

SPINNEY SURGERY NEWSLETTER - Summer 2008

For patients registered with the Spinney

SPINNEY PATIENTS ASSOCIATION

All patients are welcome to join us for an information evening

SUN AND THE SKIN

**A TALK BY DR PAOLO FARGNOLI
Tuesday 14th October at 7.30 pm
Crossways Hall, St Ives.**

Dr Fagnoli is a GPSI (GP with special interest & skills in dermatology) and runs clinics at the Buckden Surgery.

Come and hear about the effects of the sun on your skin and the types of problems you can encounter – what they look like and what you can do? We will have a question and answer session too, so bring along your questions about skin conditions...

NEW STAFF

As you know we have been waiting eagerly for Dr Amit Sethi to join us on 1st August and for Dr Andrew Borman to finish his registrar year. They join Dr Deborah Gilbert as our new salaried doctors. Some of you have met Dr Sethi before when he spent a week at the Surgery in June, and I am sure you will get to know him really quickly. Sadly, this means that Dr Priya Joshi left us on the 31st July having worked here since January. Patients and staff have liked her very much!

As described in previous newsletters it will obviously take a little while to get used to the changes.

It is probably helpful to describe how we have organised the patients lists generally. So,

Dr. Gilbert – sees Dr Cox's patients with surname starting A – Pi

Dr Sethi – sees Dr. Cox's patients with surname starting Pi – Z and Dr. Smerdon's patients with surnames starting Man – Z.

Dr. Borman – sees Dr. Smerdon's patients with surname starting A to those starting Mal.

Obviously this is not set in stone, and some patients have got used to seeing another doctor in the past or since the changes, and that's fine but we thought it would help to remind you how we dealt with the patient list administratively.

Of course patients are welcome to see a doctor of their choice, but we would encourage patients to have a "usual" doctor. Over the next few months we will be asking patients to let us know when they come to the surgery who they see as their "usual" doctor. Remember too, if you see Dr. Anderson as your "usual" doctor – let us know so we can amend your records.

NEW REGISTRAR

Dr Marion Duane joined us as a GP Registrar on 4th August. She will be with us for a year; Dr Duane has been living and working in Ireland.

Emily Brown joined us about 4 months ago, and has settled in well. She undertakes a dual role of Receptionist and Administrator.

FLU CLINICS

Clinics will be held during the mornings of Saturday 4th October and Saturday 18th October.

Flu vaccinations will be provided for those patients having received vaccine in previous year and patients who have been diagnosed with any of the following illnesses in the last year or those who have reached the age of 65.

Heart disease or stroke, diabetes or kidney disease, asthma or respiratory diseases, immunosuppression, multiple sclerosis or if you are a carer

PATIENT SURVEY

The practice scored well in the survey as in previous years. A full copy of the report is available on request from Debra Wheatley. Unfortunately, parking and length of time to wait in the waiting room were issues of note. We are unable to make the car park any larger, only appeal to patients who do not need to drive to the surgery to avoid doing so. We constantly review timings of surgeries and appointments to see if we can make improvements. If patients feel they need longer than 10 minutes then its worth mentioning this, as we can amend the appointment length if there is availability. Its sometimes difficult for a clinician if a patient attends with a "list" of conditions – each one needing in depth questioning, examination and review – if you have several issues to discuss sometimes its helpful either to make a longer appointment or to make another appointment to be seen to give you and the doctor the best chance of getting it right.

FEES

There are some services such as private forms and certificates, as well as some drugs and vaccinations which are not covered on the NHS. For these items, certain fees are chargeable to the patient or their employer. For full details of fees please see the schedule in the waiting room, or on our website. Some of these fees attract VAT. When submitting a form to be completed please enquire about the cost to ensure you are aware of this.

HPV VACCINE (HUMAN PAPILLOMA VIRUS)

The Department of Health is currently planning for the implementation of the HPV programme for Year 8 girls. The vaccine offers protection from HPV vaccine types 16/18 (which cause most cervical cancers). From September this year - all girls in Year 8 (i.e. girls born between 1/9/95 and 31/8/96) will be offered HPV immunisation with a vaccine called Cervax. This programme will be provided by the schools. When we know more about the programme, we will publish it on our website www.spinney-surgery.org.uk

TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS

At the Spinney, over the years, the use of the telephone for consultations or discussions with doctors or nurses has increased. In fact, most days, the doctors deal with nearly as many phone call consultations as they do "face to face" consultations in the surgery. Obviously these calls take some time as the clinician has to ask questions and update themselves with the patient's condition. We have recently reviewed how we manage these phone calls and have some requests and recommendations to make to patients to try and streamline this service.

Often a patient needs some simple advice about their condition or medication that can be done over the phone. Sometimes it's a bit more complicated than that and clinician needs quite a bit of information.

To try and streamline this, our reception staff will ask you to describe very simply what your request for a telephone call is about, they will record this information on the request together with the phone call. This will enable the clinician to prioritise your call appropriately.

Phone calls are made usually at the end of the morning surgery, early afternoon or during evening surgery. It is important to us that you make sure you are accessible on the phone when the doctor calls you back – we are happy to call mobiles. Our reception staff will usually be able to tell you whether the call will be during the morning, lunchtime or early afternoon. Due to the way evening surgeries are structured, we would like to try and avoid making routine calls later in the day, therefore would ask patients if they need to speak to the doctor to phone as early as possible.

If you call to speak to your doctor and they are not in surgery that day, we will arrange for you to be called back at the next opportunity. Obviously if the call is urgent then that's different, but its helpful if the doctor who normally sees you or who requested you to call actually does this rather than someone else familiarising themselves with your records.

VACCINATIONS

The Department of Health recommends certain vaccinations for certain countries – these are usually funded by the NHS. Some patients wish to have some vaccinations which are not recommended by the DOH and are therefore not funded – in these instances the patient is expected to pay for the vaccine and its administration.

Hepatitis B and Hepatitis A are recommended for some travellers, and they are also recommended for some “at risk” occupations. It is here, where it starts to get confusing!

The DOH does not acknowledge that Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations for “at risk” occupations should be funded on the NHS. Therefore if your employer requires you to have these vaccinations – then the Employer will be required to pay for the course prior to vaccination. If your employer refuses to fund them, or you wish to fund them yourself, the practice is unable to administer them to you – we have a reciprocal arrangement with a local surgery and we can give you their details to have these vaccinations locally for the same cost.

It is possible in the foreseeable future that the DOH will cease to fund travellers vaccines, obviously we will publicise this if and when it happens.

ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS

Obviously with a patient list of over 10,000 patients – there will be many patients moving house or changing their phone number. It is vital that we are informed of new addresses of the whole family and any new phone numbers, both landline and mobile. If you need referral to hospital (especially if we are using the Choose and Book system for you), contacting about a prescription or an emergency visit – its vital we have this information. If you move out of our practice area however, you may be required to change practices but we can give you information about this if it happens.

QUEUES AT RECEPTION

We appreciate our reception desk is not ideal, and we often get queues when a patient query is being dealt with and patients want to book in for their appointment. For the majority of patient appointments it's possible to use the Booking In Machine which is located near the dispensary. Its easy to use, the only tip to give you is to press slowly and firmly. If you are unable to book in for some reason using the machine – just pop back to reception and they will do it for you – please just don't sit down, otherwise the doctor won't know you are here!

DNA (otherwise known as “did not attend”!)

We do get a fair number of patients who book their appointments and don't attend. It's difficult for us if we are short of appointments and sometimes double appointments or even single 10 minute appointments are taken and not used. Please please do call us to cancel an appointment if you can't come. If you DNA regularly, we may contact you to discuss this further. If you attend or cancel – then we won't!

MAGAZINES

We love your magazines, but it's nicer for the waiting room if they are fairly up to date. But, please do avoid giving us your Sunday Supplements – or your pile from the magazine rack from 2004! Many thanks.

PAM FROM PRESCRIPTIONS!

I can't help hoping/thinking that we would all like to help the NHS save some money to spend on those services which aren't getting enough. So here's my plea from Pam on Prescriptions which may put a few coppers in the NHS coffers.

When ordering repeat prescriptions please could you request only the items that are needed, by name. When I get messages for “All items” there are often items on there that haven't been used for ages/months, and I am left in a dilemma

trying to guess what's needed/required whilst trying to avoid printing items probably not needed.

Checking your prescriptions when you pick them up could also avoid our/your mistakes. I feel it's such a shame for you to return to your home, only then to find out that a mistake has been made. Two reasons for this are:-

- Firstly, we can rectify the error/misunderstanding and see you on your way, happy that you are happy!
- Secondly, if items not needed are taken out of the surgery we cannot really use them again, despite the fact that's its not been used (What a waste I hear you say) I agree but we can only dispose of these items I am afraid.

And finally, the DOH recommends we prescribe one month supply at a time – but if you are going on holiday or away for another reason, then please specify this. It's important too that you don't order your items too early – if you need to – then again, please specify this on your request. This however, should not be the norm but the exception.

Thanks very much. *Pam*

**PROHEALTH CHIP (COMMUNITY
HEALTH IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAMME)**

***A Fun Way to Gain Health and Lose
Weight***

If you would like to participate in this unique programme, please ask your GP or

Nurse if they would complete a ProHealthChip Patient Referral Criteria Checklist.

September – December 2008 evening group meeting dates are not confirmed yet. But the programme will be in the St Neots and Huntingdon areas. If you are referred to the programme all the details will be sent to you before the course commences.

If the programme dates are inconvenient for you, please ask if you could be added to the patient list to receive early details of future programme dates.

**SURGERY HALF DAY CLOSING
DATES**

Surgeries in the area will be closed from 1pm on the following dates:-

**Wednesday 10th September
Tuesday 14th October
November (date to be advised)
Tuesday 22nd January 2009**

If urgent medical attention is required on this half days please call Huntsdoc on 01480 447800.

And finally, if you have any comments, complaints or suggestions please send them to Debbie Wheatley, Managing Partner in writing or by e mail to debbie.wheatley@nhs.net Thankyou.