



# Portishead Medical Group

Winter Newsletter 2020

## General Update

Hello again, here is the next instalment of our newsletter. It seems like a lot has happened over the last few months so I will try my best to update you as much as possible with all the latest news. If you missed it in our last newsletter, Dr Gerwyn Owen has now retired as of the end of December and his patient workload has been shared across the other GP's at the practice, including a new GP Dr Sarah Pal. We have sadly had to say goodbye to one of our Diabetic Nurses, Lara Nel, who is going off to be a diabetic specialist in a hospital! So we wish her all the luck in the world with her new position. Finally, we have altered the way we manage and book appointments to accommodate an increase in demand for appointments. Please don't be offended if you are asked for a reason for your appointment as this enables us to direct you to the most appropriate clinician.

### In this Issue:

- **General Update**
- **Important information**
- **New Diabetic Appointments**
- **Community Garden**
- **Corona Virus**
- **Wasted Appointments**
- **Ear Syringe Update**
- **Minor Injuries Unit**
- **Urgent Prescriptions**

young people friendly



Good

SMOKEFREE

## New Diabetic Appointments

There has been an alteration to the way we book our diabetic review appointments. Instead of booking two appointments (Part A and Part B) we now ask patients to book one Part A review, which includes a blood test. Our Diabetic Team will review the results and then contact you to let you know if you need to book a further appointment or just wait for your next Diabetic recall. This is so that patients whose diabetes is well managed do not need to come in twice. We believe this will be more convenient for you and should free up more time to support patients who are having issues controlling or managing their diabetes.

## Important Information

Here are some more updates regarding staff changes and other useful information.

Firstly we would like to give a warm welcome to Dr Emily Duncan who will be joining our GP team from 1<sup>st</sup> March.

We have also welcomed a new Practice Nurse, Cathy Mosey, who is now working 20 hours a week for us so a very warm welcome to you!

Sadly we will be saying goodbye to Nicola O'Connor, one of our practice nurses, who will retire at the end of February after working here for 7 years. She has always been dedicated to her work, helping her patients with a smile on her face and a friendly manner at all times. She will be missed by staff and patients.

Lastly, as we continue to review our services we are trying to enable our clinical staff to communicate with our patients in the most effective way. As part of this we ask that you please make sure that we have your current mobile phone number and also give permission either on reception or with your clinician for us to send you SMS text messages with information and advice should it be needed.

## Appointments

**Half of our appointments are released every day at 8am (on the phones and online). An urgent doctor is also on duty every day.**

**In addition we offer weekly evening appointments 18:30 to 20:00 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays plus a Saturday clinic from 9 to 12 once a month. A selection of nurse and GP appointments are released a week before each Saturday clinic.**

**Please ask at reception for more details.**

**There were 92 missed appointments in the month of January. Please remember to cancel your appointment if you know you're unable to attend.**

**920 minutes =  
6.5 clinics!**





## **Community Garden Update**



### **Portishead Medical Group Community Garden:**

This year we are planning to start development of a Community Garden on the green space between the health centre and Wyndham Way. We hope to improve the local environment, provide positive healthy outdoor activity for people and reduce our environmental impact. This will be a resource for the whole community which healthcare professionals can use as part of a 'social prescription' (where a person is referred to a local, non-clinical service, typically provided by voluntary and community sector organisations). Examples include volunteering, arts activities, group learning, gardening, befriending, cookery, healthy eating advice and sports.

Dr Howes says "there is increasing evidence that time spent outdoors in green spaces doing meaningful activities can have significant benefits for individuals. It boosts health and well-being as well as reducing the prescribing of medication. We hope that local residents, businesses and organisations will join together to support the establishment of the community garden".

### **Coronavirus / COVID 19:**

You will already be aware of this virus as there has been a lot of coverage in the press. Unfortunately there have been confirmed cases in the UK so we all need to be alert. The current medical advice for people who feel that they may have been exposed to this virus is to self-isolate and call NHS 111.

Currently COVID 19 is most likely to occur in travellers who have recently returned from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, or Thailand. Symptoms to look out for are a possible respiratory infection with shortness of breath or a cough, or a fever with no other symptoms.

### **Wasted Appointments:**

We are grateful to the vast majority of our patients who make sure that they attend appointments that they have booked. Unfortunately we still experience some wasted appointments where people don't turn up - sometimes even for appointments booked that day! Last month we lost the equivalent of 6.5 GP clinics in this way. We understand that sometimes it is not possible to keep an appointment but would ask you to let us know so that we can release it for someone else.

### **Minor Injuries:**

The nursing team have asked us to highlight the Minor Injury Unit at Clevedon Community Hospital. The Minor Injury Unit in Clevedon is fully equipped to deal with all minor injuries such as burns, cuts, small bleeds, and minor eye injuries. They can also do stitches which is something we cannot offer at the practice. We would encourage any of our patients with a minor injury to head there.

### **Ear Syringing Update:**

Ear irrigation (ear syringing) is no longer offered as a routine procedure. It is no longer considered to be first line treatment for the clearing of ear wax and is not a funded service within the NHS for General Practices.

Current guidelines state that ear drops should be used to soften wax which will then enable natural movement of the wax from the ear. Further information and treatment options are available in our 'Ear Wax Self Help Guide' which is available to download from our website ([www.pmg.org.uk](http://www.pmg.org.uk)) or pick up from our waiting room. Alternatively please ask reception where you can go privately to have this done locally. However, if you have ear symptoms that concern you please book an appointment with one of our clinicians.

### **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.