

Practice Newsletter – January 2014

Latest news from the Team

We would like to say congratulations to Kristyn Whitmore-Craw (nurse) who had a baby boy in November and to Dr Fiona Cochrane who had a baby girl in November.

We would like to welcome Dr Rebecca Stephenson who will be covering Dr Cochrane whilst she is on maternity leave.

On a sadder note Pauline Burch (Normandy receptionist) will be retiring from the surgery after 40 years' service, we would like to thank her for her outstanding contribution to the surgery and wish her well and a long and happy retirement. We know she will be sadly missed by all our patients.



Flu last call

We are now coming towards the end of our flu programme for this season if you are eligible and would still like to have the vaccination please contact the surgery. If you do not want to have the vaccination this year please also let us know and we will remove you from this year's flu programme. Telephone: Fairlands 01483 594250 and Normandy 01483 813274

The HUGE cost to the NHS of missed appointments

Just imagine - you are waiting in for the repairman to call on the date and time you have arranged. But, the repairman is a no show. Neither has there been a courtesy telephone call to apologise for not being able to make the appointment or even to arrange another day. Like most people you will be annoyed – you lead a busy life, your time is important. Yet in October 2013 the Fairlands surgery had **120** missed appointments where they had not been notified, being notified would have allowed them to pass the appointment on to someone else.

In a recent survey for Pulse magazine 51% of 440 GPs that responded voted for charging patients for appointments. I do not want to see that at Fairlands or Normandy but with these high figures for non-attendance it would be hard to counter the argument for charging.

Do you as a Fairland or Normandy patient have any suggestions as to how the surgery could reduce these figures? If you do, please speak or write to the Practice Manager, Deborah Slade. Or email her at dslade@nhs.net

*At R.S.C.H the yearly number of missed appointments is a staggering **34,763** representing 6.2% of their total outpatients' appointments of 560,633. Think of these figures when you are complaining about the waiting time to see a consultant. At a time where every GP surgery and hospital is fighting for every penny they have. Time is wasted on non-attendance of appointments. As one patient to another, please, please, if you cannot make an appointment let the surgery or hospital know, even if it is only 30 minutes before the appointment - telephone.

Frank Clement-Lorford

Fairlands and Normandy Surgeries' Patient Representative

**Thanks Frank for your article – and for your tenacity in submitting a Freedom on Information request to obtain these figures from RSCH on behalf of the practice!*

Shingles update

The Department of Health now have a supply of this vaccine which protects against shingles. If you are 79 and previously received a letter to invite you to have this vaccine but due to short supply we were unable to offer the vaccine please contact the surgery to book an appointment. We will also start sending invite letters out again to patients that have turned 70 years of age.



When we are

A&E should not always be considered as the first point of call when we are closed. A&E attendances are costly to the NHS, often involve lengthy waits to be seen and patients with many minor ailments can be managed successfully at home with simple first aid, advice from NHS Direct or the out of hours service. To obtain medical assistance out of hours you need to phone **111** and the operator will be able to direct you to the right service and arrange for you to see a doctor if appropriate.

- There is a walk-in centre at Woking Community Hospital, Heathside Road, Woking GU22 7HS telephone 01483 846209 which is open Monday to Friday 7am-7.30pm, weekends & Bank Holidays 9am-7pm but they do not see children under 2 years of age
- There is a minor injuries unit at Haslemere Hospital too
- There is no longer a walk-in centre at RSCH or Frimley Park Hospital

More about the 111 service

- You can phone the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but not in a life-threatening situation.
- The service has been introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services.

Call 111 if:

- You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.
- You think you may need to go to [A&E](#) or need another NHS urgent care service.
- You don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call.
- You need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

For less urgent health needs, contact [your GP](#) or [local pharmacist](#) in the usual way. For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to [call 999](#).

How does it work?

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of advisers, supported by experienced nurses. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straight away to the local service that can help you best. That could be A&E, an [out-of-hours doctor](#), a [walk-in centre](#) or urgent care centre, a community nurse, [an emergency dentist](#) or a late-opening chemist.

Where possible, the NHS 111 team will book you an appointment or transfer you directly to the people you need to speak to. If you need an [ambulance](#), one will be sent just as quickly as if you had dialled 999.

If a health professional has given you a specific phone number to call when you are concerned about your condition, continue to use that number.

Type talk or text phone if you have difficulties communicating or hearing, you will be able to use the NHS 111 service through a text phone. Calls will be connected to the Text Direct system and the text phone will display messages to tell you what is happening. A Type talk Relay Assistant will automatically join the call. They will talk back what you've typed to the NHS 111 adviser and, in return, type back the adviser's conversation, so you can read it on your text phone's display or computer

Website



We have just launched a new website packed full of interesting and new information, please take a look www.fairlands.co.uk On the website you will be able to view the latest news from the surgery, you will be able to take part in questionnaires, sign up to our patient reference group which uses patient ideas to improve our surgery, and much more. We welcome your feedback so please take part in the regular online polls. If you would like to receive the latest newsletter by email you can do this by signing up for it through the website, alternatively you can view it on the website.

Contacting the surgery

If you need to contact the surgery you can now do so by email GWCCG.fairlandsreception@nhs.net you can use this email to send your repeat prescriptions to us, it will be monitored on a daily basis. Please note we will not be able to routinely reply to emails as at this stage it is designed for incoming mail only.

Saturday Opening

The surgery is pleased to announce we are now open on a Saturday morning 9.00-12.00 for pre-bookable GP and nursing appointments only. You will also be able to collect prescriptions, register as a new patient and book appointments. Please note the phone lines will not be open during this time. We have set up this Saturday session to assist our full time workers and commuters and they are proving to be popular.

Appointment system

We have introduced in addition to our standard appointment system the option for a 5 minute telephone consultation, this is great for patients that work out of the area or work late or early mornings. Please ask reception when you call for more details of these appointments if you think the doctor could help you over the phone.

Subject to daily availability, we would like to remind you that we have

- 3 week book ahead appointments
- 48 hour book ahead appointments
- Same day appointments
- Internet appointments (beginning & end of day at both Fairlands and Normandy surgeries)
- Same day 5 minute telephone consultations

Please note we are only able to deal with one problem per appointment. If you feel your appointment may take longer please ask for double appointment availability.



Home visits

When requesting a home visit, please consider that including travel time, one home visit takes the same amount of time as it would to see 4 or 5 patients in the surgery. Please make every effort to attend the surgery if you can. If you do require a home visit please try and contact the surgery **before** 12 noon.

Reception desk

Please note the Fairlands reception opens at 8.30am and is not manned before this time. This is because receptionists are taking a high level of telephone calls at this time.

Prescriptions

When starting your last pack of repeat medication, please remember to put in the next request at that point rather than waiting until you have run out altogether. The turnaround process for requests at Fairlands is 48 hours (72 hours at Normandy) and we are not able to offer a drop-in service for urgent requests. May we remind you that telephone requests for medication CANNOT be accepted, but email, internet, fax, handwritten or SAE are all acceptable methods of sending requests. If you would like to order your repeat prescriptions via the internet, please ask at reception to obtain your individual password.



Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) screening programme

This is a new screening service to tell if you have an abdominal aortic aneurysm. There are usually no symptoms of an **AAA** but thousands of older men die each year after an aneurysm bursts. The screening is for men aged 65 and you will be automatically invited to attend when you turn 65. You will receive an invitation leaflet with an appointment date and time three weeks in advance, you will then come along to one of the clinics and have an ultrasound scan of the abdomen and the aortic diameter is measured. The results will be provided immediately after the scan and in the post shortly after. If you are already 65 and have not been invited you can self refer on 01784 884859 or by email to aaascreening@asph.nhs.uk these clinics are held fortnightly on a Wednesday at the Fairlands Medical Centre.



Hypertension clinics

We have changed the way we monitor our patients with Hypertension we will now be sending out invitations to come in for an Annual Hypertension review, this will involve having your blood and urine checked and then a review with the GP or nurse after.

How is your blood pressure?

If you monitor your own blood pressure at home and have not given us your readings for the past 6 months - please collect a special form from reception, complete with latest readings and hand back to a receptionist. If you are unable to come in for a form, please telephone reception with your readings instead. We have now purchased a blood pressure machine using money from a donation to the surgery. The machine is situated in reception and if you suffer with high blood pressure please feel free to use this machine, and then give your readings to one of our reception staff.

Guildford and Waverly Referral Support Service

Guildford and Waverly referral support service is provided by the NHS and allows you to choose a hospital or clinic and book an appointment at a date and time that is convenient for you.

What happens when you are referred?

When you are referred for treatment your GP will discuss possible options for more treatment and where it might take place. They will give you a leaflet explaining what the next steps will be.

If you need a first outpatient hospital appointment, this will be arranged for you by the Guildford and Waverley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Referral Support Service.

A specially trained RSS doctor will make sure the right service is selected for your treatment. You can then choose the best place to have your treatment. You can find more information about your choice of treatment locations by talking with your GP or visiting www.nhschoices.nhs.uk

You will then be contacted by the RSS to book any appointment you need. They use the national computer system called Choose and Book.

Chronic disease clinics

Please remember to book into the asthma, COPD and diabetes clinics with our team of experienced practice nurses for your annual review. These appointments are important to check your medication, overall health & chronic condition and offer the opportunity to discuss the latest recommendations & research for your specific disease. We are particularly keen to hear from asthmatic patients registered at the Normandy surgery as a number of annual reviews are overdue.



Health and social care information centre

We will soon be required to supply your personal and confidential medical information to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC). This information will be taken from the practice in a form that can identify you. The practice has NO choice but to allow the HSCIC to extract this information. However, individual patients can instruct their practice to stop the transfer of their data. For more information on the reasons for this data extract and how to opt out of sending your confidential information ask the receptionist for a leaflet or go to the website at www.nhs.uk/caredata

Are you a carer?

If you are a child or adult and look after a relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without your help because of long term sickness, age or disability – and the care you provide is unpaid... you are a carer.

The term carer should not be confused with that of a paid care worker or someone who acts as a volunteer attached to a voluntary organisation.

The reason for this exercise is to identify the number of carers in the area to ensure that they are offered the help and advice that is available to assist and support them. This includes reminders for the annual flu vaccination that they are entitled to, carers support meetings, assistance with identifying any benefits they may be entitled to, and an annual health check offered by the surgery.

If you read this and realise that you are indeed a carer, please visit the reception desk at either surgery and ask for a 'yellow form' which needs to be completed and returned to us.

We also offer carer health checks with our nurses. Please call reception to book if you are a carer and you have not had a carer's health check.

Cross roads care



This is a free service being offered to carers of patients with life limited illnesses. In partnership with NHS Surrey Crossroads Care Surrey is offering respite care to those carers looking after a loved one in the last six months of life. For more information on this service please contact: **Cross Roads Care on 01483 447777**

Private services at Fairlands

We offer a range of private services (osteopath, physiotherapist, counsellors, acupuncturist and a chiropodist) who work alongside us at the surgery. We are pleased to tell you that Donna Varns (osteopath) has now returned from maternity leave. Please book appointments with them at reception.

Some patients request 'to whom it may concern' letters from their doctor in connection with applications for gym/class membership, TV show application and college places. Please note that providing this type of letter is not an NHS service and as such a charge of £20 is payable at the time of collection. This is also the case for holiday cancellation forms, disabled badge photo verification, fitness to travel certificates and private insurance claim forms where private charges apply.

Patient representatives

Patient participation in Guildford and Waverley GP practices has been gathering momentum and two meetings have now been held with patient representation from each of the 21 member practices. The full details of these meetings and achievements to date can be found on the Guildford & Waverley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) website together with the plans that have been set and agreed by the patients themselves.

You can now join up to the patient reference group through our new website, by signing up you agree to us contacting you for feedback and completing questionnaires to help us improve our services.

<http://www.guildfordandwaverleyccg.nhs.uk/index.php/listening-to-you/patient-participation-groups>

We are lucky to have a patient representative Frank who represents Fairlands and Glaziers Lane Surgeries who attends these wider meetings but he is keen to engage with you in a number of ways. He would like to hear from you regarding the issues that are important to you as users of the Fairlands & Normandy surgeries and will be addressing some of the common themes within the practice patient questionnaire results, and the wider Guildford and Waverley area. Please contact Frank on f.clement-lorford@sky.com
For urgent matters, please contact the practice and a message will be passed to them.