

DR DUGGLEBY & PARTNERS  
STOKESLEY HEALTH CENTRE

NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2013

The purpose of this Newsletter is to clarify some current procedures as some patients do not appear to be aware of the full range of our services. It follows on from the recent Patient Survey, details of which are on our website [www.stokesleyhealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.stokesleyhealthcentre.co.uk).

Pre-Bookable (Book in Advance) Appointments with a GP are available

These appointments can be made by telephone or at the reception desk on Mondays to Fridays from 8.30 a.m. onwards. They are now spread through the day rather than in blocks towards the beginning of surgeries and usually available 4/5 weeks in advance.

There are, however, fewer Book in Advance appointments available (majority are Same Day appointments), essentially for the following reasons :-

- Most patients wish to be seen without delay and to manage this expectation we need to retain the majority of appointments for same day use.
- Fortunately, we don't get many Did Not Attend's (patients who don't keep their appointments) but when we do it is usually patients who have booked in advance. If you are unable to attend please let us know, giving as much notice as possible.

We believe we have now got the balance between the numbers of Same Day and Pre-Bookable appointments about right. Same day appointments can be made by telephone or at the reception desk from 8.00 a.m. onwards.

Extended Hours Appointments with a GP are available

These are intended for patients who are unable to attend during the day e.g. find it difficult to get time off work. They are available one evening each week on either a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday from 6.30 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Please contact us on 01642 710748 to find out which day the appointments are available in a particular week.

Online Appointments are available

Patients can book some appointments online via our website. Four pre-bookable appointments per GP can be booked in this way so, if you wish, you can make an appointment with the GP of your choice. You can also book an appointment with the Nurse Practitioner. You will need a User Name and Password, if you haven't already been provided with these for Repeat Prescription ordering. Bearing in mind not all patients have access to a computer we still ensure access to appointments remains fair to everyone.

Online booking is not currently available for Practice Nurse or Phlebotomist (blood taking) appointments.

### Introduction of 111 Service

On a date still to be confirmed, the NHS 111 Service is being introduced in our area to make it easier for people to access healthcare services when they need medical help quickly, but it's not a life-threatening situation. If people need to contact the NHS for urgent care there will only be three numbers – a) 999 for life-threatening conditions b) GP Surgery c) 111.

When it is available everywhere, 111 will replace the NHS Direct 0845 46 47 telephone number.

### Telephone Services

Some patients have suggested our telephone system should include a numbered queuing arrangement similar to those used by call centres and elsewhere. We have made enquiries but it is not possible to add this to our system. To change to a system that would have this facility would involve expenditure of several thousand pounds. Unfortunately, funding for such a purpose is not currently available.

### Repeat Prescriptions

We confirm it is not appropriate for us to accept orders for these by telephone. We haven't done so for nearly three years for safety reasons/to ensure we issue the correct item. Repeat Prescriptions can be requested by calling in to the Health Centre, by post or online via our website. Please contact us if you would like to commence online ordering so we can issue you with a User Name and Password.

### Magazines

We will not be reintroducing magazines into the waiting area for infection control reasons. The requirement to register with the Care Quality Commission has made us more conscious of our responsibilities in this respect.

### Demand for Services

Demand for our services is huge and still increasing even though our overall patient numbers, approximately 9500, have remained fairly constant for several years. Patients are more health "aware" and the hospitals continue to pass on to general practice procedures they have normally done.

That said, a) we will always strive to provide the best possible service b) all patients who consider they need to be seen on a particular day are seen that day, unless inappropriate for a GP practice.

In the meantime, if you have any suggestions which you think will enable us to improve our service please do not hesitate to let us know.

END