

TOTTON HEALTH CENTRE

Dr Wood & Partners

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2006

Tel: 023 8086 5051

Welcome to the first Totton Health Centre Newsletter!

Our aim is to keep you up to date with happenings within the practice and inform you of new initiatives we are taking to improve patient care and service.

We hope you find this newsletter useful and informative and that it enables you to understand the way we are trying to incorporate many of the new "health care initiatives" talked about so frequently in the press recently.

As a patient, if there is anything you would like to see included in future newsletters, let us know!

Appointments



48hr access and same day appointments

For many years, getting a GP appointment involved ringing up and booking an appointment with your chosen doctor in advance. Often though, this system meant that some GP's were fully booked for several weeks in advance. The situation was made worse because up to 10% of

patients did not attend for their booked appointments.

In order to address these problems and to meet government rulings, we introduced a system of advanced access in 2005. This meant that patients, with acute or chronic problems, could only ring on the day to book an appointment for the same day. A very limited number of pre bookable appointments were also available.

As doctors, we have been aware for some time that this system had its problems. On the plus side, the number of wasted appointments fell dramatically. However, as was clear from the results of our patient survey, many people found it difficult to contact the surgery first thing in the morning and those who have other commitments often need to organize their diaries in advance.

In order to try and resolve these problems, we have decided to use a mixture of the 2 systems in the coming months. We are increasing the number of pre-bookable slots (you can book up to 2 weeks in advance), whilst keeping about half the appointments for those patients needing urgent access to a doctor on the day. This system is being kept under active review.

We are trying to keep our flexibility, whilst offering fair access for patients.

NEWS FLASH! Our new website providing information about the practice is now up and running www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk

Choice & Book

The government has recently introduced a new system which allows choice to hospitals and other secondary care services.

The idea is that patients should have the choice where they would like to be referred.

In practice, this means that GP's are now being encouraged to use the **Choice and Book** system which gives you, the patient, a choice of certain 'providers' e.g. different hospitals/clinics.

These providers have been chosen by the Primary Care Trust, who have negotiated contracts with particular organisations.

What does this mean for you?

When your GP makes the decision to refer you for a specialist opinion, he/she can offer you the choice of providers and will discuss this with you at the time. Remember - we are offering you the choice!

Thinking of giving up smoking?

If you have been smoking for over 20 years, it is possible to check how it has affected your lungs with a simple spirometry test with the practice nurse. The result of this test may be your incentive to book an appointment with Trudy, our in-house Quitters advisor for individual quitters support and advice.



• Did you know



Telephone consultations

It is possible to have a telephone consultation with the GP or practice nursing sister for advice. Many situations can be dealt with over the phone. e.g.

- Seasonal antihistamine requests for Hay- fever medication
- Symptoms of a urinary tract infection (cystitis)
- Flu symptoms
- Sore throat symptoms
- Conjunctivitis
- Uncertainty whether you need to see a doctor or not.
- Uncertainty whether a home visit is needed.
- Certification for situations already under review

Telephone consultations are more time efficient, in many situations, for both you and us.

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Travel advice



You can obtain travel advice and immunisation treatment from the surgery. Ring as soon as you book your trip with details of your destination, your length of stay and dates of travelling.

Immunisations can be given.

We are also a registered yellow fever centre.

Cervical smears

Cervical smears are now routinely performed from age 25 years at 3 yearly intervals.

Above the age of 50 until 64 years, the time interval becomes 5 yearly.

These are performed to try and detect abnormalities that need monitoring over time and may need further treatment.

The aim of this screening programme is to prevent progression of these abnormalities to cervical cancer.

Please make an appointment for your smear when a reminder is sent.

Seasonal Health Tip



- epidemics commonly happen in the winter months

- usual symptoms include fever , malaise, muscle aches, non-productive cough and dizziness

- complications occur more frequently in the elderly and in 'at risk' groups

4,000 people die each year from flu in the UK.

Flu is usually self limiting - paracetamol, fluids and rest are recommended .

Avoidance of those who may be particularly vulnerable is also prudent.

Vaccination is the most effective way of preventing illness from influenza; this is best given in Oct/Nov and lasts for the duration of the winter.

At risk groups include >65yrs, those with asthma, chronic lung disease, heart disease and strokes, chronic renal disease and diabetic patients.

FLU CLINICs – include Saturday mornings 14th and 21st October

Book Now.....

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Pneumococcal immunisation



Strep. Pneumonia is a bacterial infection that can cause ear infections, sinus infections, meningitis and is the commonest cause of bacterial pneumonia after a bout of flu. It is particularly virulent in the very young and the elderly.

In the UK there are 5,000 cases of serious pneumococcal disease each year, with more than 50 children dying.

There is now a vaccine that can prevent these serious diseases which is given routinely in the surgery if you are over 65 years old or you are in an "at risk" group of patients that make you more prone to this infection.

Risk groups include patients suffering from severe Asthma or other lung diseases, angina or heart disease, chronic renal disease, strokes, epilepsy and those who have had their spleen removed.

The immunisation is usually a one-off immunisation. It is not to be confused with the annual flu vaccination.

If you are over 65yrs or are in any of the "at risk" groups, please make an appointment with the nurse for your jab!

If you are unsure whether you have had the pneumovax immunisation, please ask.

Nurse led clinics



Did you know that the Practice nurses offer a range of different clinics?

- Do you need advice, support and encouragement about the healthy way to lose weight?
- Do you need help to stop smoking?
- Do you need your annual asthma or heart disease check-up? A letter from the surgery will remind you when it is due.
- Is your diabetes well controlled?
- Do you need your warfarin level monitored?

Yes? Then, please contact reception to make an appointment with one of our nurses.

Contraceptive Services

At the health centre we offer contraceptive services ranging from the pill that you need to take on a daily basis, to longer acting contraceptives lasting up to 5 years such as the coil, the implant and the depo injection. Condoms are also available.

We are one of the few practices in the Southampton area who have several doctors trained to put in coils and Implanon.

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Car Parking at the Health Centre



Please note that the Health Centre car park is for staff permit holders only. In addition there are two clearly marked bays for blue badge holders.

Patients can “drop off” within the car park area, but no waiting is allowed.

Patients incorrectly using the car park will be asked to move.

Car parking is available in the two public car parks which are both within a short walking distance from the surgery.

Surgery opening times



We are open Monday to Friday between the hours of 8.30 a.m. and 6 p.m. (except Monday, when we are closed between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. for staff training).

The surgery telephone number is:
023 8086 5051 .

Monday mornings are always busy, so please avoid ringing then if you have a routine problem that could wait for another day.

Please phone the surgery with any home visit requests before 12 noon. This enables the doctors working that day to allocate the visits appropriately. If you are unsure if a home visit is required, please speak to the reception staff who will advise you. Again, a telephone consultation may help us to decide what action is necessary.

Please phone for blood and other test results between 9.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. each day. The reception staff will know whether you need to speak to a nurse or doctor to explain the results further.

Prescription requests need to be submitted at least 48hrs before they are needed, so that the doctor who issues your medication can be sure that this script is appropriate and correct.

Remember we do try and accommodate your requests for advice, appointments and visits.

We have a very committed team of doctors, nurses, reception staff, IT support staff and secretarial staff. We liaise closely with the health visitors, district nurses, midwives and the community mental health team.

Our aim is to provide you with a full range of medical services. We hope this holistic approach provides a good service to you and your families.

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Out of Hours Service

PRIMARY CARE TREATMENT CENTRES (OUT OF HOURS SERVICE)

An out of hours service is provided when the surgery is closed. This service is provided after 6.30 p.m. on weekdays, at weekends and on Public and Bank Holidays.

For emergencies between 6 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. on weekdays you should telephone the practice on 023 80865051 in the normal way and a message will inform you of the emergency contact number.

For emergencies after 6.30 p.m. on weekdays, during the weekend and on Public and Bank Holidays you will be able to access medical services by either ringing the practice number, 023 80865051, to obtain the emergency number or by ringing direct to the Out of Hours Care Service provided by the New Forest Primary Care Trust. The number is:-

**OUT OF HOURS CARE SERVICE –
0844 811 3060**

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USEFUL INFORMATION

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

Requests for repeat prescriptions can be made in person at the surgery or by post enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Please allow two working days for a repeat prescription to be issued excluding Saturday and Sunday and Bank Holidays.

Please ensure you inform us of any changes in your medication, so that we can keep our records updated.

To avoid errors, we only accept requests for a repeat prescription over the telephone from elderly and infirm patients.

Please note that the Out of Hours service will not provide repeat prescriptions.

SICK CERTIFICATES

You can self-certificate yourself for the first 6 days of any absence from work through illness. Self-certification forms are available from either your employer or any DSS office. They are particularly appropriate for minor illnesses which do not necessitate a visit to your GP.

It is also possible in some circumstances for your doctors to issue certificates without using up an appointment i.e. if you are already under care of the hospital. The receptionist will be able to discuss this with you; this may save both you and the Doctor time. Hospital doctors can, where appropriate, also issue certificates.

TEST & XRAY RESULTS

If you wish to enquire by telephone for a test or x-ray result, please do so between **9.30 a.m. and 12 noon Monday to Friday.**

In order to maintain confidentiality, results can only be given to the patient, or to the parents of minors. Please allow at least one week for a test result unless told otherwise; x-ray results will take longer.

Results will only be given to other people if we have the documented, expressed permission of the patient to do so.



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NHS Direct	0845 46 47
Walk In Centre, Shirley	02380 790000
Samaritans	02380 632888
Totton Police	02380 867911
Hospitals: Lymington	01590 677011
Princess Anne	02380 777222
Royal South Hants	02380 634288
Southampton Eye	02380 777222
Southampton Gen	02380 777222

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