



HIGHBRIDGE MEDICAL CENTRE PRACTICE

NEWSLETTER

August 2014

www.highbridgemc.co.uk

S.O.S - SAVE GENERAL PRACTICE

General Practice is facing its biggest challenge in its history and without our patients' help and support there is a strong possibility that General Practice in its current form will cease to exist. What it may be replaced with is anyone's guess.

As we highlighted in the last newsletter there is a national recruitment crisis in General Practice. In Somerset, we know of any number of GPs who have just had enough of the daily pressures and stresses are leaving general practice or retiring early, due to burnout, stress and low morale. We ourselves are short of GPs, and are struggling to recruit new GPs. Whilst we have a strong GP training practice ethos, and have been most fortunate to have some outstanding trainee GPs working in the practice, there are very few newly qualified doctors who want to become GPs. This is due to increasing patient expectations, and demands on general practice.

One of the biggest factors affecting General Practice is an ageing and increasingly unwell population that have more complex health needs. These patients need a lot more GP and Nurse input at a time when the budget for General Practice is being cut in real terms. Despite carrying out 90% of all NHS patient contacts, general practice only receives 8.39% of the NHS budget in the UK — an historic low. By 2017, this is projected to plunge to just 7.29%. In addition, a lot of what patients may consider to be core GP services are being tendered and if these are not retained in General Practice even more funding will be lost to you the patient.

What can you do?

Firstly, To ensure that General Practice is funded at the right level to be able to provide

- Shorter waiting times for appointments and more flexible opening hours
- Longer consultations, especially for people with long term conditions

support the petition on the Royal College of General Practitioners website (RCGP) <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/campaign-home/get-involved/petition/petition-england.aspx>. There is a link to this on our website.

Secondly, we want to provide you with the best health care that we possibly can, and over the past few years we have made many changes to our appointments system to make it timely and responsive. So please work with us.

We are always happy to see patients in need. However, if you wake up with a cold or a cough, please think about trying self care and over the counter medicines first.

Complaining that you can't get to see a GP within 4 hours isn't very constructive. We are not an emergency A & E service. In addition, waiting a few days for a routine appointment with your own GP is quite reasonable. We can remember the days not too long ago when the complaints were due to 3 to 4 week waits to obtain a routine appointment and patients queued from 8am to get an appointment when the doors opened at 8.30! To highlight how much things have changed, in June 2014, the practice provided 7,265 appointments. Of these 7,265 appointments, 4,047 were consultations (including telephone consultations) with either a GP or a Duty Nurse

- 41% of patients requesting an appointment saw or spoke to a GP or Nurse on the same day
- 61% of patients requesting an appointment saw or spoke to a GP or Nurse within 2 days
- 90% of patients requesting an appointment saw or spoke to a GP or Nurse within 5 days

So next time you grumble about getting an appointment please ask yourself whether your grumble is reasonable!

**GENERAL PRACTICE IS NOT A 'DRIVE THRU' TAKEAWAY . IT IS A COMPLEX MEDICAL SERVICE.
ABUSE IT AND YOU'LL LOSE IT**



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Flu 2014

The flu campaign begins this year on **24 September** with an extended hours clinic running from 2-8.30pm. After this date, clinics will run every Friday throughout October from 2—6pm.

You will be able to book an appointment from the 1st September

You do not need to make a separate appointment for a flu jab if you are coming in for any other reason (for example a routine appointment, specialist clinic, medication review, etc.), just mention to the receptionist when booking that you would like the vaccination.

If you require a home visit for your vaccination, please be understanding that there will be a lot of people for us to see and we will be unable to guarantee what date we will visit you to administer the vaccination. If there is any way you can come into the surgery, this will help us deliver as many vaccinations to as many



GP Registrar

We are pleased to welcome our latest GP Registrar, Dr Amy Alsop, who starts with us on 6th August.

As part of her training she will be working closely with the clinical team at the practice, which will sometimes mean observing clinicians and therefore present in consultations as well as running some of their own surgeries. Please advise reception if you do not wish to see them or have them present in your consultation.



Macmillan Coffee Morning

Highbridge Medical Centre is delighted to announce that we will be taking part in the Macmillan Cancer World's Biggest Coffee Morning fundraising event. Join us on the morning of Friday 26 September at 10.30am to enjoy some refreshments in return for a small donation to Macmillan Cancer Support. See reception for more details.

