

June 2013

The View from the First Floor

Welcome to the re-launch of our quarterly newsletter. We have been aware that this communication with our patients has been missed, and finally have brought together the resources and commitment to re-engage with the project. We want to keep you, our patients, up to date with changes, practice closures for holidays and training, health matters and more. The NHS and healthcare more generally are never far from the news, whether it is announcing the results of the latest research, the failure of individuals and organisations such as what happened in Mid-Staffordshire, or the criticism of the provision of services in or out-of-hours. Often what is missing is the local voice, and what really matters to you here in Montrose. We hope to at least provide a comment or two on these matters that you will find useful.

As with the rest of the health service, we have seen the pressures and demands on your doctor's surgery continue to rise since our last issue of these newsletters. Pressures on the availability of appointments, on the time taken and inevitably on people trying to provide a service. The practice has responded to these challenges, but new ways of working and less slack in the system make it more difficult when gaps appear.

It is therefore more crucial than ever that we make the very best use of the time we have, so would return to a topic that has never really gone away. In the past year, we have had 2132 appointments broken without adequate notice of cancellation. That is almost 5% of all our available appointments. Even at a standard ten minutes per appointment slot (and some were longer than this), that equates to more than 355 HOURS of consulting time lost, or almost seven hours per week. We could see a lot of patients in seven hours, so please remember how important it is to let us know if your appointment is not going to be kept. Let your friends and neighbours know, too. We'd really appreciate it, and it will let us release the time to someone else.

So I hope you enjoy this latest newsletter from your practice. We have included some general information as well as contacts and public holiday dates, and trust you will find it interesting, informative and useful.

Ian McNeil
Practice Manager

A timely word from the Nurse ...

Now that summer is approaching and the sun is shining, here are a few tips to make summer more pleasant.

Whether you are abroad or at home, the sun can cause damage to your skin so protect it with sun screen and moisturiser. Children are especially at risk with their delicate skin. Remember to apply often, even if it says once only on the bottle, not forgetting the face and ears. Hats help protect against sunburn on the scalp. T-shirts help protect shoulders and back.

Drink more fluids in the summer, as we can be more prone to dehydration, which can cause headaches.

Think about health risks, both at home and abroad. Make sure you know how deep the water is in the swimming pool before jumping in. Ensure travel insurance covers water sports and other activities you are doing. Also, make sure you know how to get home at night and that the route is safe.

Check you are up-to-date with travel vaccines if travelling abroad. We have a travel health form that you can complete, which is available from reception. This should be completed at least one month before you travel, but the earlier the better, so we can plan your vaccine schedule. Once we have received your completed form, we will phone you to inform you if you require immunisations. Most routine vaccines are given using an NHS prescription, but some are private. You will be informed about this prior to receiving your prescription. We also cover travel health at these appointments.

In the end, these few simple precautions should ensure you enjoy your holiday, and return refreshed – not ravaged!

Patient Contact information

Please send me future information like this by email.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Date of Birth

Email address.....

QUIZ CORNER

V S F S J A E G S V H S E E Y L A Q
 T Y N G J I G N E T U E X W A T E R
 R M A N B R Z R I R R E A K J S W Y
 E P L U F E N N I C R E D R G R B M
 S T L L O T P V E C I O S D T I Z L
 A O E Y O C G M I G O D F S Y D O B
 E M R D D A K S Z L Y E E D Y C Y K
 S S G I D B E Q B F H X O M I A F B
 I U Y E N E I G Y H N C O E S R U N
 D K U Y H O G F T T T C B R E O V C
 R U Y I M G G P G O O D D N Y A Z X
 H O S P I T A L R L P A N C R B Y O
 K Q T N Q U E D D Q Y T N H P D O S

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| ALLERGY | BACTERIA | BLOOD |
| BODY | COLD | DISEASE |
| DOCTOR | EXERCISE | FOOD |
| HEART | HOSPITAL | HYGIENE |
| LUNGS | MEDICINE | NURSE |
| OXYGEN | STRESS | SYMPTOMS |
| VIRUS | WATER | |

Medical Facts, did you know?

- When you blush, your stomach lining also reddens.
- The surface area of a human lung is equal to that of a tennis court

Townhead Staff Training Days 2013

Please note that the practice will be closed on the following afternoon this year from 12.30 pm:

| Day | Date |
|-----------|--------------|
| Wednesday | 12 June 2013 |
| | |
| | |

Medical assistance is available via NHS24 on these days by telephoning 08454 24 24 24

Townhead Public Holidays 2013/14

Please note that the practice will be closed on the following dates this year:

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Monday | 27 May |
| Monday | 22 July |
| Monday | 7 October |
| Wednesday | 25 December |
| Thursday | 26 December |
| Wednesday | 1 January 2014 |
| Thursday | 2 January 2014 |

Medical assistance is available via NHS24 on these days by telephoning 08454 24 24 24

Why we ask questions when you call...

With constant pressure on GP's time, as well as on the available time for our nurses, we appreciate it can be difficult to get the appointment you want at a time that suits. When calling for an urgent appointment on the day, staff will therefore ask for some brief details in order to ensure you are seen by the most appropriate clinician. We may also offer the chance of a doctor calling you back but for this to work effectively; GP's do wish to see what the call is about. Please do not be offended if you are asked for brief information and be assured that all our staff are subject to confidentiality agreements. If you still feel you'd rather not say, then that is ok.

Get to know the staff behind the scenes

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Debbie Casey | Senior Receptionist |
| Alison Oakley | Medical Secretary |
| Clair Barnett | Receptionist |
| Emma Laidlaw | Receptionist |
| Evelyn Ross | Receptionist |
| Kay Hurst | Receptionist |
| Maureen Gray | Data Processor |
| May Taylor | Receptionist |
| Inga Martin | Senior Practice Nurse |
| Alison Hill | Practice Nurse |
| Elaine McNairn | Practice Nurse |
| Justine Williams | Practice Nurse |
| Lisa Li | Healthcare Assistant |

Contact us:

Townhead Practice 01674 676161 (8.00am until 6.00pm, Mon-Fri)
 Prescription Line 01674 677819 (24hr Answering Machine)

Email: townhead.tayside@nhs.net
townheadprescriptions.tayside@nhs.net

