



TELEPHONE SURVEY

Following the Patient Survey this year one main priority for patient concerns was the issue of trying to get through on the phone lines. In the past several months we have undertaken a large amount of research within the surgery to see how to improve this key area of our service.

We have investigated how many people called throughout the day, why they called as well as how many people came into the surgery. From this data we have analysed and assessed the best possible options to improve access to our telephone lines, always keeping your best interests at heart. We found our peak times were in the mornings and that a high percentage of calls were related to repeat prescriptions. As a direct consequence of these findings we are opening a new prescription line, opening our main telephone line earlier and raising awareness of online services.

CHANGE IN TELEPHONE LINE

Due to the increasing demand for GP services, we understand that at peak times it can be difficult to get through on the phone first time around.

From the January 2016, we will be opening our telephone lines 15 minutes earlier, at **8.15am** every day. We are hoping this will improve your access to the surgery and your ability to make an on the day appointment. During this time, you will **only** be able to **book appointments**. If you require a different service, please call later on in the day to ensure phone lines are kept free for those patients wanting to book an on the day appointment.

NEW PRESCRIPTION LINE

In addition to opening our main telephone line earlier on each day, on the **4th January 2016** we will also be launching a new telephone line which will be for the ordering of repeat prescriptions only. We are working hard to make the necessary changes to ensure that when you need to contact the surgery, the service you receive is quick and professional. The prescription line will be open from **10am-4pm Monday to Friday** and can be accessed on **01205 319856**. Please do not call before or after the specified time, as you will be unable to get through as the line will be closed.

ONLINE SERVICES

Did you know that you can order your repeat prescriptions and book appointments online? If you wish to use our online services, it couldn't be easier. Simply come into surgery with some form of photographic I.D and one of our reception team will provide you with a username and password to enable you to log onto the website first time. Once logged in, you will have access to a range of online services including booking appointments with a GP or First Contact Practitioner, ordering repeat prescriptions or filling in travel vaccination forms prior to going on holiday abroad. New appointment slots are made available at midnight everyday so you have the freedom to book an appointment time which is most convenient to you.

Please be aware that the use of our online system must be done so responsibly and anybody found to be booking many appointments and not attending will have their online logins disabled and you will no longer be able to access the service.

One patient has said; "booking my appointment by using my computer at 6.30am was really quick and easy and I had a good choice of appointment times and doctors to choose from".

CERVICAL SCREENING TEST

A cervical screening test (previously known as a smear test) is a method of detecting abnormal cells on the cervix. The cervix is the entrance to the womb from the vagina. Detecting and removing abnormal cervical cells can prevent cervical cancer.

Cervical screening isn't a test for cancer; it's a test to check the health of the cells of the cervix. Most women's test results show that everything is normal, but for around 1 in 20 women, the test shows some abnormal changes in the cells of the cervix. Most of these changes won't lead to cervical cancer and the cells may go back to normal on their own. However, in some cases, the abnormal cells need to be removed so they can't become cancerous.

24th-30th January 2016 is Cervical Cancer Prevention week. If you are female, aged between 25-64, and haven't yet booked in for your smear after receiving a letter from us, call us on (01205) 311133 or come in to surgery to make an appointment.

FLU AND SHINGLES VACCINATIONS

Our flu clinics may have finished, but that doesn't mean you can't still receive your annual flu jab. You are eligible if you:

1. are aged 65 years and over
2. have a chest complaint such as asthma or bronchitis
3. have diabetes
4. have a lowered immunity due to disease or cancer treatment
5. are pregnant

We also offer shingles vaccinations to patients aged 70 years and over. The vaccine needs to be given before patients reach 80 years old. Patients aged over 70 but less than 80 years will be invited for the vaccine by the time they are 79. Ask at reception for more details.

STAFF UPDATE

We are pleased to welcome back Dr.I.Obi to Greyfriars team as a GP registrar. He will be with us for another year, whilst he completes his training.

It is with regret that we are sadly saying goodbye to Nurse Caroline Wilkinson. We wish her the best in her future endeavours.

However we are pleased to welcome Nurse Mandy Smith to the practice nurse team. She will be working one day a week and can deal with a wide range of health conditions such as diabetes, COPD and asthma.

HEALTH CHECK

Are you aged between 40-74? If so you are eligible to have a free NHS health-check. This check helps to identify potential risks early. By having this check and following the advice of your health professional you improve your chances of living a healthier life. On average health checks are very quick, normally lasting no longer than 20 minutes. To book your free health-check, please ring the surgery on 01205 311133.

ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE: GET THE RIGHT RELIEF FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS

Coughs, sore throats and blocked noses are all sign of an Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI).

A URTI is caused by a virus. Most viruses do not respond to antibiotics and may even cause unpleasant side effects such as diarrhoea, thrush or a rash.

As a result of using too many antibiotics, bugs can become superbugs and therefore can become too powerful for antibiotics to work.

If you are experiencing symptoms of a URTI then speak to your pharmacist for suitable medicines to treat your specific symptoms.

If your symptoms do not then improve, then make an appointment with a Doctor or First Contact Practitioner. Please do not expect to receive antibiotics upon your visit, the doctor will only prescribe them if clinically necessary.

SELF-CARE

Self-care means keeping fit and healthy, as well as knowing how to take medicines, treat minor ailments and seek help when you need it. If you have a long-term condition, self-care is about understanding that condition and how to live with it. For more information on your condition, visit our website at

www.greyfriarssurgeryboston.co.uk, where you will find lots of information on treating your symptoms taken from the NHS choices website.

It is important that during the winter period that you keep your medicine cabinet well stocked with medicines for minor illnesses such as cough colds etc. It is important that you keep your medication out the reach of children.