

St Albans Medical Centre  
July 2015



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**FLU CLINICS – SAVE THE DATE!!!!**

Our flu vaccinations will be offered this year on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October in the morning and Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October in the afternoon. More information will be made available in the surgery nearer the time. Please make a note in your diary or on your calendar.

We are going to try a system of PRE-BOOKED appointments, to help avoid the peaks and troughs that we have experienced on Flu Days in the past.

This should decrease your waiting time at the practice before you have your vaccination.

**NEWSLETTERS**

## **Everyone has a named GP**



The principle behind having a named GP for a patient is that there is a GP in the practice who will coordinate the care of that patient. Where necessary, this will mean "working with associated health and social care professionals to deliver a multi-disciplinary care package that meets the needs of the patient".

All patients at St Alban's Medical Centre have a "named GP". This practice has worked on the named GP / usual GP system for many years; it helps us give continuity of care to patients, especially to those with complex health needs, chronic medical conditions or those whose ill-health is under investigation.

You continue to have the choice to see any member of the practice team, depending on the reason for your appointment. (Read about our Nurse Practitioner / Nurse Triage service, later in this newsletter.)

If you do not know who your usual GP is, please ask at Reception – they will be able to tell you.

### **New vaccinations**

As often happens, the media have information on new vaccination campaigns before the practice are fully informed!

We know that there will be a new vaccine for babies to protect them against Meningitis B (the first vaccine will be at 2 months, with a booster at 4 and 12 months of age). This fits in with the current immunisation cycle so will not involve an extra trip to the surgery. This vaccination schedule will be for eligible babies from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

You may have also heard that there will be a vaccine for teenagers, who will be offered the ACWY vaccine. This protects against four strains – Meningitis A, Meningitis C, Meningitis W and Meningitis Y. This vaccine has been available to travellers privately for some time, but is being introduced due to a particularly nasty Meningitis W strain that is prevalent at the moment. For most young people, this vaccine will be given at school. The practice will be offering a catch up campaign for any young person aged 18 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 or for University freshers.

If you want any more information on Meningitis and the proposed vaccination programmes, visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/Meningitis](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Meningitis).

Please let us know if your children miss out on vaccinations in school – we may be able to help. One specific example is the HPV vaccination for teenaged girls – let us know if your daughter has not been able to have the full course done in school, and we will arrange for vaccination at the surgery – we only hold a small stock of vaccine, so you may need to wait for a week or two for the appointment.

## **Staff News**



Dr Aziz and Grace Oke have left the practice. We wish them well in their futures.

We are managing these staff shortages with locums and various members of the team working extra sessions, whilst we look for the right staff to join us.

Our new reception team is gelling well. The ladies who have left are all enjoying their new-found leisure time. The new faces are Mary Cameron, Sharon Bailey, Carol Pickford and Angie Hulbert.

We have a rigorous training programme covering all the many aspects of the role – believe me, there is a lot to learn!

Each new receptionist has completed the full course, including instructions for how to manage situations that only crop up infrequently.

Please continue to let Jackie (Reception Manager) know if you have any concerns or if things could have gone better – we need your feedback to help identify where additional training is needed.



### **New prescription process**

The practice is preparing to “go live” with the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) (our Go Live date is 30<sup>th</sup> September). This allows our practice to transfer prescribing information direct to a patient’s selected pharmacy without the need for printing off the actual prescription. You still request and collect your prescription in person if you prefer.

We do run a very tight prescribing system, but this will help us to be able to identify where a prescription is with absolute confidence. This will reduce the amount of time we have to spend on tracking down where a prescription or faxing over prescriptions that cannot be located and are needed urgently by the patient.

Once the system is up and running, we will be able to check the status of your prescription for you, using a Prescription Tracker. That will tell us if the prescription is with your pharmacy and whether the items have been dispensed.

If you already have an arrangement with a particular pharmacy, you do not need to do anything. Your repeat prescription ordering slip may look slightly different, but otherwise you shouldn’t notice any change.

If you currently collect your prescriptions but would like to

use the new EPS system, just tell your usual pharmacy. They may ask you to complete a nomination form. You can only nominate one pharmacy for medication. (If you have medical supplies such as stoma or continence products, you can have a second nomination provider just for these products.)

### **Prescription Clamp-down**

The Doctors have decided we need to reduce the number of telephone requests for medication. We obviously make exceptions for certain patients who cannot use our other order methods.

It is not good practice to take telephone requests because:

- Drug names sound very similar and the wrong medication could be issued by mistake
- Taking telephone queries interrupts the work that the prescription clerk was doing; that could lead to errors

Please order in writing, via EMIS Access or by email to [sa.prescriptions@dorset.nhs.uk](mailto:sa.prescriptions@dorset.nhs.uk)

### **Do It Online!**

We get a lot of good feedback about the online service, which is provided on a secure link through our system supplier. The system allows you to book and cancel appointments, check appointment times, order prescriptions and view core medical information such as your immunisation history, allergies and key medical problems.

All of this information is extracted direct from the

surgery’s records so there should be no transcription errors – if you spot anything that is not correct, let us know and we can make changes.

Users of EMIS Access have told us that what they like about the system:

- I can go online at a time that suits me
- I can request my regular medication when the surgery is closed
- I can see at a glance which doctors are available when so I can choose the right appointment for me
- I don’t need to phone to make an appointment, which is really helpful to me.

You need your own log in details to use the system. Because the information is of a confidential nature, we ask that you provide some form of photo ID to confirm your identity. Just ask at Reception if you want to sign up.

### **Have your say – ways to get involved**



There was an article in the January newsletter about giving feedback, introducing the Friends and Family Test and other ways to let us know your opinion of our services.

If you have a bit more time to offer, you may wish to become a

member of the Patient Participation Group (PPG). The group helps the practice team to decide key areas of focus for patient services. This year, we are looking to review our nursing appointment system, promote use of online services, and also to look at ways to improve our communication with patients for whom English is not their first language.

Our other aim is to try to get more members of the PPG. We have a lot of older members, and it would be really good to get some more representation from younger people and people from other ethnicities.

Let Denise know if you would be interested in finding out more – you can be involved as much or as little as you wish. You could be on our “Virtual group” and be involved in responding to email surveys / information or you could join us for our face to face meetings (twice a year).

### Late Opening



We continue to be surprised when people don't know about our late night opening! We've been offering evening appointments for six or seven years now.

In order that we can offer a range of appointments with different GPs, **we have late opening on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings.** You can book an appointment as late as 7.30 PM. Generally these

appointments are available to book in advance. We hope these appointments will be especially useful to people who cannot get to us during our usual opening hours.

We are able to offer limited reception services if you come to the surgery during our evening clinics – you can collect prescriptions / sick notes or make an appointment. Our apologies - we cannot deal with telephone enquiries or prescription problems in those evening surgeries, as we only have a couple of staff on duty.

### What is a Nurse Practitioner?

The nurse practitioner (NP) is a registered nurse who has received additional university education.

A nurse practitioner is able to assess, diagnose and treat patients. Where necessary and appropriate, the nurse practitioner will prescribe medication.

### What can the Nurse Practitioner help with?

Sore throats, ongoing coughs and colds, chest and ear infections, sinusitis, poorly controlled asthma, exacerbation of COPD, skin infections, rashes, thrush/vaginal discharge, urine infections, constipation, D&V, haemorrhoids.

We are pleased to announce that Tania, our Senior Practice nurse, is about to complete her NP training. She will have set clinics where she will see patients with minor illness or minor injury. This will be in addition to the service provided by Pauline, our Triage nurse.

In order to help us make best use of resources and direct you to the most suitable person to deal with your issue, the

Reception team may ask the reason for your request for an appointment. They are not trying to pry, just to direct your request in the right direction. They will not give you an appointment in a nurse-led clinic if it isn't appropriate. Please also be aware that there is always a GP on hand to offer further advice if needed.



### Lost Property

You would be amazed at the quantity of personal effects which are left at the surgery.

We have the usual children's coats, cardigans, hats and scarves, drinks bottles, lunch boxes, sun glasses and watches, but it would also seem we have achieved the impossible and cured people's vision as they walk out without their glasses.

It would also seem that we have discovered the cure for back and leg problems as patients arrive on crutches and walking sticks and leave without them ... "It's a miracle". We also marvel that people can leave whole bunches of keys!

If you find you are missing something and have visited the GP in the week preceding, please check with us to see if we have the missing item (ask the Receptionist to check). We usually keep them for about 6 months after which they will go to a charity shop, in which case you may spot your long lost belongings and be able to buy them back.