

Bedford Hill Family Practice Newsletter

Issue 1

March 2008

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Extended Hours

A recent Department of Health Survey reveals that most patients are happy with access to their local GP surgery. The survey also showed that some patients want to see changes in GP opening hours. The most popular option is for more convenient opening hours after 6.00pm in the evenings.

Patients will be pleased to know that we are now offering routine appointments up to 7.00pm each day of the week. More GP appointments have been made available to patients not able to attend the surgery during the day.

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YOUR GENERAL PRACTICE

Your general practice and the family doctor service in general is under threat.

Your general practice and the family doctor service in general is under threat. The government is taking steps which doctors believe will harm patient services. It is encouraging commercial companies to set up and provide GP services, but many family doctors are concerned that if this happens, company profits will come before your needs.

- The services you get from your local doctor's practice are some of the best in the world.
- Many other countries are looking to copy our local health services because they set high standards and are good value for money.
- Doctors are always trying to improve patient care. Every year a nationwide survey tells doctors how you feel about the work they do and helps them to plan and improve the care they can offer.
- The great majority of people value their local doctor's practice and the role it plays in their local community, and most are very happy with the services

that they receive.

Value for money

- Did you know that on average you doctor's practice gets just 20 pence a day for each patient to provide all their services and care?
- Or that in total each appointment with your doctor costs the NHS just £20? That's compared to up to £300 for an outpatient appointment at your local hospital or £75 for a visit to accident and emergency.

- Your doctor's practice is great value for money.

High quality care

Providing you with the best care possible is your doctor's priority. In the last few years all GPs have been working especially hard to achieve new standards of care for a wide range of illnesses. It means your care keeps improving and that long-term health conditions like asthma and diabetes are better controlled and treated. GPs have provided better care than the government ever expected them to do.

Lifelong care

Your doctor's practice looks after you and your family from the time you enter the world to the mo-

ment you leave it. They hold a record of every injury, illness, appointment and referral you have throughout your life and act as the central point of contact for all your health

care. Every doctor's practice aims to help you build a long lasting and consistent relationship with your doctor. This is especially important if you have a long term health problem. Your doctor is also there to speak on your behalf and to make sure you get joined up care. It is difficult to put a price on having a doctor whom you trust and who knows you.

Produced by the General Practitioners Committee of the British Medical Association

Your local practice is vitally important to the community. It isn't always perfect but is striving to get better. We want to improve the care we provide. This is your practice and we value your support.

EXTENDED HOURS ACCESS ...CONT FROM PAGE 1

The surgery is now open at the following times:

	Opening Times	Consulting Times
Monday	8.30 am - 7.00 pm	8.30 am -12.30 pm & 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Tuesday	8.30 am - 7.00 pm	8.30 am -12.30 pm & 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Wednesday	8.30 am - 7.00 pm	8.30 am -12.30 pm & 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Thursday	8.30 am - 7.00 pm	8.30 am -12.30 pm & 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm
Friday	8.30 am - 7.00 pm	8.30 am -12.30 pm & 4.30 pm - 7.00 pm

NATIONAL CHLAMYDIA SCREENING PROGRAMME

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the UK, and is most commonly found in young people under 25. Approximately 1 in 10 under 25s will be infected. Many of those will have no symptoms, and will not be treated.

If left untreated, Chlamydia can lead to long-term health problems, such as Pelvic Inflammatory Disease and fertility problems. However, Chlamydia is easily treated with a course of antibiotics if diagnosed quickly. The National Chlamydia Screening Programme has been rolled out to enable young people to be screened quickly and easily for Chlamydia, and as of February, Bedford Hill Family Practice will be participating in the programme.

Screening is free, quick, painless (we only need a urine sample), and above all, totally confidential. So, if you are under 25, and would like to be screened, please ask reception for an appointment with the nurse.

CHOOSE AND BOOK

What is Choose and Book?

This is a new service which allows you to choose your hospital or clinic and book an appointment with a specialist. When you and your GP agree that you need to see a specialist, they will access the service and offer you a choice of hospital or clinic. You can then select the one you want to go to. The GP will send you an appointment request and password by post, or you can pick it up at the Surgery. Once you receive it, all you need to do is to phone the call centre or access the Choose and Book website to book your appointment on a date and time convenient to you.

The benefits of Choose and Book

You have greater convenience and certainty. With the old system, your hospital or clinic chose the date and time of your appointment, which may not have been convenient for you. With Choose and Book, the choice is yours. Also, the chance of your referral letter being mislaid in the post is removed, because all correspondence to the hospital or clinic is sent electronically.

SURGERY ONLINE SERVICES

Bedford Hill Family Practice has a number of online services available via our website. To make use of these services, you will need to register at the surgery. To ensure the security and confidentiality of patient information, photo identification is required to register - ask a receptionist for details. The services you can enjoy are:

Online Appointment Booking - You can view, book or cancel GP appointments and will find this very useful when the surgery is closed or the telephone lines are busy.

Repeat Prescription Requests - You can request repeat medication, monitor the progress of the request and pick up the prescription at the surgery when it is ready.

Messaging - You can send the surgery short, non-urgent messages at any time of the day or night and a member of the administration team will pass your message to the relevant clinician. You can view their response via the website.

THE ROLE OF THE RECEPTIONIST

The reception team consists of six staff members: Irene, Nora, Julia, Vera, Jeannine and Samantha.

The role of the Receptionist at Bedford Hill Family Practice is both varied and busy. It is extremely challenging and entails being a multi-skilled person. This is often why our staff enjoy their job so much as you never know what each day will bring.

Our priorities are to ensure that both patients and practice staff receive the best possible service. It can be quite a balancing act for a receptionist as we strive to meet all of our patients needs, for example making appropriate appointments at a convenient time and ensuring the patient receives good continuity of care. At the same time, the surgery's aim is to answer all calls within six rings and deal with clinicians queries both within the practice and from other medical services, such as hospitals and pharmacies. At the same time we have to carry out our administrative duties.

The team are aware that sometimes we cannot satisfy every requirement, and we do appreciate that patients will not always be happy with the service they receive from us. We strongly encourage feedback, both positive and negative, as this informs us of specific areas that the team need to work on, and other areas that are working well. The entire reception team thoroughly enjoy their role and feel proud and lucky to work in such a popular, supportive and innovative surgery.

REDECORATION PROJECT

A significant programme of work has begun to improve the infrastructure and maintenance of some of Wandsworth's Primary Care buildings and facilities. A programme has been implemented to improve those Health Centres and GP Practices in Wandsworth that are most in need of investment. This project will be carried out in three phases with the first phase being completed by the end of March 2008. The work will include painting, replacing some flooring in clinical areas, replacing toilets and sinks where necessary and some repairs to roofing.

The work will mean that buildings will be cleaner and more hygienic; improve the patient's experience when visiting these health sites and improve working environments for staff. This work is being carried out by South West London Health Partnerships. This investment is part of the Primary Care Trust's re-investment plan as a result of forecasted surplus for the end of this financial year.

Balham Health Centre has been selected for part one of the project, with work commencing in February and finishing at the end of March 2008. We apologise for any inconvenience caused during your visit to the Health Centre. We realise that this will be disruptive to patients so we are hoping to carry out some of the work outside normal working hours to minimise this.

PHLEBOTOMY SERVICES

Over the past few months the surgery has received a number of complaints about the phlebotomy service at Balham Health Centre. While the surgery has tried to deal with some of these complaints, the service is actually provided by Wandsworth Primary Care Trust and any queries relating to this service should be addressed to the GP Contracts Manager, Kirsty Sibandze, 2nd Floor Teak Towers, Springfield Hospital, 61 Glenburnie Road, SW17 7DJ. Tel: 020 8682 5838, email: Kirsty.Sibandze@wpct.nhs.uk.

What to Expect When Attending the Phlebotomy Clinic

The phlebotomy clinic runs from 8.30am - 12.30pm each day of the week. You do not need an appointment as it is an open access service. You will need to bring your blood test request form from your doctor. When you arrive for your blood test, please take a number from the ticket dispenser situated at the main reception, take a seat in the waiting room and wait until your number is called. Waiting times vary and each test takes between 10 - 15 minutes and every effort is made to see patients as quickly as possible. Monday and Tuesday mornings tend to be the busiest days. The Phle... *Continued on page 4*

PHLEBOTOMY SERVICES ... CONT FROM PAGE 3

...botomist will call you into the room and ask you to sit in a chair and uncover your arm. After confirming your identity, blood is taken from a vein in your arm and put into a special blood bottle. Sometimes more than one blood bottle is filled depending on the type of blood test requested by your doctor, however, usually only one venepuncture is needed to collect sufficient blood for the tests. Your blood samples will then be sent to the pathology laboratory for testing.

WELCOME BACK DR LECHI

Dr Lechi has returned to work following successful heart surgery. We are pleased that he has recovered after a two month lay off and is able to return to normal duties. I'm sure you will join us in welcoming Dr Lechi back to the surgery as he settles in and sees patients again.

PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Practice conducted a patient satisfaction survey in December 2007. Over 300 patients took part, rating different aspects of their experience at the practice either poor, fair, good, very good or excellent. Overall, we were rated very good and came out with very similar scores to other Practices. We had hoped that we would achieve much higher scores, but many factors need to be considered in evaluating the final outcome. The practice will review the results at a team meeting and evaluate the outcomes. We will also meet with a group of patients to discuss the results and to get their input and suggestions on how we can further improve. The meeting is an important way of getting patients involved in improving the services that we provide to the public. If you would like to be part of the meeting to be held on Thursday, 20th March 2008 please contact the surgery and ask for the practice manager..

We continue to welcome your comments and suggestions. Please let us have these via the Suggestion Box in the reception area or you can email our practice manager at donavansunkur@nhs.net. The staff at Bedford Hill Family Practice aim to provide the highest standard of healthcare to all our patients. We feel that this can only be achieved by working together in partnership with our patients in order to promote a mutually beneficial relationship. We want you to be satisfied with our services. We welcome suggestions or ideas to help us improve.

Bedford Hill Family Practice

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We're on the Web!

www.bedfordhillfamilypractice.co.uk

General Practitioners

Dr Cedric Ribeiro
Dr Ai Lechi
Dr Feirooz Torossian
Dr Alagaratnam Kangatharan
Dr Stephen Knight

Practice Nurses

Denise Mathison
Alison Beach

Admin Team

Donavan Sunkur - Practice Manager
Tracy Tester - Deputy Practice Manager
Linda Simmonds - Senior Administrator
Sandra Smith - General Administrator

Reception Team

Irene Hall
Nora Townley
Vera Isaacs
Julia Thompson
Jeannine Labelle
Samantha Mitchell