

# TAYVIEW MEDICAL PRACTICE

## AUTUMN 2023 NEWSLETTER

### FLU & COVID VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

Patients who are eligible for either (or both) a Flu or Covid vaccination will be invited by NHS Scotland to attend a local vaccination clinic to have their vaccination(s) administered. Patients eligible should receive an invitation in the post. The practice is not involved in this campaign and, unfortunately, is unable to assist with the arrangement or changing of appointments. For further information, patients can visit [www.nhsinform.scot/winter-vaccines](http://www.nhsinform.scot/winter-vaccines).

### STAFF UPDATES

After over 20 years of dedicated service to Tayview, our Healthcare Assistant; Sandra, will retire at the end of October. A large number of our patients will know Sandra extremely well and I am sure they join us in wishing Sandra a very happy and enjoyable retirement.

After a year working at the practice, Mary-Jayne (Business Manager) left the practice during August. David Ramsay rejoins Tayview having been working at a practice in Dundee since March 2022.

Two new receptionists recently joined our Tayview team. Jorja and Vicki are currently proceeding through their training. We will also have a further three new receptionists join us during October and November and we are grateful to our patients for their patience whilst our new receptionists proceed through their induction and training.

### APPOINTMENTS

The practice provides a variety of appointments each day to our patient population. Our routine appointments are available to book at 1,2 and 7 days in advance and can be pre-booked by contacting the practice on 01382 543251. We also provide a limited number of emergency appointments which are available on the day if patients feel their medical condition is such that it cannot wait until our next available routine appointment such as a chest infection or other acute illness. Patients have the option of booking either a face to face appointment or telephone consultation based on their preference. However, our staff may suggest a particular type of appointment (such as a face to face appointment) if they feel your symptoms will require further examination from a GP, ANP or Practice Nurse.

### CALL RECORDING

Patients should note that their call to the practice may be recorded.

## EMAILS

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the practice had to adapt its procedures regarding access to the practice. At that time, the practice made more use of its email systems to enable patients to communicate with the practice. Although this was helpful at that time, the doctors decided that a review of the types of emails coming into the practice was necessary for safety reasons. Our email address is used by a large number of departments in both primary and secondary care to communicate with the practice. The number of emails being received from external agencies, patients and NHS colleagues means we have to now restrict the types of emails being received from patients. There is a safety risk that an email may be missed and our reception staff simply do not have the capacity to be responding to each email individually.

### **Patients can use our email address for the following reasons:**

- **To request an extension to their sickline (MED 3).** Please ensure you provide the practice with details as to how long you wish your MED 3 extended by. If a doctor declines to extend your MED 3, the practice will contact you and advise you of any action you need to take - such as arranging a GP appointment to discuss further.
- **To send in photographs that a clinician has requested.** Please do not send any photographs to the practice if they have not been requested by a clinician or a member of our reception team.
- **Any communication that a clinician has asked you to submit to the practice via email.** When submitting the communication, please clearly detail which doctor has requested the information to ensure that the information is passed to the correct doctor.

### **We no longer accept the following emails from patients:**

- **Registration forms to register with the practice.** These must be handed into the practice to ensure they are checked thoroughly. Unfortunately, we are experiencing a high number of registration forms being submitted incorrectly which results in reception staff having to make further contact with those patients to submit new forms.
- **Requests for private work** such as a to whom it may concern letters. The acceptance of private work requests was brought in during Covid. However, to ensure the practice is complying with GDPR, we have reverted back to our original process. This means patients should hand into the practice a written request for such private work detailing exactly what they require whilst ensuring they have signed the written request. Once our secretary has reviewed the request, she will contact you to advise you of any costs and how to pay for the request. Please note, such requests can take upto 28 days to process.

- **Requests for copies of records, specific test results, hospital letters are no longer accepted via email.** Such requests are known as Subject Data Access Requests (SDAR) and to ensure the practice is complying with its GDPR we require patients to complete a SDAR form which can be obtained from reception. The practice aims to action such requests 7 days after your request although we have up to 28 days to process such requests. If there is to be a delay to the 7 days processing, we will contact you and advise you as to when you can collect your SDAR.
- **Requests to arrange appointments are not accepted via email.** Such requests are unfair to patients who follow our procedures to arrange appointments (telephone) and the practice has never accepted requests for appointments to be arranged via email.
- **Complaints / Feedback will no longer be accepted via email.** Patients should submit any complaint or feedback in writing addressed to the Business Manager.

Our email system has an automatic reply in place to advise patients of the above. If your email has not been requested, or you are not requesting a MED3, your email will not be actioned.

### **ABUSE TOWARDS STAFF**

Sadly our staff are encountering increasing levels of abuse directed towards them. For the month of September, four patients were issued with warning letters regarding their abusive behaviour and one patient was immediately removed from our practice list following the police being informed. The practice adopts a zero tolerance approach to any form of abuse directed at our doctors or staff and such abuse can result in patients being removed from our practice list. Where this occurs, patients will need to register with an alternative practice.

### **TRAINING PRACTICE**

Patients will be aware that the practice has been a training practice for medical students for decades. We continue to be grateful to our patients for accepting an appointment with a medical student if this is offered. All medical students are overseen by a GP where they discuss your medical condition and best course of action. This helps medical students gain essential knowledge and skills to prepare them for their future career as a doctor.

From December, the practice will also become an accredited training practice for qualified doctors who are seeking to proceed with their training in General Practice. Every four months, the practice will receive a junior doctor who is proceeding through their training and we are grateful to our patients for accepting any appointments offered with our junior doctors who are overseen by a GP at all times.

## REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS & ORDER LINE (OPTION 4)

Following a review of our repeat prescription order line, the doctors have decided to disconnect this service at 18:00 on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October. The first and most important reason for this change is safety. We are receiving increasing numbers of discrepancies between what patients are saying they ordered on the line and what has been requested by our prescription officer. Mistakes are likely due to confusion with drug names or challenges with the quality of the recording. The second reason is workload and time. The practice is getting busier and busier with more and more people on repeat medication for ever increasing and complex conditions. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, it takes a significant length of time for our prescription officer to process prescription requests recorded on the line. That time can be better utilised in a safer manner by patients ordering their prescriptions using any of the methods below:

- Handing their repeat prescription slip into the practice or their local pharmacy.
- By attending the practice and completing a prescription request form.
- Registering to use our online services (Patient Access website). Forms are available from our practice website and can be emailed into the practice for processing.
- From Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October, we will also be activating an alternative online service. Rather than patients registering for the Patient Access service, patients will have the option of registering to order their prescriptions through our practice website. We will activate our website online service on the above date. This process does not require patients to be provided with pin numbers etc. By using this service, patients will receive notification at the time of their submission that their prescription request has been received by the practice. Patients under the age of 16 years of age will also be able to register for this service as the risk of confidentiality breaches are significantly reduced compared to the Patient Access service.

All prescriptions requests take two full working days to process. We understand patients can sometimes forget to order their prescription within a suitable time period however the practice is receiving increasing levels of requests for 'urgent' prescriptions due to patients not ordering in plenty of time. The doctors have provided our staff with a list of medications deemed urgent. If your medication is not detailed on that list, you will be advised that your prescription will take two full working days to process.

If your medication request is one of the medications detailed on the urgent list, you will be advised to return to the practice at 5pm to collect your prescription.

## HOW OUR PHONE SYSTEM WORKS

We have had a high number of patients informing the practice that their call can not be connected when they select an option on our phone system. We thought it would be helpful to advise patients as to how our phone system works.

When patients contact the practice, they will be provided with one of two messages:

- Message 1 - will advise patients that they have reached the practice and to select an option. This message allows patients to bypass listening to the full message as most patients know to select option 2 to seek an appointment. Patients feedback that they did not want to listen to the full message before selecting an option and we implemented this. When patients select an option, they will be placed in a queue (in the cloud). When the queue limit has been reached, patients will be advised that their call cannot be connected and to try again later. This means our phone system and queuing system is completely full and patients should attempt to phone again.
- Message 2 - will advise patients that all of our routine appointments are now fully booked and to contact the practice back the next working day for a routine appointment. We implemented this following patient feedback. Patients complained that they were left queuing in the system only to be advised that there were no appointments left when they finally spoke with a receptionist. This message notifies patients in advance in order to reduce any frustration caused by waiting in the queue only to be advised that all of our appointments are fully booked. Patients are unable to bypass this message and must listen to the message fully before selecting an option. The reason for this is to ensure patients are notified in advance that all of our routine appointments are fully booked. Again, if the queue is full, patients will be advised that their call cannot be connected and to try again later.

## TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE

Over the next couple of months, the practice will be upgrading the use of its text messaging service to communicate with patients. It is vitally important that the practice has an up-to-date mobile number for you. If you are unsure as to whether your mobile number is up-to-date, please ask a receptionist who will be happy to assist you further.

## PRACTICE CLOSURE

All practices in Fife will be closed on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November between 13:00 and 18:00 for staff training. NHS 24 will be providing cover and can be contacted on 111 if you feel your need to medical assistance is urgent in nature and cannot wait until we re-open at 8am on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. NHS Inform also provides a variety of helpful information regarding the management of medical conditions and can be viewed by visiting [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

The practice will also be closed on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December and Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> December of public holidays. Again, NHS 24 will be providing emergency medical care and can be contacted on 111.

As always, if you feel your need for medical assistance in life threatening in nature, you should dial 999 and request the ambulance service.

## PRACTICE WEBSITE & FACEBOOK PAGE

We are aware that both our practice website and facebook page has not been updated for quite sometime. During the month of October, patients will notice that our website will be updated to reflect up-to-date information. We will continue to make use of our facebook page. Patients can request to join our facebook page by searching for Tayview Medical Practice.

## CARE NAVIGATION

Care Navigation is a system used within NHS Scotland GP practices to ensure patients are directed to the most appropriate healthcare professional suitable for their medical need. This could be your local pharmacy, dentist, mental health practitioner, advanced nurse practitioner, practice nurse, minor injury unit, accident and emergency or other healthcare professional.

From November, our reception team will commence nationally recognised training in the area of Care Navigation. The training is provided through National Education for Scotland and the practice will close for a one hour period, once a week, to enable training to occur. We will detail those dates on our practice website and facebook page. Patients needing to speak to someone urgently during those one hour closures will still be able to contact the practice where a member of our practice team will assist you further. If your call is not urgent in nature, you will be advised to contact the practice back at the time it reopens.

## REGISTER FOR OUR NEWSLETTERS

If you wish to receive our quarterly newsletters directly to your email inbox, please email [Fife.F21609tayview@nhs.scot](mailto:Fife.F21609tayview@nhs.scot) and type 'Newsletter' in the subject box. You will then be added to our distribution list.