

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007

Welcome to the latest edition of the Fairfield Park Health Centre newsletter.

Introduction

In November I celebrated having been with at the surgery for one year. The year flew by very quickly as there was a lot for me to learn about how General Practice works and how the team at Fairfield Park Health Centre runs. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here so far and look forward to many more years of service. In particular I have found that all of the staff at the surgery are very friendly and helpful and that the atmosphere here is always welcoming and relaxed, even at the most hectic times. This is reflected in the many positive comments I get from patients about all of the staff, both clinical and administrative. We try to provide a high quality service for all of our patients and it is always rewarding to hear that it is appreciated. We feel that it is very important for us to continually seek ways to improve and develop our services and that our patients should be able to contribute to that improvement and development. Your views, comments and suggestions are always welcome and there are a number of ways in which you can give us feedback.

Email: office.staff@gp-L81071.nhs.uk
Post: Write to me, Roger Stead, Practice Manager
Website: This will be 'live' shortly and will include a link for feedback
Phone: 01225 331616
Fax: 01225 485522

There will also be a suggestion box and some suggestion forms in the waiting room. Please feel free to tell us what you think (good or bad!) about us and our services to you and any ways in which you feel we could improve.

Changes for patients with long term conditions.

We are introducing some changes to the way in which we manage the treatment of patients with long term conditions such as Asthma, Diabetes, Coronary Heart disease etc. We currently invite all patients with long term conditions for a six-monthly and/or annual review. This is to conduct a number of tests such as checking blood pressure and cholesterol levels and also to review patients' medication. These reviews are often done with either a Doctor or a Nurse, with some tests, such as blood and urine tests being conducted by a Health Care Assistant.

We have now set up dedicated Health Monitoring Clinics with our Nurses specifically to see patients with long term conditions. These will be held at various times throughout the week to ensure that availability of appointments will be as flexible as possible.

So, patients who normally receive a letter inviting them to make an appointment for a review will, from now on, receive a letter inviting them to make an appointment at the Health Monitoring Clinic.

This is the same as the six monthly or annual review and is not an additional appointment.

The Health Monitoring Clinics are staffed by our dedicated Nurse team who are all highly qualified and very experienced in managing long term

conditions. They will be able to discuss patients' conditions and give advice about things like lifestyle, diet, exercise specific to individual patients and their health. The clinics will be supported by the Doctors and the rest of our clinical team to ensure that we deliver the highest possible quality of care.

We are introducing these changes in order to improve our service to our patients, both in terms of clinical effectiveness and access to care. By having separate clinics for Long Term Conditions and traditional Treatment Room functions we will be better able to ensure that patients are receiving appropriate care and advice. This may also free up some appointment times with the Doctors, thereby improving patient access.

We hope that patients will find these changes of benefit, whether they have a long term condition or not, and would welcome patients' feedback. In the introduction to this newsletter are a number of ways in which patients can provide feedback to the Practice on any aspect of our services.

In addition to these changes we will also be setting up a Self Care room by the waiting room. Patients will be able to check their own blood pressure, provide the surgery with important information and access a range of health advice and information to enable them to look after themselves and improve their general health and well being.

Patient records

In order to ensure that we can provide high quality clinical services it is important for us to have up to date information in our clinical records. In particular, it is very helpful for us to have an up to date contact telephone number, information about your smoking status, whether you are a carer, and your ethnic origin. You can help us to maintain our records by taking time while you are waiting for your appointment to complete one of the short information sheets available in the waiting room.

All of the information collected will be subject to the Data Protection Act (1998) and will be used, in the strictest confidence, only to update your personal clinical record.

Cervical smears

We advise that all women between the ages of 25 & 49 have a cervical smear test every three years, and patients between the ages of 50 and 64 every five years. This can be arranged by making an appointment with the sister in the treatment room.

Patients are encouraged to have a routine cervical smear , however if a patient feels that they do not want to have a smear test for any reason the patient can either ask for the test to be deferred for 3/5 years or sign a disclaimer form which will remove them from the Health Authority Screening list. A patient should be aware that if this is the case they will not receive any more letters and if at any time in the future they want a cervical smear they can make an appointment to have this done.

Appointments

The Department of Health has set standards for GP Practices to meet with regard to access, and the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) conducts a monthly survey to determine how GPs are performing against these standards.

In the past 12 months, this Practice has achieved 100% in all 3 of the standards assessed:

- Access to a GP within 48 hours
- Access to a Health Professional within 24 hours.
- Ability to book appointments at least 3 weeks in advance.

In order to help us to maintain our 100% record, and to continue to provide a high quality service to all of our patients, please remember that there are a number of different appointment options available to you including:

Routine appointments. 10 minute booked appointments with a GP; these can be booked up to 1 month in advance.

Urgent appointments. 5 Minute appointments, bookable on the day for urgent or same day appointments. There are only a limited number of these appointments on any day, so if your need is not urgent, please use a routine appointment, so that these can be held for more pressing cases.

Telephone appointments. 5 minute telephone appointments with a GP. These are particularly useful for medication reviews, discussing results etc. You may also make appointments to see a Nurse or Health Care Assistant for some minor ailments, blood tests etc.

Our excellent Reception staff will always try to find the most convenient and appropriate appointment for you, although this may not always be possible. Please understand that there are only a certain number of each appointment type that we can make available on any given day and try to help us by considering which would be the most appropriate type of appointment and with whom?

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can offer the appointment to someone else.

There are also other alternatives that may be more appropriate:

- Your local Pharmacist may be able to offer advice for some minor ailments.
- NHS Direct (0845 4647) provides telephone health advice 24 hours a day.
- NHS Walk in Centre, Riverside Health Centre, James Street West, offers access to a range of NHS services, including health information, advice and treatment for a range of minor illnesses (coughs, colds, infections) and minor injuries (sprains, sprains, cuts).
- For emergencies, contact 999 or go to the Accident & Emergency unit at the RUH.

Prescriptions

Please help the receptionists and yourselves by remembering the following key points when requesting a repeat prescription

1. All prescriptions take 48 hours to prepare.

2. If posting and requesting a posted return allow extra days for the possible Royal Mail delays.
3. Urgent prescriptions may take at least 4 hours to produce and may require you returning to the practice as there are not always staff available immediately to process and sign them.
4. Repeat prescription requests may be accepted by fax, letter, email and repeat slip. **Requests cannot be taken by telephone.**
5. Requests by fax, letter or email must include the following personal information:
 - Name
 - Address
 - Date of Birth
 - Collection Point
 - Full list of drugs items required

Results

If you are calling for results of a test, please try to ring in the afternoon and avoid ringing on Mondays as we are usually very busy.

The number to ring for test results is 01225 331616

Hospital transport

Just to remind patients who are eligible for hospital transport to contact the practice at least two working days before the transport is required.

Hello to...

Since the last newsletter there have been a number of staff changes. We would like to welcome the following people to our Reception and Admin team:

Charlotte Haines (Receptionist)

Sue Price (Receptionist)

Felicity Gale (Receptionist)

We would also like to welcome the following people to our Clinical team:

Rachel Horner (Practice Nurse)

Dr Joanna Swallow (GP Registrar)

Goodbye to...

Since the last newsletter the following people have left:

Amelie Cartigny (Receptionist)

Jennie Martindale (Health Visitor)

Dr Louise Willcocks (GP Registrar)

Contact us

For appointments, please ring:

01225 480007

For general enquiries please ring:

01225 331616

To send us a fax, please ring:

01225 485522

To email us:

office.staff@gp-L81071.nhs.uk