



THE VILLAGE PRACTICE

PATIENT NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2015

Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2015. We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. We know it seems a long time ago now, but thought it would cheer you up knowing Spring is just around the corner.

Appointments

Please note routine Doctor's appointments are for **10 minutes only**. Could we also remind you to cancel any appointments you are unable to attend so that we can offer your appointment to other patients.

One hundred hours of Doctor, Nurse and Admin time were wasted during 2014 by patients who did not attend.

This is an increasingly big problem in General Practice as appointments are at a premium and these could have been used by other patients. To continue to maintain our standards with regard to access, please make an extra effort to try and cancel appointments with the Nurses especially as these tend to be more than 10 minutes.

Some patients may be aware that you are now able to book appointments online. If you wish to use this service, please ask the Receptionist for a form to complete. You will need some form of ID to show to the Receptionist.

Repeat Prescriptions

Please allow **48hours** from ordering your prescription before collection. Reception Staff are unable to take prescription requests over the telephone, as mistakes can easily be

made. **You may wish to know that you are now able to order your prescriptions online. Should you wish to do this, please ask one of our Receptionists to give you a form, to complete.**

Should you have any problems with online booking of appointments or ordering prescriptions, there is an email address you can contact for help. This is: www.patient.services@inps.co.uk

Saturday Opening

Some patients may not be aware but our GP's hold a Saturday morning surgery for patients who cannot get to the surgery during the week. These are held on alternate months for each GP and are from 09.00-11.00am. **Please note there are no Nurses present.**

Advance Notice of Practice Closure



Fri 3 April	Good Friday
Mon 6 April	Easter Monday
Mon 4 May	May Day
Mon 25 May	Spring Bank Holiday
Thurs 4 June	Target Day

The Out of Hours service will be covering the Practice on these days and they can be contacted on **111**, should anything arise that cannot wait until the surgery reopens.

Please note this number is not for emergency situations. Should you have an emergency you should contact 999.

Please be aware that because of the Bank Holidays there may be less available appointments than usual as we would like to give priority to the more serious conditions immediately after the holidays. We would

therefore be most grateful if you could delay making your routine appointments until after this period. Thank you.



Website

You will be pleased to know that we now have a website available for you to visit. This holds various information about the surgery. Here you can find the results of our 2014/15 Patient Survey under Patient Questionnaire. The website address is:

www.thecowplainvillagepractice.net

Contact Details

Please can you let us know if your contact details change. When you change your mobile or home phone number we appreciate your first thought isn't to let your Surgery know. However, from time to time we might have to speak to you urgently and this is very difficult if we do not have an up-to-date telephone number. A land line, mobile number, or both, is very helpful. Please check your details with a Receptionist at your next appointment.

Test Results

Please ring the surgery after 1pm when the telephone lines are likely to be less busy, to get your results.

Do you really need to go to A&E?

Save the NHS money and yourself a journey. Try giving us a ring first to see if we can help or try the new NHS Helpline number **111**.

A great deal of money is wasted in the Waterlooville area by people attending A&E inappropriately. Each time someone goes to A&E, regardless of whether they wait to be

seen, it costs the NHS a minimum of £59.00 and more often at least £87.00.

A&E is what it stands for - **Accident and Emergency**. A visit to your GP costs a fraction of a visit to the A&E Department and you will often be seen sooner!

Your GP

On an average day your GP will see between 30 - 40 patients in the surgery, undertake

home visits and carry out anywhere between 5 - 20 telephone consultations.

We are not perfect and are always seeking to improve our services to meet your needs but we need your help and support.

If you need to see a Doctor and it is outside of our normal operating hours then telephone 111. Local chemists are also well placed to advise on healthy living and minor ailments.

There are some good websites which give excellent information for patients and help with symptom checking. Try www.nhs.uk or www.patient.co.uk

HEALTH ISSUES

Pneumococcal Vaccine

We would like to remind all patients over the age of 65 that they are entitled to a free pneumococcal vaccination. For most people this is a one off vaccination designed to help prevent a common type of pneumonia and to keep you from having to go into hospital in the future. If you would like this vaccine please book an appointment with our Nurse.

Hay Fever

Please remember that tree pollen can become a problem as early as April – it is therefore best to prepare beforehand for this eventuality.

Effective treatments are available, without prescription, from pharmacies at a much **LESS** price than a prescription. If you do require medication on prescription, and you have had it before, you can request it from Reception. Simple measures to try and reduce pollen exposure are:

- Stay indoors as much as possible and keep windows and doors shut
- Avoid cutting grass, large grassy places and camping
- Shower and wash your hair after being outdoors (especially the countryside)
- Wear wrap-around sunglasses when you are outside
- Keep car windows closed and consider buying a pollen filter for the air vents in your car
- Avoid drying your clothes and bedding outside on a washing line

From April, Nursing Staff will now have a "Health Board" which will be in the lobby area. This will provide you with information on various health issues and will be updated on a monthly basis.



Travel Vaccinations

If you are planning a holiday abroad and think that you may require travel vaccinations or malaria prevention medications please complete a travel health questionnaire – these are available from reception. Also it would be appreciated if you could book at least a month in advance for a Travel Clinic appointment.

Sun Safety



Most skin cancers are caused by over exposure to UV radiation from the sun or sunbeds. Whether you are at home or abroad, use shade, clothing and SPF15+ sunscreen applied generously and regularly to protect your skin and wear sunglasses.

Protecting Children:



Young skin is delicate and very easily damaged by the sun. All children, no matter whether they tan easily or not, should be protected from the sun. Studies have found that sunburn during childhood can increase the risk of skin cancer later on in life. This is why it is important to ensure that children stay safe in the sun.

- ✓ Keep babies in complete shade – under trees, umbrellas, canopies or indoors. Provide shade for prams and buggies, if possible
- ✓ When outdoors, protect a baby's skin with loose-fitting clothes, and a wide-brimmed hat that shades their face, neck and ears
- ✓ Buy good quality, wraparound sunglasses for children as soon as they can wear them
- ✓ Apply a high-factor "broad-spectrum" sunscreen to all areas that cannot be protected by clothing, such as the face, ears, feet and back of hands
- ✓ Don't forget school play times and lunch breaks on summer school days.
- ✓ Give children a hat to wear and, and if they can't apply sunscreen at school, cover their exposed skin before they go.

If you require further travel health information please see the NHS Fit for Travel Website: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

One last thing, if you go to www.nhs.uk you will be taken to the NHS Choices website. Here you are able to register what you think of the Practice, eg staff, the premises, things you feel can be improved on, anything you wish.

Any thoughts or ideas would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, Regular patients to the surgery may have noticed that we have a new Receptionist, Vicki who started in January. We hope you will join us in welcoming her and wish her a long and happy stay.

All that remains is to say we hope this Newsletter has provided you with some worthwhile information.

Have a wonderful springtime!



A LITTLE EXTRA TO MAKE YOU SMILE

The Grim Reaper came for me last night, and I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death

Doctor, Doctor! I have a virus that makes my left hand constantly butter toast. How can I stop it spreading?

I went back to the Doctor today. I said "I applied the pile cream that you gave me this morning and I got a very nasty reaction." "Where exactly did you apply it?" he asked. "On the bus" I said

A cosmetic surgeon recently set up surgery in town. He raised a few eyebrows.