

The Practice Post



Issue 4

Newsletter of Kirriemuir Health Centre

November 2010

Public Holidays and Protected Learning Time Dates

The surgery will be closed for training from 12.30pm on the following date

2 February 2011.

As usual, **NHS24** will be providing emergency cover on all these dates. Contact them on **0845 4242424**.

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Access to Appointments

The Practice has received the results of the national survey carried out on behalf of the Scottish Government around September last year. For this survey, letters were sent out to 422 people registered with the surgery. The survey asked questions about people's experiences during 2009/10 of making an appointment, visiting the GP surgery, seeing staff and being prescribed medicines. A copy of the survey questions is available at:
http://surveyresults.bettertogetherscotland.com/gp/GP_Survey_FINAL.pdf

The results were overall very positive and we thank the 199 people who responded.
If you wish to see the full results, go to:
http://surveyresults.bettertogetherscotland.com/gp/Recent_Positive_Results_key.pdf
We were delighted to hear that our "people skills" came out highly - as a Training Practice with responsibility for training doctors to become GPs, it is important for us to know that we are getting the right message across to our patients.

It is clear from the results that patients are comfortable that they can book an appointment within the next 48 hours, but many don't realise that they can book an appointment ahead. This newsletter gives us the opportunity to make sure people know that they can indeed ask for an appointment a few days, or even weeks, away.

We have tried to answer some of your common questions about how to use our services:

"I need advice fairly quickly because I feel unwell/am worried about something"

We have a commitment that, when you need help within 2 working days, we will give you access to a health care professional today or the next working day. This might be an appointment or a phone call. The appointment may be with a doctor or a nurse. The doctor you normally see may not be available within this time, but you will be offered an alternative who will have access to your records and will be able to see what "your" doctor has been discussing with you recently.

Occasionally, if you really wish to see a particular doctor urgently and nothing else that we have offered will suit you, you may be asked to phone back "tomorrow" at 8.30am when more appointments may be released for that doctor. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee that an appointment will then be available for you, as the appointments we "hold back" are intended for those with urgent illnesses that have suddenly developed overnight and must be dealt with as a priority.

"I want to book an appointment in advance – for when I get back from holiday, or to fit around my own commitments"

We try to have appointments for both doctors and nurses available **at least** two weeks in advance, and usually more like 4-6 weeks in advance. When you are phoning, please make sure the receptionist realises that you wish something in advance - they can sometimes be so busy trying to sort out appointments for "today" that they automatically offer these without checking what you actually want!

“Why do the receptionists ask so many questions when I just want to see the nurse?”

Our nursing team has different skills and experience, so we need to match up appointments with the right nurse for the job. Some procedures take 40 minutes while others take only 10 minutes. Please understand that our receptionists are just trying to find out enough to allow them to book the right appointment for you. It would help if you could let us know just a little about what you need - a blood test, or a blood pressure check, or a family planning check, for example. Our receptionists are under the same rules of confidentiality as all our clinical staff and would never divulge the reason for your attendance to anyone outwith the surgery. If you are uncomfortable talking about this at the reception desk, give us a phone or write a note to pass to the receptionist.

Practice Nursing Team

We have had a lot of changes in our nursing team over the past year, so this is our chance to introduce you to our team and what they can do for you.

Minor Injuries Service

Our nurses can assess and treat many minor injuries (falls, minor burns etc). If possible, phone ahead so we can arrange for you to be seen with minimal disruption to others. The nurses may call on the GPs for advice, or may ask you to travel to Whitehills in Forfar or Ninewells Hospital if your injuries require a more specialist service.

Gillian Henderson – Lead Practice Nurse

Gillian manages the team of nurses. She has expertise in helping patients with asthma and COPD and has wide experience of Practice Nursing. She is currently undertaking training to become a Nurse Prescriber, which will allow her to issue prescriptions appropriate to the care of the patients she sees. Gillian undertakes annual reviews on patients with asthma, COPD, diabetes, hypertension or long-term mental health problems, in close co-operation with the GPs.

Mary Edgar – Senior Practice Nurse

Mary is the longest-serving member of the team and has a wealth of experience. She deals with patients who require regular INR blood checks for their warfarin medication, and offers travel health care and treatment of warts. Mary undertakes chronic disease

reviews. She also helps the Health Visiting team by undertaking child immunisations.

Mary and Gillian also offer the normal range of Practice Nursing duties.

Gill Ramsay – Practice Nurse (Treatment Room)

Gill is our newest recruit and comes to us from Ninewells where she nursed in many varied wards. She is now being trained in Practice Nursing duties. She currently undertakes blood tests, ECGs, new patient checks, and dressings. This list of duties will expand in time following further training.

Geraldine Wilmhurst – Health Care Assistant

Geraldine assists the trained nurses and carries out basic nursing tasks under their supervision. She offers appointments for blood tests, blood pressure checks, ECGs, weight checks.

“Positive Pathways” towards wellbeing

This joint venture between Angus Volunteer Centre, GP practices and Angus Mental Health Services was launched in February. This exciting new development is aimed at supporting emotional health and wellbeing. The local project worker, Lynne Orrock, is employed by Volunteer Centre Angus with support from Angus Mental Health Services. She works with people who are identified by their GP as stressed and struggling to cope with the demands in their life.

The project will help people learn effective ways of coping with stress and link them to organisations that can help them to change the stress factors in their lives. It aims to involve people in learning or creativity and have social supports. Kirriemuir has many things going on to help people to live their lives to the full, but sometimes it can be difficult to make the first step. The Positive Pathways project is unique in the way that it builds bridges between all the different parts of the community.

For access to this service, talk to your GP or nurse who can assess your needs and refer you if appropriate.

Training GPs at Kirriemuir

We are involved in training doctors to become GPs, and also sometimes support the training of medical students on their paths to becoming a doctor.

Dr Chris Urwin was with us for 3 months in his first steps to becoming a GP. Drs Victoria Brown and Karen Nicholson will be joining us again in January part-time following their maternity leaves, both in their final year of training (Registrar year).