

THE SEASIDE MEDICAL CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Issue 19: Winter 2017

PRACTICE NEWS



CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

Fri 22 Dec - Normal Opening Hours

Mon 25 Dec - **Closed**

Tues 26 Dec - **Closed**

Wed 27 Dec - Normal Opening Hours

Thurs 28 Dec - Normal Opening Hours

Fri 29 Dec - Normal Opening Hours

Mon 1 Jan - **Closed**

Tues 2 Jan - Normal Opening Hours

For advice during closure ring NHS111

Seasons Greetings from all of us at
Seaside Medical Centre

The Electronic Prescription Service. Saves You Time, Makes it Quicker!

Your GP will send your prescription electronically to the chemist you choose, saving you time. Nominate a chemist today by phone or at reception!

ARE YOUR DETAILS UP TO DATE?

There are times when we may need to make contact with you.

It is important that we have the correct telephone numbers including mobile telephone numbers on file.

Please could you either come into the Practice and fill in our contact details slip or telephone the Practice and speak to our Reception Team.

NEW PATIENT TEXT SERVICE

The Practice has recently installed a new messaging service for patients. The new system is programmed to send a booking confirmation once an appointment has been made and a reminder before the appointment is due to take place. This text reminder will allow you to cancel your appointment by replying **CANCEL** to the message. This service will also be used to send reminders regarding annual reviews and health campaigns.

This service is only available to patients if the Practice has an up to date mobile number on the system. Please ensure your contact details are up to date at the Practice. This service is not a messaging service to the Practice, if you need to contact us you must telephone the Practice.

FED UP OF THE 8.30AM RUSH?

We are constantly told by patients that they find having to ring the Practice at 8.30am in the morning time consuming and very frustrating. We appreciate that this is the case, and we endeavour to answer calls as quickly as we can and accommodate patients where possible.

But there is another way patients can book and cancel appointments ; **Online**.

The Practice offers patients the opportunity to register with the online service.

Registering with the service enables patients to book, cancel appointments and order prescriptions. To register with the online service, patients will need to show identification and complete a form.

Once this form has been completed, patients will receive an email with the codes needed to register with the service.



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WINTER PREPARATIONS

KEEP WARM, KEEP WELL THIS WINTER

Keeping warm over the winter months can help prevent colds, flu or more serious health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression. The chances of these problems are higher if you are vulnerable to cold related illnesses due to one or more of the following:

- You are over 65
- You are on a low income (so can't afford enough heating)
- You have a long-term health condition, such as heart, lung or kidney disease
- You are disabled

Wrap up warm inside and out. Wear lots of thin layers, clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are particularly good and help to maintain body heat. Wear shoes with a good grip to prevent slips and falls when walking outside.

If possible, stay inside during a cold period if you have heart or respiratory problems. Food is a vital source of energy, which helps your body keep warm. Try to make sure that you have hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day and keep active in the home if you can. Check on older neighbours or relatives to make sure they are safe and well.

Make sure they are warm enough, especially at night, and have stocks of food and medicines so they don't have to go out during very cold weather. Icy pavements and roads can be extremely slippery.

Take extra care if you go out. The Met Office advises putting grit or cat litter on paths and driveways to lessen the risk of slipping. It is wise to try and avoid small roads that have not been gritted and stick to major roads taking straight forward routes.

If making long journeys and bad weather is expected it would be advisable to pack a warm blanket, a flask with a hot drink and a shovel in the boot just in case driving becomes treacherous due to adverse weather conditions.

You may be able to claim financial and practical help with heating your home. To find out if you are eligible for help to improve your heating or help with bills you can ring the **Winter Home Check Service** 0800 085 1674 www.warmeastsussex.org.uk.

HAVE YOU HAD YOURS YET?

We still have flu vaccinations available.

The purpose of the flu vaccination programme is to offer protection to those who are most at risk of serious illness should they develop influenza. If you are 65 or over, pregnant, a carer to a vulnerable person or someone with a serious medical condition, book for your vaccination now!

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HEALTH NEWS

DO YOU THINK YOU ARE PREGNANT

Patients don't have to see a GP if they find they are pregnant. Patients can self refer themselves to the hospital so they can get a booking with the midwife. Just go to www.esht.nhs.uk/maternity/referral.

ONE YOU! WANT TO BE THE HEALTHIEST YOU?

Making better choices today could have a huge influence on our health, whether it be reducing our risk of stroke, frailty in later life, cancer, heart disease or type 2 diabetes.

Modern life isn't easy, tempting treats on offer, the comfort of a car when its cold to get to work, technology that allows us to shop at home.

One **You** is here to help you get back to a healthier you. One **You**, gives you support to make simple changes, provides you with the tools and encouragement to see the changes through.

One **You** covers a variety, smoking, drinking, eating, moving, sleep, stress, sexual health, weight-loss and diabetes. If you would like to take the steps and change, speak to your doctor or ask for details at the reception. Search **One You** today and take the quiz.

ANNUAL DIABETES CHECKS SAVES LIVES

Patients with Diabetes who've had regular annual Diabetic checks during the past seven years have a mortality rate that's half that of those Diabetic patients that haven't had their checks. Diabetic patients at Seaside Medical Centre are given a yearly review with

Dr Varuna, the Diabetic doctor as well as a follow up at around 6 months. Eye health, foot health, blood pressure as well as blood tests are carried out to ensure that the patient has their Diabetes under control.

If your review isn't due and you have concerns or questions about your Diabetes then speak to your Doctor.



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OFFICE NEWS

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF RECEPTIONIST

There are 13 receptionists throughout the Practice, the day begins when we take back the phones from the Out of Hours Service at 8.00am when our 'phone triage' (telephone advice with a doctor) begins. From 8.30am all calls to the Practice are answered in reception and we have 4 phones that ring constantly.

We deal with a variety of calls including making appointments, taking visit requests, giving out blood test results, handling queries on prescriptions and routing referral queries to the secretaries.

Between 8.30am and 9.30am is our busiest period and we hope you understand if the phone is not answered quickly. One of the team is on the prescription desk processing the prescriptions for the doctors to sign. On average we process prescriptions for around 130 patients per day. **Patients should ring after 10am if they have a query related to their prescription. Prescription requests are only accepted by written request or online and not over the telephone.**

The receptionist on the front desk is kept busy checking in patients arriving for appointments, booking new appointments and dealing with queries and registering new patients. Another receptionist is constantly scanning incoming letters from hospitals onto patients files. **We suggest patients ring after 10am to ask for blood test results.** The doctors always put a message on the screen for us to give to you.

Unlike other Practices in Eastbourne, we don't close during the day. Between morning and afternoon surgeries we are still busy answering the telephones. Doctors go out to do visits between the morning and afternoon surgery to those patients that are very ill and house-bound. During the afternoon we continue to deal with queries, patient appointments, filing.

A receptionist's day isn't always easy. Every call is different, no patient request is the same. On a daily basis the team can encounter difficult and challenging situations. At 5.30pm the phones are transferred to the Out of Hours Service and for the reception team the day comes to a close.

