

# DORKING MEDICAL PRACTICE

at New House & Hillside Surgeries



# NEWSLETTER

November 2015

## GP Recruitment

As many of you already know, Dr Amanda Sherwood left the Practice on 30<sup>th</sup> October and we have yet to find a permanent replacement. It is with much sadness that we must tell you of Dr Frances Ryan's departure at the end of January. She is planning to re-launch her career in a different direction and we know you will join us in wishing her well.

So we have now placed a second advert in the British Medical Journal (bringing the total spent so far on recruitment to £3,000). Given that we only had one applicant for our first advert (compared to sixty when we advertised five years ago) it is difficult to be optimistic.

We are not alone in finding it hard to recruit; many practices are in a similar position. Historically, being a GP was a popular option for medical graduates but 20% of GP training places remain unfilled for this year so recruiting GPs is likely to become even harder. A recent survey found that 1 in 3 GPs plan to retire in the next five years and 1 in 5 trainees plan to work abroad. The majority of trainees are female and plan to work part-time only.

However, in the meantime we are lucky to have some regular Locum GPs to share the load – you may already be familiar with Dr Mackay, Dr Gengasamy, Dr Roux, Dr Collett and Dr Ryder. We are also fortunate to have an excellent GP Registrar (Dr Dhoul) working for us.



## Wasted Appointments

The number of people not attending for pre-booked appointments is increasing. In October, nearly 6% were wasted - 152 consultations totalling around 24 hours! I am sure that the majority of you will agree that is outrageous and patients have approached us to ask why we do not charge a fee – unfortunately we are not allowed to do this.

If you use our Appointments Online system, you can make and cancel appointments at your convenience and we had hoped that this would improve matters, but it appears not. If anyone has any ideas about how we can reduce the numbers of people wasting precious NHS resources, we would love to hear from you!



## Christmas

We are closed on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> December plus Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January. So when you're buying your turkey and tinsel, please add Repeat Prescription to your "to do" list!

Please don't leave it until the last minute to discover you have run out of your routine medication. We're always happy to help but with 9,500 patients, we really struggle to cope with demand around Christmas.

At Hillside Surgery, we are aiming to do no routine dispensing between 18<sup>th</sup> Dec and 4<sup>th</sup> Jan so please do put your requests in early! Thank you.

## Home Visits

Please request before 10 a.m. and do not ask for a visit unless the patient is genuinely too ill to come to the surgery - a doctor can see four or five patients at the surgery in the time that it takes to do ONE home visit. It would be really helpful if you would give the receptionist brief details of your illness so that the doctor can assess the order of priority for visits – thank you.

## Struggling with stairs?

Please do tell our receptionists at the time of booking your appointment and remind us on arrival so that we can arrange for you to be seen downstairs.



## Blood Tests

The level of service that we have previously offered is proving to be unsustainable, so you may find that you have to wait longer than a few days for your routine blood test appointments from now on (blood tests are rarely deemed to be clinically urgent). If you choose not to wait for your routine test, you can opt to have blood taken at the hospital – just ask at reception for a blood form.



## Don't miss out on your health MOT

If you're aged 40-74, and have not been diagnosed with heart disease, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes, or had a stroke you're eligible for a free health check at a nearby pharmacy or GP surgery. Think of it as a midlife MOT to check your risk of becoming unwell.

Even if you feel well at the moment it's still important to have a check. As you get older, your risk of developing these problems increases, but an NHS Health Check will spot early signs. This means you can take action to prevent them happening to you, so you can carry on enjoying your life for longer.

The check will only take 20 to 30 minutes and you'll be asked a few questions about your family history and lifestyle choices which may put your health at risk. Your health professional will make a note of your weight, age, sex and ethnicity before taking your blood pressure. You'll also have a simple blood test to check your cholesterol level. After that, you'll discuss your results and be given advice and support to help you reduce your risk of developing any illnesses and improve your health. Visit <http://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/healthchecks> for more information. To book an appointment, please call New House Surgery on 01306 881313.