

Fernville Focus

Please see back page for bank holiday closing dates

Spring 2014

Good News

We have a substantial achievement to report this year, which will be of real benefit to our patients.

Over past years, telephone access to the surgery has been a consistent priority for patients. This has been very difficult to address in the context of successive funding cuts over the past 7 years, which means we cannot increase the size of our workforce. However, with the active support of our Patient Participation Group, we have been able to identify some practical changes in working patterns, resulting in a measurable and significant improvement in access times.

To make these changes permanent, we have had to renegotiate contracts with our receptionists and make internal alterations within the surgery, involving IT and telephone infrastructure. This work will be funded by the income received from the Patient Participation DES.

Based on our success this year, we believe further improvements are possible as we optimise the call handling system. This will be evaluated as we collect further data during 2014.

Telephone Access Success



Care.Data

You will probably know something about 'care.data', the new data sharing scheme being introduced by NHS England across the country (care.data isn't to be confused with Summary Care Records, which allows appropriate medical professionals to see a limited amount of your medical history, in order to provide you with emergency treatment).



NHS England want to gather information on what is happening in health and social care, in order to plan services according to what works best. NHS England aim to understand the health needs of everyone by collecting patient data about the care received from all parts of the health service, including hospitals and GP practices.

There has been some controversy around the project, in particular the way that it has been communicated to the public. NHS England have now announced that they will be delaying the implementation of care.data to October in order to give them the chance to better explain the benefits of the scheme and also to make sure that everyone is aware of their right to 'opt out' of the care.data scheme, if they wish to. The project itself will still go ahead; it is just the timing of it that has been put back.

Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG), the NHS body that commissions most health services in West Hertfordshire, will work with NHS England to make sure that people living in this area have a better understanding of the care.data project and can make an informed choice for themselves. All GP practices in West Hertfordshire are members of Herts Valleys CCG and we will work together, and also with local patient groups, to clarify how the care.data scheme will work and to answer questions from you.

In the meantime, there is nothing that you need to do yet as the 1 April deadline for opting out of the scheme is no longer in place. We don't yet know what forms of communication NHS England will use for their national campaign but it is worth looking out for notices in your local surgery, various websites and elsewhere over the coming months if you want to find out more, an excellent summary can be found at www.patient.co.uk/health/caredata-sharing-your-information

Dr Bhamra

Dr Raj Bhamra is retiring as a Partner from Fernville after long service. He began working at Fernville in 1976, and has seen and treated generations of families. Over the years he has worked in Hemel Hempstead hospital in dermatology, minor surgery, thoracic departments and also as a police surgeon with Hertfordshire police.



Dr Bhamra has enjoyed treating patients over the years and working with doctors and staff at Fernville. Despite many changes in the NHS, it's the clinical contact with the patients he will miss the most.

Dr Bhamra would like to wish all his patients good health and assure them that they will continue to receive good care from his partners.

On behalf of Fernville, we wish Dr Bhamra a very happy and healthy retirement!

Nursing Appointments

We are very fortunate at Fernville to have a Prescribing Nurse Practitioner in addition to our team of Practice Nurses and Health Care Assistants. However, it can be confusing for patients to know who to book their appointment with.



Nurse Practitioners are experienced nurses that have undergone extensive extra training to enable them to treat common health problems. Their role is to see some of the same-day urgent cases, which means we can see patients more quickly. Nurse Practitioners are qualified to prescribe from a menu of drugs used to treat common conditions and are fully supported by our GPs. They are able to see patients complaining of aches, pains, sickness, diarrhoea, coughs, colds, skin problems and more. Nurse Practitioners are not able to see babies under 8 weeks old or deal with 'ongoing' medical conditions.

Practice Nurses are not qualified to prescribe and must not be used as a gateway to access a GP. Practice nurses are able to perform smears, long term condition checks, ecgs, injections and dressings etc. Please see attached insert for a detailed guide of who does what. Alternatively, check with a receptionist, or refer to our website for an up to date list of who does what, to avoid making an inappropriate appointment.

Hay Fever

Hay fever is a type of allergic rhinitis caused by pollen and spores. It's a condition where an allergen (such as pollen) makes the inside of your nose inflamed.



Hay fever generally affects the nose, sinuses, throat and eyes, causing sneezing, a runny nose and itchy eyes. It's a common allergic disease, with anywhere from 15 to 20 percent of the population suffering from hay fever. Hay fever usually occurs in spring and summer, when there is more pollen in the air and people with hay fever can experience their symptoms at different times of the year.

Treatment

There are many treatments available and the earlier in the season you start treatment the better. Your **Pharmacist** can advise you on many 'over the counter' treatments, some of which are much cheaper to buy than on prescription (in-fact many treatments are available to buy from your local shop). If your symptoms persist or become severe, then make an appointment with our **Nurse Practitioner** for further advice.

Preventing hay fever

For useful tips on preventing hay fever go to: www.patient.co.uk/health/hay-fever

Welcome!

A warm welcome to Jo Cattini who will join the nursing team from April.



Referrals

If your GP has to make a referral for you, please ensure you update us with any new contact telephone numbers and addresses (forms available at reception). We will also need to record your height, weight and a recent blood pressure reading.

This can all be done using the pod area in reception, you do not need an appointment. Please ask at reception if you require any assistance.

Travelling Abroad?

Please don't forget to check if you require travel vaccinations when booking your overseas holiday this year.



We suggest you check a minimum of 12 weeks before travel, as some vaccinations can take 4-6 weeks to take effect.

For lots of useful information about your travel destination including vaccination advice go to www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or check with your Travel Agent or Tour Operator.

A double appointment with a Practice Nurse is usually required, please ask at reception or check online if you are unsure who to book with. Alternatively, Nash Chemists now offer a travel clinic. For more information and prices call 01442 240431.

In Focus.....Mark Jones, Managing Partner

Before joining Fernville Mark studied bio-chemistry at Kings College, Mark went on to become a scientist. Initially performing diagnostic testing, he progressed to running his own projects and eventually managing a science business. After nearly 20 years in the industry, Mark moved on to do consultancy work, before taking on the role as Managing Partner at Fernville in 2003.

My role is to co-ordinate all types of services we provide to patients - Anything from ensuring the building is maintained and safe, producing business plans, managing budget and staff, down to premises infrastructure, such as IT, telephones etc. I also share our management expertise with other surgeries and our document management system has been shared with several other practices locally and nationally.

I also work as an Associate for Urgent Healthcare Solutions - helping GP-led organisations across the country win contracts in the new NHS for a large multi-national corporation operating within the healthcare sector.

I particularly enjoy listening to our patients via forums such as the PPG, with regards to their concerns and trying to work in conjunction with them to provide a solution and improve overall patient care.

One of the most satisfying aspects of the job for me is ensuring we keep within our limited budgets, whilst maintaining a comprehensive service to our patients and help improve patient care and overall experience. However, I do get frustrated because healthcare means so much to people, so not being able to provide the level of service expected, due to cuts, is a constant challenge.

At Fernville I see ourselves more as a "leader" rather than a follower, we are a very proactive, forward thinking practice, like to look at things from "outside the box". We initiate new ideas to generate better healthcare to our patients and keep our staff at the for front of technology and development. My hope is that as austerity fades, we will be able to provide more appointments, better access and overall efficiency.



Branded Medicines

GPs are actively encouraged to prescribe medicines by their generic name. This is because generic medicines are usually as effective as the branded versions, but can cost up to 80% less.

It is similar to buying branded goods or a supermarket's own label; both products do the same job but the supermarket's own version is usually cheaper. Both medicines have the same clinical effect, but each separate manufacturer can give it a different name.

Prescribing the cheaper generic medicines frees up NHS resources to pay for other treatments. It also gives the pharmacist the widest choice of products to dispense. This can be important, particularly if there is a shortage of a particular product.



Prescription Bath Oils & Shower Gels

A reminder to patients who use prescription bath oils and shower gels (also known as moisturisers or emollients), GPs in Hertfordshire will now not be providing prescriptions for these products.

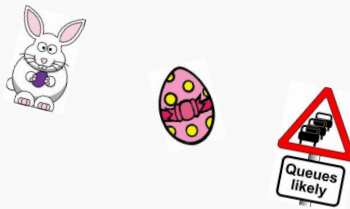
Concerns about the risk of falls and the evidence that these products are less effective moisturisers than those applied directly to the skin mean that your GP may issue you with an alternative item.

However, patients who choose to continue to use them, can buy them from their local chemist or supermarket where they are readily available.

For more information on moisturisers for dry skin visit www.nhs.uk

Fernville Surgery will be closed on the following dates

Friday 18th April - Good Friday
 Monday 21st April - Easter Monday
 Monday 5th May - Early May Bank Holiday
 Monday 26th May - Spring Bank Holiday



For medical assistance that cannot wait until the surgery re-opens, please dial **111**. Calls to this number are free from both landlines and

Our Usual Opening Hours

Monday 8am-6.30pm
 Tuesday 8am-8pm
 Wednesday 8am-6.30pm
 Thursday 8am-8pm
 Friday 8am-6.30pm
 Saturday 8am-12noon*

*For booked routine appointments only

Tel: 01442 213919
 Fax: 01442 216433
www.fernillesurgery.org

Fundraising

Our Patient Participation Group recently asked us if they could help with fundraising for the surgery.



Our GPs suggested we greatly need an additional 24 hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring machine. We currently have two machines that are constantly in use. There is a waiting list of patients who would benefit enormously from the ABP.

The PPG are currently looking at fundraising ideas and we will keep you posted via notices in the surgery and on our website, with details of fundraising events.

Missed Appointments

The majority of our patients are very courteous and cancel unwanted appointments in good time.

We are still experiencing a number of patients who repeatedly miss their appointments (known as Did Not Attend or DNAs).

Patients who abuse our service by repeatedly missing appointments, will be sent a letter warning them that they may be asked to register with another practice.

Urine Samples

Please only bring in urine samples for testing, if a GP or nurse has issued you with the relevant paperwork. We are unable to accept samples for random testing without a GP's prior authorisation. Thank you.

Saturday Appointments

We are open every Saturday from 8am until 12 midday for **pre-booked** routine appointments and general enquiries. We do not offer a 'triage' service or process urgent prescriptions on Saturdays.

Please dial 111 for urgent medical advice or 999 in an emergency.

F U N D R A I S I N G
 R M R Z E S V I S S D
 A E C Q F H O A E J K
 C N T M E A T L L U R
 C Y T I R U P Z S N E
 E Z E R R M K B B H V
 S C Y D A E R Z V U E
 S F A S L V M A W H F
 E Y C D S F E E L L Y
 S N U R S E S L N S A
 A T A D E R A C Y T H

Waiting room WORDSEARCH:

CAREDATA SAMPLES
 REFERRALS HAYFEVER
 NURSES TRAVEL
 ACCESS FUNDRAISING
 SATURDAYS RETIREMENT

Doctor, Doctor.....

Patient – Doctor Doctor, I've got a strawberry stuck in my ear
Doctor—Don't worry, I've some cream for that....

