

WALLINGFORD MEDICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3, 2019



STAFF NEWS AND RECENT RECRUITMENTS

Dr David Godsiff joins the Partnership, taking over from Dr Hughes who retired in April.

Dr Nichola Osborne – GP working Monday and Thursday and shares a patient list with Dr Lam.

Dr Jennifer Hey – GP working Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday.

Dr Jocelyn Lam (from August) – GP working Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

Dr Ashton now shares a patient list with Dr Beswick.

PLEASE SEE THE PRACTICE WEBSITE www.wallingfordmedicalpractice.co.uk for full details of Doctor availability via our Doctor availability chart.

Our new GP Registrars will join the practice in August – Dr Turcato, Dr Dasgupta and Dr Patel will be with us for a year.

Rachel Granito who is our new Patient Adviser

We said goodbye and good luck to Dr Jacque Cornell who retired from the practice in April and Dr Sara McKelvie who left earlier this year.

DR HUGHES AND DR CORNELL HEAD INTO THE WORLD OF RETIREMENT...

Dear All,

It is with mixed emotions that Jacque (Dr Cornell) and I leave after a combined total of 52 years here at Wallingford Medical Practice.

We have seen many changes over the years but we have always felt the support and kindness of the people in Wallingford and the surrounding area.

I first came to the practice in 1985; of course there were no computers, no practice nurses and lots of visits every day. We were “on call” from our homes on a rota basis in the evenings and at weekends and we were “on call” for our maternity cases 24 hours a day 365 days of the year. Having said this, the daily work load has increased and now we have less “on call” but more intensity during the day, less maternity but more chronic disease and less home visits but more telephone and email consultations. We of course, have seen many changes of staff and colleagues.

We both feel very privileged to have worked in such an excellent GP surgery and part of this joy has been the relationship that we have formed with our patients over the years.

Fortunately, we leave the practice in safe hands under the care of Dr. Hans Paul and the rest of the medical team and Debra Perry and her fantastic staff.

We will miss everyone who works in the practice as well as all our patients and we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all happiness and health in the future.

Dr Charlie Hughes

GENERAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

PATIENT NEWS

HAVE YOUR SAY

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

What is a Patient Participation Group?

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are run by volunteer patients to help strengthen the relationship between practices and their patients.

The PPG contribute ideas, feedback and suggestions directly to your practice.

Take a look at our Patient Participation Group notice board which is in the main waiting room. Here you will find information and events regarding the practice, such as health walks and local events.

Wallingford Medical Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) is a group who attend informal meetings and we are always looking for new members.

The aims of the PPG:

- To ensure that the Patient's voice is heard
- To get feedback from Patients and suggestions
- To increase the flow of information, view and concerns between the Practice, staff and patients.

Look out for details of the PPG activities on the notice board in the Practice. You can contact the PPG by leaving a letter in an envelope at the Practice. If you would like to become a member please email Wallingford.edt@nhs.net

Could I be part of it?

Please tell us if you are interested in taking part. We want the group to represent young and old, people with chronic illnesses and people whose first language is not English. You might be just the person.

WE ARE GROWING!

We have already started plans to expand the practice premises and review staffing levels to manage the expected increase to patient numbers over the coming years due to the increased housing in Wallingford. The PPG have accepted our invitation to participate in plans on behalf of patients. We will keep you updated as things progress.

SATURDAY SURGERY

This is a plea on behalf of our appointment team staff. We only have a limited amount of appointments in Saturday morning surgery, only 1 GP is available. This is not a walk in clinic and appointments are booked in advance. Please do not blame the receptionist if you are turned away. If you need to be seen or need advice at the weekend and don't have a booked appointment, please contact 111 – thank you or your understanding. The Partners.

We now unfortunately also no longer have the limited walk-in appointments available on a Saturday so if you do not have an appointment you will need to call 111.



FIRST AID UNIT

The First Aid Unit which is next door to us is independent of the Wallingford Medical Practice. They are open between 8:30 and 18:30 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). It is a drop in service, therefore no appointment is required.

The first Aid Unit can treat:

- Cleaning and stitching of simple wounds
- Insect bites and stings
- Minor burns and scalds
- A foreign body in the eye
- Minor head injuries- bumps to the head where there has been no loss of consciousness
- Simple sprain



Any potential fractures will be referred to another hospital for an x-ray. If you'd like to check if they can help you before arriving please call 01865 903471.

GENERAL INFORMATION

EAR SYRINGE

If you are having your ears syringed please make sure that you have read and completed the consent form with the information pack and have that signed and completed **before** your appointment.



VISIT YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY FOR MINOR HEALTH CONCERNS SUCH AS:

- Minor skin conditions
- Coughs and colds, including nasal congestion
- Sore throats
- Bruises
- Sunburn
- Minor burns and scalds
- Or call 111 for urgent medical advice



FLU CLINIC



We will soon be announcing the dates for flu clinics, please check the practice website for details

www.wallingfordmedicalpractice.co.uk

ageuk INFORMATION

DROP IN

These sessions are an opportunity for you to receive free information, advice and support and meet your local community information networker.

The second Tuesday of every month at 9.30 -11.30am.

Call Rachel on 07827 235460 for more information.

Call age UK on: 0345 450 1276

Email:
network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

Visit:
www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire



Are you looking to try and lose weight? A variety of free services are available for patients in Oxfordshire. You can self-refer by visiting

<https://achieveoxfordshire.org.uk/contact-us/> or by telephoning 01865 338119.

Do you have Type 2 Diabetes? The community diabetes service run free information courses for patients who are newly diagnosed but also those who have had diabetes for longer. These are designed to increase your understanding of diabetes and provide you with the skills and knowledge you need to manage your condition and live a healthy life. We would encourage all our patients with diabetes to attend one of these courses if you have not done so recently.

You can call them on 01865 604091 or email diabetes.education@nhs.net or speak to your GP or nurse for referral.



EYE PROBLEMS



The Oxfordshire Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS) is available for patients at local opticians (Robert Stanley Wallingford and Patricia Hayselden Wallingford), along with others across Oxfordshire. These services are available to look at conditions such as:

- Red eye
- Dry eyes
- Irritation and inflammation
- Recent flashes and floaters
- Foreign bodies in the eye
- Recent sudden loss of vision.

To get an appointment you will need to telephone and the qualified optometrist will be able to discuss your problem or refer you to the relevant place such as the eye hospital.

GENERAL INFORMATION



TRAVEL



At Wallingford Medical Practice we have a dedicated team of 'Travel Health' nurses, offering both NHS and private vaccinations including Yellow Fever. We are able to offer a range of advice related to travel, and can even provide prescriptions for anti-malarials. In a climate where many GP surgeries are reducing their travel services to offer more urgent nursing procedures, we are still able to offer clinics to our patients.

However we do have limited availability for these appointments; it is most important that travellers book their consultations **well in advance of travel** to enable us to give the correct advice, and start any immunisation schedules in good time (these can occasionally take 3 months to complete!) If we cannot offer an appointment within the time-frame required before travel, there are lots of private providers locally who can usually see you as a 'walk-in service'.

Your help with this is appreciated and we wish you happy holidays in 2019!

Sister Hanna Smith
RGN NMP DFSRH PGCert (MMed)



PHYSIO SELF REFERRALS

Do you suffer from pain in your back, neck, muscles or joints?

Refer **yourself** to Physiotherapy without waiting to see your GP.

If you are over 18 you can refer yourself via the Healthshare website:

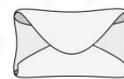
www.healthshareoxfordshire.org.uk

For more information call Healthshare on: **01865 238 108**



PRIVATE REFERRAL LETTER CHARGES

After recent discussion, private referral letters are now chargeable at a fee of £35.50/£42.60. If you would like more information regarding this, come to the front desk and we can print off a leaflet with a bit more information about this service.



PATIENT CALL BOARD SOUND ALERT

We have recently added a patient information screen in our Nurses waiting area. As part of this upgrade the sound to alert patients to being called was changed to a very pleasant ding dong, we hope you like it.

REMINDERS

TEXT SERVICES

We now offer a text service where we are able to send messages which are useful for a number of things including, reminding you that you have a letter to collect, asking you to book an appointment or texting you an email/number if you don't have a pen to hand.



APPOINTMENTS

When you contact the surgery to make an appointment you will be asked by the Patient Adviser the reason for the appointment. This will be for all appointments, whether on the day or pre-bookable and for phone call requests. This helps us signpost you to the most appropriate clinician and appointment type.



We do not offer a walk-in service. You must book an appointment to be seen at all times, including Saturday mornings. Information on how to book appointments is on page 8.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Patients over the age of 16 must call for their own results or queries.

If you are over 16 but would like for somebody else to be able to speak to a member of the team at the surgery regarding confidential issues you must bring in a signed letter consenting for a named person to speak on your behalf. Without this we are unable to discuss anything with another person due to confidentiality.



TEST RESULTS

Please give it a week before you telephone for your blood test results, unless told otherwise by your doctor or nurse. You may need to have an appointment to follow up with your doctor. Do not assume that your results are normal if you don't hear from us, it is your responsibility to call us for your results.

DISPENSARY

We are now open on Saturday's for dispensary until 12 am.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING IN OXFORDSHIRE

What is social prescribing?
It is a way in which you can be linked with a range of local, non-medical activities, opportunities and support that can improve your health and help you 'live life to the full'. These activities, opportunities and support are typically provided by locally based, voluntary and community sector organisations.

If you think that you, or someone you know would benefit from this speak to your GP or Practice Nurse about being referred.

You can also contact them directly on **01235 849445**

Email:

socialprescribing@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

Visit our room opposite dispensary for information regarding mental health including, domestic abuse, miscarriage support, counselling and bereavement. There are lots of people you can talk to if you are not quite feeling yourself. You can help yourself to the leaflets and information which we feel may be helpful.

RIVERSIDE COUNSELLING SERVICE

To make an appointment or find out more contact Riverside counselling on:

Phone: 07879 381 334

Email:

riversidecousellingservice@gmail.com

Post: Friends' Meeting House, 45 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 2JJ

Website:

www.riversidecounsellingservice.co.uk

To contact the space (counselling for young people) Phone: 07879 381 334

Email:

thespace@riversidecounsellingservice.co.uk



Never suffer in silence if you are struggling with your mental health.

WHERE TO GO:

- You can talk to a GP or self-refer to Talking Space who offer a wide range of services including counselling
- MIND
- Samaritans
- Talk to people about your worries, we're always here for you too!

HAVE YOU BEEN BEREAVED BY SUICIDE?

Cruse Bereavement Care offer a friendly support group which is run by trained volunteers from SOBS and CRUSE and they meet on the last Wednesday of each month between 6.30 and 8.30pm (except December) for a tea or coffee and a friendly chat at:

Wesley Memorial Hall, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2DH.

National helpline: 0844 477 9400

Email support: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Charity number: 208078



TAI CHI FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

Come along to the FREE Tai Chi sessions which is held at 4-5pm at the Quaker Meeting House, 45 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 2JJ.

This is a casual drop-in class for people with mental health problems. No experience needed!

Email: info@sportinmind.org

Number: 07341 267740

REQUESTING MEDICATION

The turnover for requested medication at the practice is two clear working days for the prescription form (we advise to allow much longer for dispensing here or at chemists). For example if you request it on a Friday, it won't be ready until Wednesday. We allow this length of time due to the sheer volume of requests the dispensary team receive and the process of doing these.

WHY DOES IT TAKE SO LONG?

1. Requests are put in the box and emptied at the end of the day but not processed until the following day (hence the 2 **clear** working days)
2. Print form or process EPS (electronically)
3. All prescriptions have to be signed off by a doctor which may take longer if updates are required
4. Chemists collect forms
5. We send our prescriptions for collection or dispensing

As you can see, this is not a quick process so please ensure that you request your medication in plenty of time.



ARE YOU A CARER?

Come along to the carers meeting which is held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month for a cuppa and a biscuit at St Mary's Church in Wallingford for a friendly chat. The meeting is an informal chat to discuss all things related to caring for someone. There are often guest speakers here and Age UK often attends too. You can contact Val Wolsey for more information on 01491 836820.

If you care for someone, we can also provide you with a carers back which has lots of valuable information in there. You can collect these from the front desk at reception.



HAY FEVER

Hay fever is usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest. You may suffer with:

- Sneezing
- Feeling tired
- A running or blocked nose
- Itchy, red or watery eyes
- Itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears
- Loss of smell
- Pain around your temples and forehead
- Headache
- Earache

If you have asthma, you might also:

- Have a tight feeling in your chest
- Be short of breath
- Wheeze and cough

Your local Pharmacist is able to advise you on antihistamine tablets, nasal sprays and eye drops to help relieve the symptoms. If this doesn't help you can see your GP. If you have increased asthma symptoms it is advisable to see an Asthma Nurse or Doctor.

Sister Ruth Varley.



WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

Please ensure we have your correct contact details for you and your family, this makes it easier if we need to contact you and ensures you receive your text reminders for appointments you have booked. Please check they are correct the next time you contact us.



THE BOOKING SYSTEM

All routine appointments are released on the day at 8:30am, these are not emergency appointments. We also have a small amount of pre-bookable appointments which are released in advance.

- Call 01491 835577
- In person at the practice- you can come in at 8:00am and receive a card with a number, patients will then be called up in number order at 8:30am when the appointments are released. This is sometimes a better alternative for those who are unable to call.
- Online (GP appointments only)



When we are fully booked:

Routine matters – call back the following day at 8:30am or coming in from 8:00am to get a ticket to book an appointment at 8:30am

Urgent matters – request a triage call with Nurse/GP or call 111

Emergency – If you require IMMEDIATE medical attention please call **999**

ONLINE SERVICES- SKIP THE PHONE QUEUE!

You can book appointments and order medication online via **Patient Access**.

To register for these services please come to the surgery with a form of photographic I.D such as, a passport or a driving license. Children between the ages of 11-15 are unable to register for these services and over 16s must register themselves. Each patient will require their own unique email address. **For more information speak to a receptionist or look on our website.**

RELEVANT EMAIL ADDRESSES

wallingford.prescriptions@nhs.net (you can order medication using this email)

secretaries.wallingford@nhs.net

wallingford.practice@nhs.net



CAN'T MAKE AN APPOINTMENT? D.N.A (Did Not Attend)

On average annually 2250 appointments are missed and not cancelled at the practice. Please contact the practice if you are unable to attend an appointment so it can be offered to someone else. **Missing appointments can result in warning letters and registration from the practice removed.**

**Phone 01491 821780 or
01491 835577**

If you are arriving to your appointment by transport, please ensure you give yourself plenty of time to park. If you are late it will be down to the clinician if they can still see you.



REMINDER... JUST THE ONE CALL... If you have requested a telephone call from your doctor, ensure you are available to answer the phone as time does not permit a second call. Doctors returning your calls will show up as an unknown number and members of staff will request a brief reason for the call to allow the doctor to prioritise their calls.

NISHMA MANEK: THE REAL GATEKEEPERS OF GENERAL PRACTICE



New to a GP practice, I was recently asked to spend an afternoon with our practice receptionists. I wasn't sure what to expect.

But that day gave me a new understanding of what they really do—and a realisation that it's one of the hardest jobs in primary care. I must admit I hadn't given it much thought before.

Fielding the highly-charged emotions of those who inevitably feel fobbed off in a system under pressure, day in day out can't be easy. Putting myself in their shoes felt like being the bouncer of a horribly overcrowded nightclub.

Watching them also made me realise something: as GPs, we often consider ourselves to be “the frontline.” But we're not really—the receptionists are.

They might be the first people to hear the pain that illness stirs, the first to see the strain that it uncovers, and the first to be casually offered some specimen of bodily fluid as a greeting. Or even, as they told me, an envelope stuffed full of faeces once from a patient who didn't quite follow the instructions.

The rewards felt few and far between. Like GPs, our receptionists are exposed to the grit, the love, and the turmoil that exists in our community, witnessing the clouds of emotion that gather in the petri-dish of a waiting room. But they can't step into the thick of it, or do much to waft them away. Perhaps that's not what they go into the job for—but I wonder if that makes it harder. Because what's left felt like a pretty thankless task at times.

Working in the NHS, we all inhabit an uncomfortable void that's easy to forget. But that afternoon with our receptionists showed me that there is a silent expectation of professionalism in the consulting room that isn't always evident at the door. And yet they offered their patience and kindness unreservedly, without much exposure to it themselves.

Like all of us, they may not always get it right. But they usually do. I've seen them placate a waiting room of fuming patients. And sometimes, without decades of medical training, act on instincts that change a patient's entire trajectory.

Like a relative of mine, who suddenly discovered a new lump in his neck one morning. He was due to fly out that evening for his wedding, and en-route to the airport turned up unannounced at his GP surgery. He hadn't been there since he was 14, and knew he was pushing his luck as he walked into the commotion. But something about the fear in his eyes made the receptionist create an extra appointment for him at the end of a busy day.

My family will never forget her—because she started a cascade of events that led to him being diagnosed with thyroid cancer. Our gratitude for the skilful GP and specialists involved in his care will remain with us forever. It's something we talk about often, just as our own patients do. But in truth, it was the receptionist that saved him from a delay in a life-altering diagnosis.

On the other side, as a doctor, I've been indebted to our receptionists for many similar stories. They know our patients just as well as we do, and sometimes their astute observations make a bigger contribution to the patient's care than anything the GP might have done. How often do we trace such stories back to the person who opened the book in the first place?

As GPs, we mourn the lack of time that we have for our patients thanks to rising demands, increasing complexity, and mounting reels of red tape. But after spending the day with our receptionists, I truly began to see that they experience all of that too, while having to bear the heat of emotion it draws out of our patients.

As always, the New Year has been accompanied by the thunder of patients descending on GP surgeries across the country. We will continue to speak out about the challenges, attract some sympathy and gratitude for our plights, and quietly admit that most weeks are peppered with things that keep us in the job.

But as we plough on through the pressure in 2018, let's spare a moment to thank the people holding the whole thing together—our GP receptionists.

Because, in truth, they're the real gatekeepers of general practice.