**COLINTON SURGERY NEWSLETTER SPRING 2018**

Welcome to our Spring 2018 Newsletter. Firstly the whole team would like to thank all patients who generously handed in gifts at Christmas time, they were greatly appreciated.

**STAFF CHANGES**

***Doctors***

As many of you will have noticed there have been a number of staff changes over the past 2 years. Following the sad, but much deserved retirements of Drs Janet Oswald and Tom McMillan in late 2016 we welcomed Drs Alexandra Rolfe and Graeme Parry to the partnership.

Following a decrease in sessions by Dr Reid in October, we were joined by Dr Rebecca Shedden, (our previous registrar) as a salaried GP. We continue to support GP training and welcomed Dr Joanna Loudon in February who will work with us until August 2018.

The practice continues to host Year 4 University of Edinburgh medical students who are undertaking their GP rotations. If you do not wish to have a student in your consultation please let the reception staff know.

***Nurses***

Kirsty Yeung has joined the nursing team as well as Emma Dunlop as an additional Phlebotomist.

***Receptionists***

Following the retiral of Joyce Hobson after over 40 years with the NHS we have two new members of the reception team – Lynne Baxter and Emma Spencer, plus Emma Dunlop who also works as a Receptionist.

***Pharmacist***

We are also pleased to have a pharmacist, Kathryn Scott, attached to the practice. In due course she will be able to answer queries about medications and a message can be left for her at reception.

***District Nurses***

Our district nursing team, who are based in the building, are Gail Turner, Sarah Risk, Joanna Garforth and Barbara Mole. Last year saw the

retirement of June Whitehead after many years of service to the NHS. The district nursing team can be contacted by telephoning 441 9128.

***Health Visitors***

The Health Visitors, although based at Allermuir Health Centre, support clinics here. They can be contacted on 441 4704.

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

***Staff training***

To allow staff training, we will no longer take routine phone calls between 1245 and 1315 every Tuesday. The reception desk will remain open and an emergency line will be available.

***Text messaging appointment reminders.***

We have launched a text messaging service. If you opt in to this you will receive a reminder of your appointment two day’s before. A consent form for this service is available at reception. Please note that, for data protection reasons, this must be your *personal* phone number and the service cannot be used by those under 16.

 If you receive your reminder and cannot attend please let us know, even at short notice, to allow another patient to be seen. Last year there were 715 patient consultations wasted through non attendance.

***New Telephone System.***

The first stage of a new telephone system will be installed on Sat 17 March, so please bear with us on Monday 19th as we get used to it. The second stage will occur at a date yet to be confirmed (hopefully late April). For this second stage there will be no phone lines for a short time over a lunchtime, but you will be able to contact us via a special mobile number. More information will be put on our website and our phone messages in the run up to this date, once confirmed.

This second stage should provide you with more useful information whilst you are waiting to be connected and should improve the patient experience.

There may be initial teething problems on installation of both the first and second stage, so your understanding is appreciated.

***Flu vaccination campaigns***

We would like to thank our patients for attending last autumn’s successful immunisation programme

where 2845 people were immunised, including 77% of our over 65`s.

Uptake is lower for the under 65s who are eligible and we would encourage all in this category to attend our autumn flu clinics.

Pre-school children aged 2-5 are eligible for a flu vaccination in the form of a nasal spray and uptake is encouraged. Please note that this does have shorter shelf life than the adult vaccine so needs to be taken by the end of the calendar year.

Full details of next year’s flu campaign will be published by early September 2018.

***Snow Disruption.*** We would also like to thank our patients for their understanding during the recent heavy snow and in particular for all those who offered their support to us and to the local community during this difficult period.

***Chronic Disease Management – Birthday Month reviews***

We are changing the way we undertake our annual review of patients with long-term conditions such as COPD, Heart Disease, Thyroidism, High Blood Pressure etc. To make it easier for you to remember when the review is due, we would like you to undertake the annual review appointment in your birthday month. Please contact the surgery in the month of your birthday and arrange an appointment with a nurse and tell the receptionist what review you are attending for. We will no longer be sending out a reminder letters.

***Diabetic Patient Reviews****.*

Diabetic patients will notice a change in the format of their reviews, developed in liaison with the House of Care project. To involve you more in the process, you should receive the results of your tests *before* your review. This will give you time to consider your diabetes and decide what issues you wish to discuss in the consultation.

***Cervical Screening.***

Uptake of cervical screening has recently decreased. We strongly encourage all women aged

25 – 64 to attend the practice nurse for their cervical smear when sent a reminder.

***Bowel Screening Changes***

This test has been made easier to use. All patients aged 50-74 will now receive a simple *single* test to complete and send off. This will hopefully improve the uptake rate of screening for early detection of bowel cancer disease which is often treatable at an early stage.

***Travel Vaccinations***

There is currently a global shortage of Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccines. Only specialist travel clinics are being given these vaccines and then only for travel to endemic Hepatitis B areas.  **If you are travelling to an endemic area which requires Hepatitis B please arrange your vaccinations through a private specialist travel clinic. Rabies vaccine stocks are also currently limited.**

Please contact the practice **at least 8 weeks before** travel as you may need a series of vaccinations at different times.   **If you have less than 6 weeks before the date of departure** you will need to contact a private specialist travel clinic as **we do not have the resources to provide the appropriate vaccinations** within such a short time.

***Charity***

This year we are proud to support Maggie’s Centre, Edinburgh as our chosen charity. Maggie`s centres provide support and advice to individuals and their families who are affected by cancer. We chose this charity for the positive stories from our patients of the great support they provide and for those of us who have been personally affected by cancer. To raise money we will be participating in several activities this year.

We are holding a “Great Colinton Bake Off” staff competition over 4 days in Feb and March which are already proving competitive

On Sun 27 May we have entered 2 teams of doctors into the Edinburgh Marathon.

 Fri 27 April sees the Maggie`s kitchen table day and September 21st the Maggie`s culture crawl.

Our second hand book exchange in the reception area continues and a donation for Maggie`s for books taken would be greatly appreciated (collection box at Reception). Donations of books are always welcome, including children’s books.

If you are interested in Maggie`s and their work please view *www.maggiescentres.org*

If you wish to support the fundraising efforts of the practice we have a designated ‘Just Giving’ page at *www.justgiving.com/colintonsurgery* and we will keep you informed of our latest endeavours via this website.