

# DEDDINGTON HEALTH CENTRE

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2014 Edition [www.deddingtonsurgery.co.uk](http://www.deddingtonsurgery.co.uk)



## OUR PATIENT SURVEY 2014

Earlier this year we conducted our patient survey and we wanted to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey. We had a good response, and, like last year, we are using part of this newsletter to cover some of the comments that were made about the surgery, so that as many people as possible understand how different aspects of the surgery work.

## **Surgery Opening Hours**

There were quite a lot of comments about extending the surgery opening hours into evenings and weekends. There are 2 reasons why we are not open at the weekends and in the evening.



At this surgery we have 6 GPs - 4 of whom work fulltime, and 2 work part time out of choice because they have young children. In order to cover these extended hours, our staff would have to work less during the daytime, in order to cover the additional evening or weekend hours. This means we would have less availability of appointments during the working week in order to provide appointments at evenings/weekends. Since our appointments during the week are always full, there is no slack in the system to provide the slots in evenings and weekends. Your reaction may be – employ more doctors, but this brings us to the second reason - funding. Like every part of public service in the UK, General Practice funding is decreasing not increasing, so there is no extra funding to employ extra GPs. And working at weekends and evenings would be expensive because we would not only have to have the GPs there, but also the Receptionists and Dispensers. All of which is additional cost which is not funded by the NHS.



## **Seeing your preferred doctor**

We realize that if you want to see a particular doctor then there can be a wait for an appointment, particularly if that GP has been away on annual leave. In all surgeries, routine GP appointments are available on a first come first served basis, this means that inevitably there can be a wait if you want to see a specific GP. There is no way round this. We do offer both an 'email your GP' service and a phone call service (leaving a Voicemail before 11am) which allows you to contact specific GPs, and this may help if your issue is something that could be dealt with using either of those methods.

## **Waiting Time Before Being seen by the GP/Practice Nurse**

Several people made a comment about having a long wait at the surgery before their appointment turn was called. The GPs have 10 minute appointments for each patient, which is usually enough time to deal with what someone has come about, but sometimes isn't, especially if a person has more than one thing they want to discuss, or they are discussing something complicated. In this case, the consultation can run over and this then impacts on the patients booked after then. This is a difficult thing to avoid, and so we ask that you are tolerant. The doctor sees each patient as quickly as they can, but it is impossible in a surgery to be exact about timing. It does help if patients are mindful when they are with the GP, that appointments are booked at 10 minute intervals and only discuss 1 problem at 1 appointment. Our reception staff are asked to inform people in the waiting room when a GP is running late. It is always a good idea when visiting a surgery/hospital to go armed with a newspaper or a book in case there is a wait.



## NEWS ABOUT OUR DISPENSARY

First of all a few things to remind you about.

- The Dispensary is **shut between 1pm and 2pm on Mondays**.

This is to allow a time when the staff can have Dispensary meetings, attend Practice meetings, or for staff training.

- When you put in a **request for a repeat prescription**, there is a 48 hour turnaround time before the medication is ready for collection, which does NOT include weekends. So if you put your request into the Dispensary before lunch on a Friday, your medication will be ready for collection on Tuesday. The only prescriptions that are 'same day' are those that the GP prescribes on the day that he/she sees you – we call them 'Acutes' because they are one off prescriptions, not a medication you have on a regular basis.
- **Our Medication Delivery Service** to villages, and, in some cases, to peoples' houses is run by volunteers. If there are any problems, please contact the surgery not the volunteers. Thanks

- **Uncollected Prescriptions**

If you order a repeat prescription, but then forget/don't bother to collect it, it is kept waiting for you for one month and is then unpacked and the medication is put back into the Dispensary stock. This is a lot of time consuming work for the staff because as well as the unpacking and putting away, the medication also has to be taken off the person's computer records, it has to be added back into the computer stock control; the labels have to be removed – they are very sticky and firmly stuck on so this is a fiddly and time consuming job. Sometimes they are 'special' orders of high cost drugs which we use only rarely, and then the money spent on that drug has been wasted. This is the pile of uncollected medication from February 2014, that one of our staff was about to start unpacking.

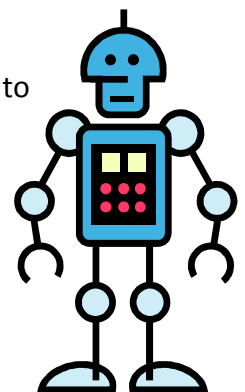


### Dispensary and our Patient Survey

There were several similar themes about the Dispensary that emerged from our patient survey.

- That there may be a long wait in a queue to pick up prescriptions, because the dispensers take a while to find a persons' medication from the baskets on the shelves
- That items that you have ordered are sometimes missing from the bags
- Crowded waiting room with some patients waiting to see GPs and some waiting to collect medication

We have been thinking about how to rectify these problems for a while. The problem is that with our Dispensary in its' current location, there is just not enough room for the Dispensers to work efficiently. We are therefore planning some fairly radical changes to our Dispensary, which we hope –if we get planning permission – will greatly improve the service we can offer.



We are planning several things

1. Move the Dispensary from its' current location, to the bottom of end of the surgery, with its' own entrance/exit and waiting room.
2. Install a robot to automate the selection process for gathering up the medication that a patient orders and then collecting the bag from the shelf when the patient comes to collect.
3. Install a 'hole in the wall' medication machine called a Pharmaself to enable patients to pay for and collect medication when the surgery is shut, using a personal PIN number.

We hope these changes will enable Dispensary staff to work efficiently and with greater patient privacy. Exciting times!