



SUMMER 2010 NEWSLETTER

CERVICAL SMEARS

Despite recent publicity, 17% of our eligible female patients have not had an up-to-date cervical smear test.

In the UK, 2800 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer each year. A smear test detects the early pre-cancerous changes in the cervix. Detection and treatment of these cells can prevent up to 75% of cervical cancers.

Routine screening starts at 25 years and will be 3 yearly up to age 49. From age 49, screening is 5 yearly up to the age of 64. If you have been called for a smear please don't delay in booking an appointment with the Practice Nurse. Alternatively the test can be carried out at the Dorchester Contraception and Sexual Health Clinic, 20 Trinity Street, Dorchester, Tel 0300 3031948. The best time for the test is in the middle of your menstrual cycle (between your periods) although anytime is better than not at all.

Please make time for this important test.

PATIENT LIFT

Our lift requires major repair work and unfortunately there is no quick fix. While the lift is out of action, we have taken the opportunity to upgrade the lift to ensure that it is compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act regulations and to ensure it is easily accessible to all our patients.

We cannot promise that it will be any faster but we hope to unveil our newly improved lift in the next few weeks.

When booking an appointment, please let reception know if you are not able to negotiate the stairs so that we can endeavour to make arrangements for you to be seen downstairs.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by this situation but appreciate your patience and understanding.

NEW ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBER?



Have you recently moved or changed your mobile/landline number?

It is important that we have your most up-to-date contact details.

Please inform reception of any changes.

STAFF CHANGES

Kate Harrison has been part of our Practice Nurse team since 1996 but has decided to retire this summer. She has been an excellent nurse and will be sadly missed by all her colleagues. **Jane Porter** will join the team as our newest Practice Nurse. You may have met Jane during her initial training period at the surgery. She will take on responsibility for her own patients in August.

Dr Charlotte Higgins is with us for a couple of months during her GP training and will re-join us as our GP Registrar in September as successor to **Dr Andrew Boyd**.

Isabel Apablaza and **Nichola Covil-Crawford** are new to our reception team. We are very sorry to lose **Rachel Fox** who has decided to move into a carer support role. We wish her all the best in her new career.

Emma Leese has recently joined the District Nurse team and we bid farewell to **Kate Cartwright** who will still be part of the team but will be working from the Atrium Surgery in Dorchester.

“HE’S BURNING UP DOCTOR”

Feverish (febrile) children are a great source of anxiety for most parents at some time in their children’s lives. Children rarely complain of feeling hot but more of the symptoms of temperature, for example headache, aches, feeling cold. Parents often describe the child as “burning up”.

Fever is a natural response by the human body to infection and is actually beneficial to the immune response. However, it is usually recommended to give medication to lessen the child’s symptoms. No fever-lowering medication will totally abolish the temperature but it will limit the rise.

Paracetamol and ibuprofen are the two medications commonly used in this country. Both are totally safe at recommended doses. Paracetamol is given 4-6 hourly per day with a maximum of 4 doses per day and Ibuprofen is given 6-8 hourly, 3 times a day with a maximum of 3 doses per day. It is not known whether giving one of these drugs alone or both of these drugs either together or alternating is best. Studies have not shown a clear advantage of one regime over another. Current advice is that you choose either paracetamol or ibuprofen in appropriate doses and switch to the other if the child does not respond.

SATURDAY SURGERIES

The surgery is open every other Saturday for pre-booked appointments.

A recent patient survey indicated that patients would like additional appointment times on Saturdays and are not aware that we already offer appointments at this time.

If you find it difficult to obtain a convenient appointment time during the week please ask reception if it is possible to make a Saturday appointment.

NOTICE FOR PARENTS

We have recently put a notice in our waiting rooms asking parents to keep young children under control in the surgery.

There have been a few instances of parents leaving young children unattended in the waiting room while they see the Doctor or Nurse for their appointment. The surgery can be a dangerous place for an unsupervised child who could wander into an unoccupied clinical area. We cannot take responsibility for any resulting accidents.

The Doctor or Nurse are happy for you to bring your children into the appointment with you and will normally suggest one of our staff looks after your child if there are any problems with this.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

If you are attending the surgery for a blood pressure check, it is a good idea to turn up 5 to 10 minutes early for your appointment so that you can rest in the waiting room before seeing the Doctor or Nurse.

Rushing or exertion can temporarily increase your blood pressure and can lead to an inaccurate reading.

HELP REDUCE WASTAGE

If you are no longer taking a medication, don’t forget to tell your pharmacist.

Any medicines ordered by mistake and not used cannot be reused and must be destroyed.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

A review of our appointments for June 2010 shows that our overall DNA (Did Not Attend) rate for GPs is 2% but that the rate for nurses is much higher at almost 10%. Whilst the rates for the GPs are encouraging, the number of people missing nurse appointments is a cause for concern due to the time wasted and the cost implications for the practice. Most importantly, this creates a longer wait for appointments and denies patients the ability to be seen sooner. A number of the nurse appointments are double (20 minutes) and if 3 of these appointments are missed in one clinic will constitute a third of the clinic time.

Please contact us as soon as you know that you will be unable to attend an appointment at the surgery. This will free up an appointment for another patient and help us to offer a more accessible service.

Patients who regularly miss their appointments will receive a letter from the practice and should this continue, are at risk from being removed from the practice list.

NATIONAL PATIENT SURVEY RESULTS FOR 2009/10

The results of the Department of Health National Patient Survey for the period April 2009–March 2010 were published in June. The full set of results can be accessed via our website www.queensavenue.co.uk in the Latest News section.

We are particularly pleased with our overall results and would like to thank the 237 patients who took the time to complete this lengthy survey.

The following is a selection of the survey results:

	Queens Avenue Results	PCT Results	UK Results
Overall satisfaction with care at the surgery	98%	95%	90%
Would recommend to someone who has moved to the area	97%	91%	84%
Helpfulness of receptionists	98%	96%	93%
Ability to get through on the phone	84%	76%	68%
Ability to see preferred Doctor always or most of the time	96%	85%	75%
How well the Doctor explained tests and treatments	88%	83%	78%
How the Doctor involved you in decisions about your care	84%	78%	72%
How the Doctor treated you with care and concern	94%	90%	84%
Did the Doctor take your problems seriously	92%	89%	83%
Your confidence and trust in the Doctor	99%	97%	94%
Ease of obtaining an appointment with the nurse	98%	95%	91%
Ease of speaking to a Doctor on the phone	48%	41%	25%

13% of the patients who responded thought we close at lunchtime. The surgery is open from 8.30am–6.30pm Monday to Friday and on some Saturdays for pre-booked appointments. We do not close for lunch.

43% of patients who responded think we do not open on Saturdays and 71% expressed a preference for Saturday opening. We open every other Saturday for pre-bookable appointments. If you are unable to book a convenient appointment during the week you may prefer to make a Saturday appointment. Please note that you may not be able to see your usual Doctor.

9% of the patients who responded were able to overhear conversations at reception and were not happy with this. We have a rolling plan of improvements for the surgery which includes the reception area and an aspect of this considers how we can make reception more confidential without losing the openness which we feel the patients value.