



NEWS FROM COLERIDGE MEDICAL CENTRE WINTER 2017

Merry Christmas to all our patients, their families and friends.

As the festive season is just around the corner we will be closed on Friday 22nd December at 1pm so that staff can enjoy lunch together and perhaps sing a few carols before opening up again at 2pm. We are closed on Monday 25th December and Tuesday 26th December and Monday 1st January 2018. We would like to wish all our patients, their families and friends a very happy Christmas.

This issue of our newsletter is primarily about who to see and when to see them especially as we are entering the period of winter illness. This is a time when people become extremely unwell, particularly the elderly, frail, vulnerable and those with chronic and long term conditions. It is also a time when winter bugs and viruses take hold and therefore when there is likely to be most pressure on the health system.

If we are closed and you or someone you are with needs to be seen with a life threatening emergency please dial 999. Otherwise please dial 111. The 111 operator will be able to advise you further on what to do next. Please do not use emergency services and A&E inappropriately.

As we are closed for four days over Christmas and three days over New Year, please order your repeat medication in plenty of time. Please make sure your first aid cabinet is well stocked with over the counter medicines. The local pharmacies can advise on items and medication to keep at home.



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WHEN TO SEE THE DOCTOR

You don't need to see the doctor unless you need to see the doctor.

Use NHS Choices health checker at www.nhs.uk or the symptom checker at www.patient.info to find out what to do. If you don't have internet access you can telephone 111 for advice. Alternatively ring and ask one of our receptionists to signpost you to the right service.

If you have a life threatening emergency please always dial 999. A life threatening emergency could be severe breathing difficulties, sudden loss of speech or function of a limb or new onset of facial or limb weakness, new acute chest pain, collapse with loss of consciousness, seizure or fit.

If you think you have broken or fractured a bone please go to the nearest A&E at the RDE, Exeter or Honiton Minor Injury Unit. The minor injury units also treats things like burns, cuts, head and neck injuries and other minor accidental injuries.

Your dentist will see you with any dental problems. Please telephone the dentist you are registered with or alternatively dial 111 for advice or when your dentist is closed.

The local community pharmacists can advise on a wide range of minor illness such as sinusitis, styes, sunburn, worms, insect bites and stings, head lice and scabies.

Gail Foreshow, our Primary Care Pharmacist can be consulted about most medication and prescription queries.

Our team of Nurse Practitioners can see you for minor illness such as abscess, boils, constipation, emergency morning after pill, dizziness, earache, eczema, headaches and migraine, heartburn, ingrowing toe nail, fungal infection, piles, rashes, shingles, skin infection, thrush etc. All our Nurse Practitioners can prescribe if prescription medication is required.

If you do need to see a doctor about an on going or unresolved issue, please book with the same doctor as last time. This will potentially save time during your ten minute slot.

If it is important to you to see a particular doctor on a particular day you will most probably have to wait much longer for an appointment, particularly if your availability is limited too. Please do not put pressure on receptionists as they always offer what is available and appropriate but they cannot offer what isn't.

To avoid the telephone queue please book and cancel appointments online via your smartphone, tablet or computer if you have one. You can cancel appointments using our online services or our text messaging service.

For safety reasons the local pharmacist and the practice cannot take prescription orders over the telephone. Please use the online services or hand in your repeat slip or order form to your chosen pharmacy or direct to the practice. Please write clearly, preferably in block capitals.

NEWS ABOUT OUR PRACTICE TEAM

Congratulations to Dr Jones who has recently welcomed a new addition to her family. Thank you to our locum GPs who are supporting us to maintain the number of appointments we can offer while Dr Jones is away.

We have recently said goodbye to Jane Stewart, Practice Nurse/Lead Research Nurse. Jane has been with us since 2014 and specialised in the management and care of patients with Diabetes. In addition she led the research projects within the practice. Jane is going on to work at the MacLeod Centre in Exeter. As one of the diabetes specialist nurses working across primary and secondary care and for all types of diabetes. Good luck Jane, we wish you all the very best in your new role.

We recently welcomed Chris Wright to our Medical Secretarial team. Chris is also a registered research nurse and will be working closely with the Primary Care Research Network team and within the practice.

Our recent recruitment drive for receptionists was successful and training is now underway. Please bear with us while training is in progress as things can take a little longer and sometimes they may need to ask a colleague for help before answering your query.

NEWS FROM OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

We have a new team of volunteers who hope to provide you with monthly updates about what the PPG is involved in as well information on relevant health issues. The group meet every month here in the practice chaired by Tim Venner. Dr de Sousa and Mel Snow (Assistant Manager) also attend.

The group aims to find out what you would like to see improved at the practice and they will be seeking your support and opinions over the coming months. They are also committed to strengthening links with support agencies that are concerned with specific areas of health; both physical and mental health. The two issues currently being prioritised by the group are mental health and preventative health care.

At their last meeting the PPG were fortunate enough to have four students from Kings School attending to inform the group on the work being done in school to raise the profile of mental health. Ottery Help Scheme are hoping to be successful in securing some funding from the Aviva Community Fund with their bid to support young people in Ottery with mental health issues.

Finally another quick mention about Ottery Help Scheme. They are a registered charity providing a variety of support services to all those who live in Ottery St Mary and its surrounding areas. Please take a look at their website and get in touch if you would like their help, would like to volunteer for them or would like to donate. www.otteryhelpscheme.org.uk or 01404 813041

DONATIONS TO THE PRACTICE CHARITY

The Ottery St Mary Medical Trust will soon be able to accept donations online at <http://www.btplc.com/mydonate> Please click Donate to Charity and search for Ottery St Mary Medical Trust.

The Trust was established in 1990 to receive donations and bequests from patients and their families in acknowledgement of the care and services received from the Coleridge Medical Centre. The Trust has recently purchased a blood pressure monitor that is capable of detecting Atrial Fibrillation and resuscitation equipment.