

Dr S J Godfrey & Partners

at

TOTTON HEALTH CENTRE

Newsletter Spring 2010

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Hopefully, the cold snowy days of winter are behind us now and we are looking forward to warmer and more settled times ahead. We remain a busy and thriving practice. Our team of doctors, nurses and administrative staff strive to provide an accessible and responsive service for all patients - responding to the changing health needs of our patients and reacting to the political changes that seem to be thrust upon us – almost daily (or so it seems on occasions!).

With the economy still in a precarious state and solutions to the national debt looming on the horizon, the financial pressures within the health service are beginning to mount and services are stretched to the limit. As a practice, increasingly our activities are being analysed and our actions being questioned – referral rates, attendances to A+E, hospital admissions and so forth – the list is increasingly lengthy. Comparisons are being made between practices and between different localities in Hampshire, to try and modify inefficient use of health resources and encourage best practice.

As a practice, we relish this challenge and will not only do our best to continue providing good health care for our patients, but also strive to improve the services we offer, even in these difficult and financially constrained times.

To this end, **don't forget** to look under the sections below headed up “**Prescriptions**” and “**Nurse Practitioner**”. We are delighted to be offering soon, two new services – re-ordering repeat prescriptions via the internet and an additional clinician for you to see! Also in this edition is information about our new “**Patient Participation Group**”.

Finally – and very important - can we remind all our patients
that you can book appointments up to two weeks in advance.

Please remember that we also offer
pre-booked evening appointments on a Monday and Tuesday and
pre-booked appointments on some Saturday mornings.

Please telephone the surgery for further details.

www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk

SWINE FLU



Pandemic H1N1 influenza results in a predominantly mild illness for most people, but clinically at-risk groups, pregnant woman and young children are at higher risk. Vaccinations of these groups to prevent complications, hospital admission or even death remain a priority for future outbreaks of the disease.

We are, therefore, still actively seeking to immunise these groups as vaccination does provide the best protection against complications.

Vaccination is recommended in:

- Those patients over 6 months of age who are in a clinical at-risk group e.g. with asthma, diabetes, heart disease, COPD
- Pregnant women
- Those who live with an immuno-compromised patient

Please make an appointment for your swine flu immunisation if you are eligible. The nursing team have done a sterling job with the flu immunisations this year but they are still very keen to maximize vaccination uptake.

Pneumococcal Vaccination

Remember, pneumococcal vaccination protects patients from the most common form of bacterial pneumonia and even meningitis.

Those who are over 65 years old or in any 'at risk' group – with heart or respiratory diseases for example - are more prone to this infection.

This is **not** the seasonal flu immunisation. It is a one-off, lifelong, immunisation.

Ask the practice nurse if you are unsure if you qualify for this vaccination.

BOOK IN TODAY.

Prescriptions

Getting your prescriptions quickly, accurately and efficiently is important for both you and us. Each week we deal with approximately 3,500 item requests. We endeavour to deal with repeat script requests within 2 working days. Please remember to put in your repeat script request in good time - **before** you run out of your medication!



It would surprise you how many scripts end up having to be processed 'as an emergency' by the same individuals because of lack of foresight and planning!

And, please **HELP US TO AVOID WASTE** when requesting repeat prescriptions for your medicines; please only order those items you actually need. Please **do not** stockpile medicines at home! **Please notify us if some medications on the repeat scripts are no longer required.**

Please tell us if the time of ordering different tablets on the prescriptions do not tally - your usual GP should be able to sort this out for you.

Repeat script requests can be put into the letter box outside the surgery. This may save you waiting around on your way to work for the surgery doors to open or, even, enable you to pop the script request in at the weekend.

NEW SERVICE NEW SERVICE NEW SERVICE
..... ORDERING REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS VIA THE INTERNET

We are shortly launching this exciting new service for our patients. You will be able to request your repeat prescriptions using the internet. Just log on to our website www.tottonhealthcentre.co.uk and follow the link to "Repeat Prescriptions".

This link will take you to an on-line form hosted on a secure website. Once you have completed this form you can submit it to the practice (a bit like sending a very secure e-mail). The more time you can give us to complete your request, the better. However, as with our paper requests, we will endeavour to complete them within two working days (this excludes Saturday, Sundays and all bank and public holidays).

Just as with the existing paper based system, you will be able to specify on the form if you would like a particular pharmacy to collect your script for you.

Hopefully, this will lead to a more streamlined and efficient service for you – our patient.

As with any new service, there are bound to be some teething troubles. Please be patient with us and do not hesitate to let us know how we could improve the new system to make it more user friendly.

DO YOU USE THE PATIENT CHECK IN MACHINE???

It's easy to use, can save you time and free up the receptionists to answer patient queries and deal with prescriptions. If you don't know how to use the "check in" screen, please ask one of the reception team to show you.

NEW SERVICE ... NEW CLINICIAN ... NURSE PRACTITIONER - PILOT PROJECT

We are delighted to announce that mid April will see us offering an additional clinician for you to see on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning.

An experienced Nurse Practitioner will be joining our nursing team; her main task will be to assist the Duty Doctor by seeing patients who have urgent, "on the day" problems.

Initially, we plan to have a three month pilot of this new way of working, to ensure the service helps us meet day to day patient need.

During the pilot, your constructive feedback would be welcome and valuable.

If successful, it is hoped this service will be offered each morning on a daily, long term basis.

Dr. Godfrey & Partners Patient Participation Group

An exciting new group is in the process of being formed to represent patient issues within our surgery. It is anticipated this group – made up of patient volunteers and practice staff - will meet independently to help improve their own, and your, primary care.

These groups often make an important contribution to the well-being of their communities. Their activities may include health promotion, information provision, service delivery, fundraising and strategic input to the practice.

We hope to bring you further information about the PPG in the forthcoming months.



Carers

A carer is someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who could not manage without their help. This could be due to age, physical or mental illness, addiction or disability.

The term “carer” should not be confused with a care worker, or care assistant, who receives payment for looking after someone.

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 carrying out significant caring tasks and assuming a level of responsibility for another person, which would normally be taken by an adult.

Anyone can become a carer. Carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be of any age.

Many carers do not consider themselves to be a carer; they are just looking after their mother, son, or best friend. They just “get on with it” and do what anyone else would in the same situation.

Carers don't choose to become carers, it just happens. In many cases, if they did not do it, who would and what would happen to the person they care for?

At Totton Health Centre, we estimate that there are up to 1,000 people who could be classified as a ‘carer’. Why is it important to know if you are a ‘carer’? What benefits might this information be to us and you?

If you feel you are a ‘carer’, please let your doctor or practice nurse know. Knowing this can help us to help you access a number of different services which may make your life easier – help keep you healthy, provide support, information on access to any specific benefits, have assessments for home adaptations – the list is a long one. Small changes can make a big difference e.g. getting your prescriptions sent to your usual chemist or delivered to your home. It may make a trip out, leaving your ‘cared for’ friend or spouse unnecessary, and negate the difficult logistics that a journey out often entails.

Local organizations which can be particularly helpful are listed below:

CARERSTOGETHER 9 Love Lane Romsey 01794 519 495

CARERSUK 01962 842 034 68 St Georges St, Winchester

[Carers.org/help-directory/](https://www.carers.org/help-directory/) and click on link Help for Carers from Carers.org

This is a very helpful link for benefits, respite, travelling and employment queries



Practice Based Commissioning

The three Totton practices have continued to work together over the past year to try and make services more accessible and available to you. The drive has been to look at patient experience, clinical evidence and GP activity and see where resources could be used more effectively and efficiently. Projects we have been involved with have included:

- Helping those patients with severe pulmonary airways disease access pulmonary rehabilitation to improve their quality of life;
- Looking at the “End of Life” systems in each practice, with a view to standardizing care for all patients nearing the end of their life;
- Piloting a Teledermatology service, whereby patients can have an informed specialist opinion in the first instance to help the GP manage them in primary care;
- Reviewing GP referrals to hospital specialists to try and see if there are any consistent, alternative pathways that may be developed in the future;
- Looking at emergency admissions to hospitals to see if these could have been managed in any other way, so as to have avoided admission.

Feedback from patients who have used any of the services mentioned above or have been involved in any of the service changes is always welcome.

Seasonal Health Tips

ANTIHISTAMINE REQUESTS

You do not need a doctor's appointment for antihistamines if you have had them before for seasonal hay fever – please send in a written request.

WEIGHT LOSS and DIETING

3 TOP TIPS

- Cut your meal portion size by a third – this can be helped by using a smaller plate to serve the food
- Walking up to 10 000 steps per day
- Only snack on fruit

If you followed these tips, we would be surprised not to see a useful reduction in your weight over 4 weeks.

STRONG BONES

Regular weight bearing exercise e.g. walking is good for maintaining good bone strength as we get older.

Taking vitamin D and adequate calcium is also important. Vitamin D is obtained through exposure to sunlight –alternatively 2 cod liver oil tablets taken daily are a good substitute.

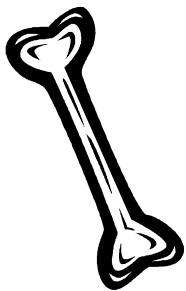
Calcium from milk and its products e.g. cheese, is also important.

TICK BITES

Remove ticks gently from the skin.

You do not routinely need antibiotics after a tick bite, but an evolving red rash around the tick bite over days needs to be seen.

Please **do not** smother the tick with Vaseline etc.



Practice News



We are very pleased to announce the safe arrival of Dr. Helen Fleet's baby daughter, Josie Emma. Josie weighed in at 7lb 9oz on 28th January. Congratulations to both Helen and Paul.

We now wish her a happy and enjoyable maternity leave and will look forward to welcoming her back in the summer months.

As many of you know, we are very fortunate to have Dr Lisa Manalang, who has worked as a locum for us in the past, covering Dr Fleet's maternity leave.

"FRIENDS" of Dr. Godfrey & Partners

As a practice we are, from time to time, fortunate enough to receive cash and equipment donations.

As an example, patients who have visited the surgery will have seen the television screen, which is used daily to display patient information. This television was very kindly donated by Asda Stores of Totton.

We were also extremely fortunate to receive from Testwood Working Men's Club a Hyfrecator electro surgery unit. For those who have never heard of such a thing, it is a device used to arrest bleeding during minor surgery! Having this piece of equipment enables our minor surgery GP to undertake procedures in the practice, rather than patients having to go to hospital.

All cash donations are used to purchase equipment which will benefit our patients.

During the past eighteen months we have received almost £3,000. From this, we have been able to purchase two electronic treatment couches, a phlebotomy chair and trolley, a nebulizer and several other small items. All this equipment is in daily use within the surgery.

Sincere thanks go to all the "Friends" from the partners and the practice team for their interest in our practice.

CURRENT SURGERY OPENING TIMES

Monday – Friday 8.30 am. – 6 pm.

(Except Monday lunchtime 1 pm - 2 pm - we are closed for staff training)

Monday and Tuesday evening surgeries
Monthly Saturday morning surgeries

Emergency on call Doctor

Available from 8 am. - 6.30 pm.

Home visit requests

Please phone before 12 noon

Blood or other test results

Please phone between 9.30 am. – 12.30 pm.

Repeat Prescriptions

Require 48hours to be processed. We do not accept prescription requests over the telephone unless the patient is infirm or elderly

PLEASE NOTE:
MEDICAL EMERGENCIES OCCURRING OUTSIDE OUR STANDARD WORKING HOURS
CONTINUE TO BE DEALT WITH BY THE
OUT OF HOURS SERVICE ON TELEPHONE NUMBER
0844 811 3060

Patients views and comments?

Ideas

Comments

Brainwaves

Compliments

If you have any constructive comments that may help us improve our service, please let us know by either writing to us or completing one of the “Comments” Slips provided in the surgery.

We will be receptive to all your comments and suggestions; they will help us shape our services in the future.

Thank you.

TELEPHONE: 023 80 865051

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