

VILLAGE MEDICAL CENTRE

Newsletter January 2024



Wishing all our patients a Very Happy and Healthy 2024!

Practice News

We hope that all our patients have enjoyed the Christmas and New Year holiday. We have certainly 'hit the ground running' since the end of the holiday and have started several initiatives utilising additional specialist pharmacist support to assist in providing the best possible care for many of our patients with a chronic illness particularly those with diabetes, COPD and asthma. This will give us additional capacity to review more patients in the coming months.

We are also planning some changes around access and the appointment system to help us to implement the Modern General Practice Access plan as directed by NHS England.

Changes to Access and the Appointment System

From Monday 5th February 2024, we will begin a move away from telephone triage for same day appointments to an online model which will allow for improved access for patients, faster navigation, assessment, and response.

We will use eConsult only to triage all requests for appointments, advice, services. However, please don't panic if you do not have access to this for whatever reason or you are not familiar with it. Our team will talk you through the process and complete the information with you on the telephone or in person at the desk throughout the period of transition and beyond for those patients who require a little more support.

Your request will be triaged and responded to in the same day in most circumstances by our on-call GP supported by our Care Navigators.

This is a very different way of working for us here at the Practice, so please bear with us. We will review the system regularly and make changes as necessary along the way.

The feedback from local practices who have implemented this process already is that it works extremely well and is very efficient and very popular with their patients.

I'm sure we can all agree that a system which avoids the dreaded 8am telephone line jam has got to be worth a try!

If you have any questions or concerns about this change and how it might affect you or a family member, please don't hesitate to speak to us.

Cervical Screening Campaign

Next month we will be launching a Cervical Screening Campaign with Jo's Trust to highlight the need for women to attend for smears. It is both shocking and saddening that 2 women every day lose their lives to the disease when 75% of cervical cancers can be detected very early by cervical screening. Only 1:4 women attend for this potentially life saving test! We understand that you might be embarrassed and that it is an intimate test, but our Practice Nurses really have seen it all before and what is a couple of minutes of slight discomfort and embarrassment when it could potentially save your life? In the

past few years we have seen several patients die tragically in their thirties and forties. These were patients who failed to attend for their smear tests despite our repeated attempts to encourage them. Please don't be another tragic case.

We will host a week of activities to promote our Smear Campaign from 19th February. We will have raffles, giveaways and on hand expert advice on the screening process and who will listen to your fears and concerns and will hopefully reassure you and empower you to overcome your fears and have your smear test. There will be an opportunity to win a special treat if you come along and have a smear test during the campaign week. We will be inviting women who haven't attended for their smears by letter and by telephone in the coming weeks.

Medical Students

Thank you to all our patients who continue to help us with our medical students. You are invaluable in helping train and shape the doctors of the future. We continue to be involved in the teaching of all medical students from first years through to fifth year students. This requires a great deal of commitment, particularly from Dr Davidson who leads our medical student training, but we are rewarded when we see how much the students have enjoyed their experience in general practice and how much they have learnt from it. Without exception, they are all extremely grateful to the Practice and to the patients for the excellent training, support and mentoring they receive.

Flu Vaccination

We are approaching the end of our Flu Vaccination Campaign, but there is still time to get a Flu Vaccination if you are eligible. However, we have very limited stock remaining and unfortunately there are no further stocks available at this time, so please act quickly before we run out!

Patient Participation Group

We are looking to increase membership of our Patient Participation Group. If you have views or suggestions on the service we provide, would like to help us shape the services we provide in the future then please consider joining our

group. We desperately need more patients to work with us, tell us what works and more importantly what doesn't from the perspective of a patient and essentially be a voice for the wider patient population. It is not too onerous a commitment, most communication is by email and occasional meetings. If you would like to have a say and feel you have something to contribute then please contact the practice and ask to speak to Tracy Doyle our Managing Partner or alternatively email village.practice@nhs.net You will be made to feel very welcome. Many thanks!