

## **Staff changes**

We have one new member of staff to welcome to the practice.

Dr Helen Twomey joined us in August to become our first Registrar. Helen will be with us for a year and run several full surgeries per week. Helen is a qualified doctor and will be completing her G.P training with us with input and mentoring from our doctors. Helen wrote this small piece to introduce herself to our patients.

“I am originally from Cork in the Republic of Ireland and moved to Oxford 18 months ago to begin the GPVTS scheme here (my (Irish) husband is doing a DPhil in Oxford and moved here before I did). I did my undergraduate training in Cork and did core medical training in Ireland after finishing my house officer jobs. I worked in Medical Oncology and Palliative Care prior to commencing my GP training and also worked in Australia for six months. I enjoy walking, swimming, reading and scuba diving, when the opportunity arises!”

## **Seasonal Flu Vaccination**

We are busy planning this year’s flu vaccination programme. The vaccination this year will include the “Swine Flu” vaccine given out last year and at the beginning of this year.

We are yet to decide on dates for the week day clinics but we will be inviting all eligible patients who are under 65 to a Saturday clinic on the 9<sup>th</sup> October with a further Saturday clinic on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

When you get your invitation it would be very helpful if you could attend on the date specified.

This year pregnant women, who have not had a previous swine flu vaccination, are recommended to have the trivalent seasonal flu vaccine. If you think you are eligible and do not receive an invitation by mid September please let us know.

## **Appointment System eight months on**

As you will be aware the appointment system was changed in the New Year. The aims were:

- 1) To try to ensure that patients only need to telephone the surgery once for an appointment.
- 2) To ensure that the patient sees the appropriate clinician. e.g. doesn’t see a doctor for detailed travel advice.
- 3) To free up appointments so that more are available than before.

We recently ran a small survey which was overwhelmingly supportive of the new system. Our records show that by using a nurse to triage some calls we have saved several appointments each day that would otherwise have gone to a doctor. These patients were either seen by a nurse or given appropriate advice by telephone saving the need for an appointment.

If you have any comments on the system please address them to the practice manager [bob.lewis@gp-k84019.nhs.uk](mailto:bob.lewis@gp-k84019.nhs.uk) or by letter.

## **Extended hours**

We have been offering extended opening hours for BOOKED APPOINTMENTS now since 1st July. We offer pre booked appointments with a nurse from 6 p.m. to 8 pm and with two doctors from 6 p.m. to 8.15 p.m. the evenings alternate between Wednesdays and Thursdays each week.

We also offer pre booked appointments with two doctors from 9 a.m. until 11.45 a.m. on the first Saturday of the month.

The surgeries are going well and have been almost full on every occasion.

## **Repeat Prescriptions**

We sometimes get asked why it can take up to two working days to issue a repeat prescription. Here is a simplified look at what needs to be done to issue the repeat prescription. We process an average of 1,000 per week, a lot more prior to Xmas and Easter!

1) Receive repeat request from box in waiting room or by front door, via E-mail or fax, in person or from any of four pharmacies.

2) Open patient's medical record and see if all of the requested items are available for issue immediately.

(The doctor will only allow a certain number of repeats of the same medication without having to re authorise the prescription. The authorisation must also not be more than a year old.)

2a) If all are available then the prescription is printed and put for the patient's usual doctor to sign. Doctors sign all prescription requests before 9 a.m. and then sign more at 1 p.m.

The prescriptions are then listed so that we know when they were issued and how i.e. over the counter or to any of the four pharmacies that may be specified by patients.

2b) If any of the prescription need to be re authorised the doctor has to be notified. The doctor will then check that they are happy to re-authorise or, perhaps ask for the patient to make an appointment first.

We then either proceed as in 2a or contact patient to make an appointment.

3) The patients medical record needs to be updated to show what has been prescribed and when.

The prescription is then stored to await collection by the patient or their nominated pharmacist.

If patients leave repeat prescriptions with their pharmacy to be delivered to us this may easily add another 24 hours to the process!

Please try not to leave repeat orders until you have run out! In the time that it takes to get one "emergency" repeat authorised 20 or 30 standard repeats could have been processed.