



Portishead Medical Group

Autumn Newsletter 2020

A Message from our Editor

Greetings to all, here is the next instalment of our practice newsletter and what a year we have had so far! We hope everyone has been keeping safe and well. A lot has happened since we last published this newsletter so we will try our best to update you on what has changed and how we are keeping you safe. Firstly we want to give a large thank you to all our staff who have been working so hard since this pandemic began. We have been open since the beginning and this would not have been possible without the outstanding effort and dedication from all members of staff. We would also like to thank all of our patients for your understanding and support in these trying times.

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Important Information

Some big changes have happened over the last few months. The first of these is that we now accept E-Consultations, You can find a link to this service on our website. E-Consult is an easy way for patients to contact the practice regarding a problem or admin request and get a quick response. Once a patient completes one of their online forms we aim to respond to your query before the end of the next working day.

Another change to the practice is that we are sending more and more information out via text message. We have found this to be a very useful tool to give information to patients quickly and effectively. This is why it is important for you to update us if your mobile number has changed.

We would like to stress the importance of maintaining your health so if you have been sent an invitation for any kind of health screening eg. Cervical Smears or Health Checks then please do contact the surgery as these are services we are still offering during the pandemic. These types of screening are essential for maintaining your health and can also give an early indication if something is wrong, making it much easier to treat.

Finally we would like to ask that you still call the practice before coming to the surgery. This is to keep our patients and our staff safe and maintain social distancing.

Appointments

We now release all of our GP appointments at 8am every morning for same day bookings.

All GP appointments are a telephone call in the first instance. If the GP feels that you need to attend the practice for a face to face review they will arrange this.

Nursing team appointments are released every Monday morning for the week ahead. These can be booked any time from Monday morning onwards.

Diabetic Reviews

Our annual reviews for diabetic patients consist of two stages.

A 'Part A' appointment with a member of our nursing team. This appointment will consist of a blood test, diabetic foot check and a general health check.

'Part B': Following your appointment a member of our Diabetic Team will review your results. You will then receive a text or phone call informing you about your results and providing advice and what to do next.

If you have any concerns regarding diabetes outside of this review please contact us.

In the last 6 months, despite COVID restrictions, we have completed 30,081 consultations with patients. These have been a combination of telephone calls, face to face appointments, home visits and e Consults.

COVID-19

Since this pandemic began we have had to drastically change the way we work. Within just a few weeks we changed our working practices, converted our appointment booking system to comply with NHS England guidance, made changes to our surgery building and re-trained staff to handle the changes.

The situation with Coronavirus continues to change so we are keeping a close eye on developments and following all guidance from Public Health England.

We are often asked why we are not able to offer appointments in the same way as we used to, and we do appreciate that this can cause frustration for everyone. As long as there is a risk of COVID-19 cases in our community we must ensure that we promote and protect the safety of our staff and patients, particularly as we support some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

We have been fully open and supporting patients throughout the period of this pandemic. In the last 6 months we have completed 21,247 telephone calls, 7367 face to face appointments, 1195 E-Consults and 272 reviews for patients in care homes.

We are so proud of the members of our team here at PMG who have kept everything running during these challenging and stressful times. We also really appreciate our patients bearing with us as we make these essential changes and cope with reduced staff availability and capacity.

Going into this winter we are working very hard to ensure that all staff and patients who come to the practice are safe and appreciate your continued support and understanding.

To protect our patients and staff we ask anyone who develops a temperature, a new continuous cough or loses their sense of taste or smell to cancel their appointment and stay away from the surgery.

Please see 111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19 for information and advice

New Website

Our website has been redesigned. You can find it at www.pmg.org.uk

We hope that this will make it easier to find the information that you need. You can also provide information online such as blood pressure readings, new patient forms or provide updated contact details.

Mental Health Support

During the Covid-19 pandemic mental health issues have become even more prominent in our communities. VitaMinds is a service which allows people age 16 and over to refer themselves or a friend for short term psychological therapy support.

Wellspring offer counselling for adults and young people aged 11-18

Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community for young people aged 11-18.

For more information please see the 'Patient Advice' page on our website www.pmg.org.uk

Same Day Prescription Requests

Please allow 2 full working days for routine repeat prescription requests to be processed. We issue scripts for over 2000 medicines per week and each request must be processed by a prescription clerk and checked and signed by a doctor. Requests for prescriptions at short notice have a significant impact on both doctor and administration staff time.

If it is not possible to wait 2 days for your prescription we will ask you to come into the surgery in person to speak to our reception staff. Same day requests cannot be ordered online, in writing or through a pharmacy. Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that your repeat prescription request is ordered in plenty of time and we thank you for working with us to support our staff.

Thank you for reading our newsletter!

Editor: Alex Pearce

www.pmg.org.uk