

THE SANDRINGHAM SENTINEL

July 2015

Welcome to the latest Sandringham Practice newsletter! Bringing you all the relevant news about what is happening at the surgery.

Have we got your correct details on record?



PLEASE ensure we have your up to date contact details. Many of you will be aware that we are increasingly using text message as a means of communication, and as a reminder service for appointments. It will only work though if we have your correct number!

On-line services...

Fed up of waiting on the phone to get through to the practice? We are in the process of updating our telephone system which should make telephone access to the practice easier, but have you registered for online access? It is so easy to do and can save you time. Over the last year we have been increasing our facility to book appointments on line and take up is steadily rising. We will be continuing to increase this facility in the coming months. You can also order your repeat prescription on line as well, again saving you time and effort. Interested? Ask for details at reception.



Triage...



Still baffled by triage? So what is it exactly and how does it work? Triage is a process of efficiently dealing with **generally urgent** patient queries and problems. It is not always necessary to see a doctor or in fact to be **seen** by a healthcare professional in order to deal with your problem appropriately. The role of nurses has changed dramatically over the last 10-15 years and they are highly skilled to perform various roles within the practice. Our triage system is manned by nurses who have received specialist triage training. When you contact the surgery with a problem which you don't think can wait for a routine appointment, you will be offered an appointment on triage. Triage operates from 8am til 4.30 and all calls will be dealt with on the day. The triage nurse will call you back and take details of the problem. They will determine who best to deal with your problem. If the problem can be dealt with over the phone, it will be. If it is felt that you need to be seen by a nurse that day, you will be booked into an acute illness clinic or a clinic with our advanced nurse practitioner, ANP. If it is felt that you need to be seen by a doctor, you will be booked into an appointment with the duty doctor or another doctor, the same day where appropriate, or into an appointment with a doctor in a suitable timeframe. There is close liaison between the nurses and the duty doctor at all times and advice is sought from the duty doctor wherever it is needed. If you are not seen by a doctor, it is not that you have been "fobbed off", simply we are trying to make the most appropriate use of the resources we have. You will find that most GP surgeries have moved to a triage system and on the whole it helps with the efficient running of the practice.

Prescriptions

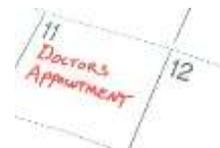
Please remember that it takes 48 hrs from dropping a request for medications in, to the script being generated and signed. This also applies for requests for medications not on repeat.

Remember there are several really easy ways to order your repeat prescription: in person, by post, on line, by telephone, and via repeat dispensing (please ask your local pharmacist for more details).



If you no longer need your appointment, DON'T FORGET TO CANCEL IT!!!

PLEASE remember to attend your appointment, and if you are unable to attend, please be kind enough to cancel it rather than just not turn up.



Did you know a shocking **170** patients failed to attend their appointments in **June** alone? Access is one of the biggest grumbles about most GP surgeries. Just think if those **170** appointments had been made available to other people? Appointments are precious and shouldn't be wasted and if you can't make it, cancelling enables someone else to make use of that slot. The practice has a policy of asking patients to leave the list if they fail to attend appointments on 3 occasions in a 6 month period.

Named GP

From the 1st April 2015, all patients, not just the over 75s as was previously the case, will have a "named GP". This is a new government initiative. Please ask the next time you are in as to who your named GP is. This GP has nominal responsibility for your care, but it has little impact in your day to day interaction with the surgery. You can still see whichever doctor you want to see - you may have to wait longer to see some doctors than others due to the number of sessions each doctor works, and all GPs will work hard to provide optimal healthcare at all times.

Friends and Family Test...

Friends and Family Test has been up and running since the first of December 2014 and is an NHS wide initiative. You may have seen signs around the surgery asking you to complete a very quick survey called the Friends and Family Test. It consists of a simple question, asking whether patients would recommend the surgery on the basis of their experience of the services used. It helps to highlight good and poor



practice to help us improve the quality of care we provide. Forms are available from reception, clinical rooms and from the website and can be completed anonymously and returned to the box in reception. This isn't a one off exercise but an ongoing process which we have to report on every x months. You can therefore fill one in whenever you have had an encounter at the practice.

Summer sense!

Summer FINALLY seems to be upon us and it is a good time for a little reminder about being sensible in the sun. This advice is applicable to everyone, but ESPECIALLY the elderly and the very young who are more susceptible to the effects of the sun and heat. Summer sun is particularly strong in the middle of the day - between the hours of 11am and 3pm, and even here in the UK it can cause lasting damage to your skin and make you feel unwell with the effects of sun burn and heat stroke.



- 1) Avoid prolonged exposure to the sun in the hottest part of the day
- 2) Make sure you use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.
- 3) Ensure your sun screen is broad spectrum - this means protecting against 2 different types of sun ray - UVA and UVB. The SPF is a measure of the protection against UVB rays, while the "star rating" of 0-5 is a measure of protection against UVA rays.
- 4) Ensure your sunscreen is in date! Usually sunscreen has a shelf life of only 2-3 years.
- 5) Reapply regularly.
- 6) Drink plenty of fluids (water preferably). It is easy to dehydrate in the sun and heat.

Patient Participation Group...

We will be meeting on Richard Langthorp will be contact existing members of the group but we are ALWAYS looking for new members so we can get a true cross section of our patient population. We are particularly looking for young people, those with families and

those whose first language is not English. If you are interested in attending, please contact Richard. We would love to see you!

Electronic Prescription Service:

The service has been up and running now for 4 months and on the whole has been a great success. There have naturally been some teething problems but these continue to be ironed out and on the whole the feedback has been very positive. If you're still not sure what EPS is or how to get on board, please contact your local pharmacy or ask at reception. It really is simple to get on board.



Self-referral for certain services:

Did you know that there are certain specialist services that patients can self refer to, rather than wait to be seen by a doctor for? Such services include podiatry, weight management??? and the continence service.

Telephone numbers and further information are available at reception.

Consultations are by appointment only...



Please remember, consultations with GPs or nurses are BY APPOINTMENT only. We do not offer a walk in service. If you feel you need to be seen the same day, please contact the surgery and ask to be put on the triage list, or if

you feel it really can't wait, contact the 8-8 centre at the Flying Scotsman, or in an emergency, attend A and E, **though this service is due to relocate from 1 October 2015, more about this in our next Newsletter.**

Suggestions?

If there is something that you feel we can change, or if there is something you would like to see here in the newsletter, LET US KNOW!!! There is a suggestion box in the waiting room. Pop your suggestion in! It can be anonymous if you prefer. If there is something you think we can do better, we would sooner hear about it from you, rather than to let it fester away unaddressed. We want to provide the best service possible and can only do that if we get feedback from you!

Don't forget the website...

www.thesandringhampractice.co.uk

...for everything you need to know about everything we have to offer!

... And while we're talking about websites, the internet can be a minefield when it comes to finding reliable information especially when it comes to matters of health, however here are a some useful, reliable and trustworthy sources of information that are worth having a look at:

www.nhs.uk NHS Choices website offering information from the National Health Service on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living.

www.patient.co.uk A sound, reputable resource providing information on a wide range of conditions in understandable language.

www.treatyourselfbetter.co.uk A website providing vital information and advice regarding self-treatment of cold and flu symptoms

Until next time, stay healthy and enjoy the summer!

Dr Vicary