600 flu jags were given to Skerryvore Practice patients last winter (OUCH) ... and the Skerryvore Darts team is in good form! Seriously, we were asked to offer influenza immunisation to all patients aged 65 and over, as well as those who had medical conditions for which influenza immunisation was advised.

955 patients were offered jags...

We did not feel the Health Centre had the capacity to cope with this, so along with Scapa Medical Group we "requisitioned" a room at the Pickaquoy Centre for several sessions through November 2000. This, we felt, offered adequate accommodation for the mandatory 20 minute recovery, adequate parking and even a cup of tea.

...over 600 accepted (the Flu jag!)

Most were given in plenty of time to protect against influenza throughout that winter. Feedback on the whole was good although a few didn't like the change.

Overall we felt it went well – What did you think. Could we do better?

DISTRICT NURSING CHANGES

Community Nurses in Orkney have now formed 3 teams, made up of mainland and island practices, each with a newly appointed Team Leader. The Skerryvore Practice team area is Skerryvore Practice, South Ronaldsay & Burray, Westray, Papa Westray and Shapinsay with Lynne Croy appointed as Team Leader who is District Nurse/Midwife.

Welcome back to Community Staff Nurse Moira Flett who has recently returned to work after the birth of her little girl, Emma who was born on 25 October 2000.

TRAINING DOCTORS IN SKERRYVORE PRACTICE

For several years Skerryvore Practice has played a part in the education and training of doctors who intend to work in General Practice. Earlier this year we were joined by Dr Rachel MacKenzie who had already completed her training for GP. She wanted to undertake further training to prepare herself specifically for practise in remote or rural situations and was successful in applying for a post as a "Rural Training Fellow". As part of her further training she joined Skerryvore Practice and will return to the Practice after her maternity leave.

Congratulations to Rachel and her husband Peter who had a baby girl called Kirsty on 22 April. They already have a little boy, James, aged 4, who is quite over the moon to have a baby sister.

Rachel is hoping to return to work around September and we are delighted to hear that she plans initially to spend a few more months working with the Skerryvore Team. However she is keen to get a broader experience of Orkney medicine by spending some time in some of the country and island Practices in the months ahead.

In August we will be joined by Dr Catherine Mangham, who will work with the Practice for one year to complete her training for General Practice. She has undertaken the earlier part of her training for GP in Aberdeen and we look forward to her involvement with Skerryvore Practice.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

If you have an appointment for either the Doctor or the Nurse and will be unable to attend, please, please, let us know in advance so that we can offer the appointment to someone else. Every month around 6 hours worth (9%) of surgery time is wasted by people not turning up for appointments. We usually manage to offer appointments very soon after patients request them and we work hard to keep up this level of service, so this waste of appointments is very frustrating.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY AEROPLANE TRAVEL

In recent months there has been a fair amount of media interest in so called "economy class syndrome". However, it has been known for many years that being forced to sit still in cramped conditions on long plane flights increases the risk of blood clots forming in the deep veins of the legs. This is often referred to as thrombosis. Although the symptoms may be mild, this can be a very serious condition and in extreme cases may even be life threatening. People most at risk are smokers, the overweight, pregnant women and those on certain drugs such as HRT and the pill. Don't be too alarmed, however, thrombosis is rare and there are simple ways to make air travel as safe as possible for yourself (without having to move from economy to first class!)

1. If you smoke, think about stopping
2. If you don't feel ready to stop smoking completely, at least try not to smoke on the day of travel
3. Avoid alcohol in flight, concentrate on drinking lots of soft drinks as the atmosphere in an aeroplane cabin can be very dehydrating
4. Consider wearing support stockings or tights, and this is not just for the ladies! (We can prescribe them if necessary)
5. Try to get out of your seat to move around as frequently as you can
6. While in your seat, move your feet and legs as much as possible, tensing and relaxing the muscles to keep the blood flowing
7. Taking ½ an Aspirin tablet before travelling may be helpful, but avoid this if you have had a recent ulcer or any bleeding problems

If you have any concerns about your fitness to travel, any of the Doctors would be happy to advise.

But above all relax and enjoy your holiday!

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR WEBSITE?

www.skerryvorepractice.co.uk

