



HONITON SURGERY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2007



Telephone Triage

Some of you may already have used the new "same-day appointments" service. Patients who phone requesting to be seen urgently that day are telephoned by a doctor who will discuss their problem with them. The doctor and patient can then agree the most appropriate course of action. It maybe that the patient's problem can be sorted out with telephone advice, they may need a blood test or investigations before they are seen or they may need help from a district nurse. The doctor who phones will be able to offer these different solutions. Anyone who needs to be seen that day for an examination at the surgery will be offered an appointment. Children under 5 years old will be automatically offered an appointment unless their parents would prefer telephone advice. This system has been used for sometime in other surgeries throughout the country and has been shown to be very popular and lead to more efficient use of both patient's and doctor's time. Already in a few short weeks we are seeing similar results in Honiton. We hope that many patients will be able to avoid unnecessary journeys and long waits in crowded waiting rooms. Doctors in turn will have more time to spend with their patients who have on-going and more chronic problems. A patient has remarked "I'm so glad you're offering this service, it's saved me an unnecessary journey". We would be delighted to have any feedback either positive or negative from patients using this new service so that it can be adapted to best suit everyone's needs. Suggestions can be placed in the suggestions box which can be found in the main waiting area or sent to our practice manager, or to our patient group representatives who are:-

Mr Alf Boom – 01404 548745
Mrs Val Royle – 01404 44463
Mrs Meg Pipe – 01404 850855

They will be pleased to hear from you.

Telephone System Upgrade

We are upgrading our telephone system on May 2nd 2007 to improve telephone access to the surgery. This will however involve a change in the numbers you dial. Our old 41141 number will no longer be in use, callers who use this number will

not be charged for their call and will be given details of a new number to dial which will then give you options to choose. To make things more efficient we are introducing a series of new direct dial numbers which should enable you to reach the desk best suited to your needs. We will endeavour to answer calls as quickly as possible but inevitably, as with all large organisations, there will be busy times when waiting will be necessary. The new telephone system will stack the calls in a queue and provide updates as to how many people are in front of you. These queues will be specific for the desk you dialled directly or the choice you made from the menu.

New direct dial numbers are as follows but please note will not be in use until 2nd May 2007:-

Main Telephone Number: 01404 548544

Appointments Desk: 01404 540074

Home Visits Desk: 01404 540070

**Results Desk (will only be open between 2-6pm):
01404 540071**

Enquiries Desk: 01404 540072

We anticipate that the change over period should be as smooth as possible but ask you to bear with us during the change over period. We will publish details of the new numbers long before the changes take place, at the surgery, on our website, at local pharmacists and in the local newspapers.

Surgery Website

The Honiton Surgery Website was recently launched at a meeting of the Honiton Surgery Patient Group. At an earlier meeting they had been given the opportunity to see the website whilst it was under construction.

Details from the practice leaflet are available online together with useful information about local and national contact numbers and website addresses. The website is under constant review and development and we hope to be able to make forms such as those used in the travel clinic, and those used in new patient assessments, available for patients to print off and complete before they come for their appointments. In time we hope to have a repeat

prescription request system. The website will be a useful way of informing patients about new developments at the surgery and to give information about our services.

The website can be found at:-

www.honitonsurgery.org

Please put any suggestions that you might have regarding the website in the suggestions box which can be found in the main waiting room.

The Build

As people may have gathered Planning Permission has finally been granted.

The Architect is now preparing detailed drawings and seeking tenders from builders. Once these are accepted we can start building. We are hoping to start in the summer. Unfortunately there will be several months of disruption ahead to both patients and staff. We will be losing our car park early on in the development but eventually the same number of parking spaces will be constructed on the hospital site adjacent to our new entrance. A large extension is to be built on the current car park and there will be remodelling and refurbishment of the existing building. We know it will be worth it in the long run and ask for everyone's forbearance during construction.

More news when we have it.