

NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2020

Staff News

Earlier in the year we said goodbye to Dr Sophie Foster, our registrar, who completed her training with us in July. We wish her every success in her future career.

We also said goodbye to Louise Butler, who had been with us for 9 years as an administrator and phlebotomist. We wish her every happiness in the future.

In August we welcomed a new nurse, Rebekka Smith. Rebekka joined us in July and we are delighted to have her in our nursing team alongside Perdita, Jan and Bev and our Nurse Practitioner Lizzy.

Also in August we welcomed our two new registrars Dr Natasha Butters and Dr Jonathan Slot. They will be with us for a year. We welcome them to our team and look forward to working with them.

Since January we have engaged a clinical pharmacist Pavel Teklinski. Pavel is working across our Primary Care Network which includes Grove House and four other local practices. He will be contacting patients from time to time regarding medication reviews and medication queries. We are very pleased to have him working with us.

More recently in August we welcomed Damaris Hobbs. Damaris is a First Contact Physiotherapist and like Pavel, she works across the Primary Care Network. Damaris will be in the surgery on Fridays and patients will be referred to her through the GP.

AskmyGP

Many of our patients will already be aware that in May we introduced a new on line system to contact our GPs. The system is called askmyGP and has been very successful and our patients are reporting lots of positive responses. Here is a brief selection:

- *This is a very effective way of communicating with my GP. Very happy with this system.*
- *Great and easily accessible service. Quick responses and appointment booked.*
- *Brilliant. Needed a referral for a ongoing medical condition so doctor could look at my records to check without needing me present. Doctor has done referral in less than 24 hours. Great!*
- *I am really impressed with this new set up. I used to worry about making appointments about niggling concerns. This new system allows me to ask and it's dealt with a phone call or message. If the Doctors feels it's appropriate an appointment is made. Great service.*
- *What an exceptional service! This is the third time I have had to use it and on each occasion I have been dealt with quickly and efficiently. Each of the issues I have raised have been addressed to my complete satisfaction.*
- *Much easier and a quicker response than the previous system.*

We would like to encourage as many of our patients as possible who have access to the internet to use the system because it is effective and much more efficient both for the patient and for the surgery. Please be reassured that if the doctor feels he or she needs to see you they will arrange an appointment for you and you will be seen.

The system is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – requests sent when the surgery is closed will be processed the next working day.

The system can be accessed through our website –

<https://www.grovehousesurgery.nhs.uk/>

If you need any help using it our receptionists will talk you through the process – once you have done so once you will find it very simple to use in future. There is also a short video on our website home page explaining how to use it.

Of course if you do not have access to the internet our reception team are here to help on the end of the phone.

It is a good idea to check we have your up to date contact details i.e telephone number, mobile number and email address – and to let us know if these change. You can do this through our website using the “Update your Details” link or by phoning our reception.

On Line services

We would also like to remind all our patients that we also offer other on line services – not just to order repeat prescriptions but you can also get access to your records including test results – for more information visit our website or telephone the reception team.

Flu Vaccinations 2020-21

No doubt many of you will already be aware this year due to Covid-19 we will have a very different method of providing flu vaccinations to our patients. The government are advising that as many people as possible who are eligible should have the vaccination this year. We will be holding some smaller clinics at our surgery but the majority of our vaccinations will be provided by our staff at the Shepton Mallet Scout Hall. This is to ensure the maximum protection during the pandemic for our patients and our staff. There is plenty of room at the hall, allowing social distancing; we can operate a one way system; there is

adequate parking and appointments will be phased. We will be doing this from Monday 28 September, through to Friday 2 October. We are taking bookings now for all patients currently eligible (i.e 65 and over, under 65 with long term condition etc). If you are not sure if you are eligible please ring our receptionists and they will help and advise you – 01749 342314 or 342863.

Our nursing team will be administering the vaccines and will be wearing their personal protective equipment as directed at the time by NHS England. We ask that our patients attending the clinics, whether in the surgery or the hall, wear a face mask or face covering please.

The government has also announced that it will be offering the vaccination to patients aged 50 and over who are not at risk, i.e do not have a long term condition. At this point in time we have not been given any further details except that we will be notified of the plans in September. We will let our patients know how this will be organised as soon as we can.

Please do book if you are eligible now – we are expecting a higher than usual demand this year. Please do not use askmyGP to book this – please phone us on 01749 342314 or 342863. We are doing everything we possibly can to provide a safe and efficient service during these difficult times, both in the surgery and in the hall.

We would like to give huge thanks to the Scout Hall Committee for their very kind co-operation and support in helping us to do this. With regard to children’s flu vaccinations, we are awaiting information about when we will receive the vaccines from Children’s Health – once we receive this information we will contact the parents of the children who will be eligible to have their vaccinations here at the surgery.

Visiting the Surgery

Because of the pandemic we have introduced more measures to protect our patients and our staff. We will be seeing patients face to face when necessary, but many problems and queries can be dealt with over the phone, and in some cases using video consultations.

If you have a problem, worry or concerns do please contact us.

We ask patients to make initial contact using askmyGP (see above) if at all possible. Please do not come to the surgery unless the doctor or nurse requests it. You will only be asked to attend if absolutely necessary. If you do need to come to the surgery, we currently are keeping the door closed and only admitting a certain number of patients at a time. We do have our appointments staggered to help us do this.

The waiting room and public areas have been marked out to encourage 2 metre distancing. Our staff, including receptionists who have contact with patients are wearing gloves and face coverings, our clinicians also wear scrubs.

We ask that you attend alone unless you need a carer or in the case of children, one parent.

You will be asked before entry if you have any Covid symptoms (temperature, new persistent cough, loss of taste and smell). If you have you will be referred to NHS111. In the unlikely event that we have to see a patient who may have symptoms we have a room allocated so they would not come into contact with other patients. The room and the equipment are deep cleaned immediately after use.

Patients are asked to use face coverings such as masks or scarves. If you don't have a mask we will provide one but it is very helpful if you have your own. We operate a one way system so you will enter the front door and exit via another. Staff will assist you in and out of the surgery. You will be asked to use hand sanitiser on entry and on exit.

We would like to encourage our patients to use the on line facilities we have set up, but please be assured our reception team are here on the end of a telephone to help if needed.

We hope this reassures our patients and that you will feel comfortable and confident should you need to visit us.

Surgery Opening Hours – August Bank Holiday

The Surgery will be closed on Monday, 31st August, we will be open again on Tuesday 1st September as normal.

If you need urgent medical attention and cannot wait until the surgery re-opens you should ring the Out of Hours service on 111.

Calls to the 111 service are free from both landlines and mobiles.



We have our own Facebook account. We are using this, as well as our website, to keep our patients up to date with news about our surgery, as well as articles and information about health issues and local news etc - please like us and follow us.

