

Hathaway Medical Centre Newsletter

Written *by* Patients – *for* Patients

Patient Privacy

We take your privacy very seriously. We have designed our reception area in such a way that conversations between receptionists and patients are not easily overheard but if for any reason you wish your discussion with our reception staff to be completely private we will always arrange for this to take place in the interview room upon request.

All incoming telephone calls are answered in our dedicated suite, not in Reception and cannot be overheard by anyone else.

All incoming and outgoing calls are now recorded



Website prescription requests:
www.hathawaysurgery.co.uk

Factoid... an average of 3.4% of medication costs is wasted each year; for Hathaway this is equivalent to £68,000 - approximately the cost of 18 hip replacements.

REMEMBER - if you don't need it - don't order it.

Hathaway as a training practice

Hathaway is proud to be recognised as a training practice for doctors who have chosen to specialise in general practice. We were appointed only after a rigorous examination of our quality and performance standards and it is our role to give already qualified doctors training and experience in general practice.

These doctors will have already been qualified for between 2-5 years gaining extensive experience as a doctor within various hospital departments. Doctors undergoing GP training generally have extended appointments and one of our regular doctors is always available if the trainee requires advice or assistance. Feedback from patients and the trainees themselves has been particularly positive about this experience.

New Doctor



We are delighted to welcome Dr Henna Siddiqui to our team of doctors who joined us in early November. Henna is a Public Health Scholar and enjoys looking at the bigger health issues and how they affect the community.

Bank Holiday Arrangements

Christmas/ New Year - The Surgery will be operating normally every day except Tuesday 25th, Wednesday 26th December and New Year's Day 1 January when it will be closed.

Easter 2012 - Normal service except closure on Good Friday and Easter Monday.

The period immediately before and after Bank Holidays can be extremely busy for us and it would be helpful if in the case of repeat prescriptions you could place your orders in good time - up to three weeks ahead is fine with us - and also to recognise that the demand for appointments is likely to be very high, particularly as we enter the New Year. Thank you.

Chippenham Area Pharmacies - the rota for coverage over the Bank Holidays has not been finalised as we go to press with this Newsletter but details of opening times will be published as a link from our website as soon as they are available.

Influenza

Flu is a highly infectious illness caused by the flu virus. It spreads rapidly through small droplets coughed or sneezed into the air by an infected person. For most people, flu is unpleasant but not serious. You will usually recover within a week.

Flu vaccination is offered to people in at-risk groups. These people are at greater risk of developing serious complications if they catch flu, such as pregnant women and elderly people.

People sometimes think a bad cold is flu, but having flu can be much worse than a cold and you may need to stay in bed for a few days if you have flu. Some people are more susceptible to the effects of seasonal flu. For them it can increase the risk of developing more serious illnesses such as bronchitis and pneumonia, or can make existing conditions worse. In the worst cases, seasonal flu can result in a stay in hospital, or even death.

Nationally the number of over 65 year olds who have been vaccinated has fallen since last year, as has the number of younger "at risk" patients.

Around 4,700 people die every year after getting flu. People in at-risk groups are 11 times more likely to die than someone who is not in an at-risk group.

(Source - <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/11/nhs-winter/>)

Difficulty in getting an appointment?

Those of you who have read previous newsletters will know that we recently formed a Patient Reference Group, (PRG), to gather views from a representative group of our patients regarding things we do well and areas where we could improve. You might even be a member yourself. A recent survey identified things that you want us to do better and one was a request to be able to make appointments up to a month in advance. We have implemented this arrangement and that has pleased a number of our patients but unfortunately has had some unpredicted adverse consequences too. Regrettably the number of non-attendees - that is patients who do not turn up for their appointments and also who do not tell us in advance - has increased, resulting wasted appointments that could have been used by other patients.

We have also experienced an increase in demand for "on the day" appointments that has stretched our ability to meet patients requiring to be seen within the next two or three days of making the request. We are urgently looking at resolving this situation. This may result in us having to curtail the availability of long term appointment dates, increase our medical staff resources for "on the day" requests and the employment of more temporary doctors. Please bear with us while we address these problems some of which inevitably take time to implement. In the meantime if you are not able to arrive for a prearranged appointment please tell us in advance so that somebody else can have that opportunity.

Our cancellation line number is 01249 655500 and is available 24 hours a day.

How you contact us - the bulk of our initial contact with patients is through telephone contact. We have up to six staff at busy times dealing with telephone calls from you making appointments, answering questions and taking messages. Please note that all incoming and outgoing calls are recorded. A sample of calls will continue to be used for quality control purposes but complete coverage does mean that any disputes about what was said or complaints regarding our telephone service can now be resolved much more easily to the benefit of both patients and staff.

Please be aware that our front desk receptionists do not take direct calls from patients. These are always dealt with by our call centre staff.