

## Newsletter Autumn 2005

**Drs Macleod, Macleod, Curry,  
Ward and Vose**

### **Appointment System – a reminder**

We operate a system, which allows you to book appointments with your preferred GP up to 14 weeks ahead; we also have a number of urgent appointments that can be booked on the day.

### **Telephone calls**

To help us answer your calls in the quickest possible time, we would ask you to ring us after 10am if your call is not urgent, for example if you want to book hospital transport, enquire about your test results, or book a future appointment.

This will enable us to deal with requests for urgent appointments between 8.30am and 10.00am.

### **Teenage patients**

We now have some regular emergency appointments allocated especially for teenagers e.g. for emergency contraception, please pick up a copy of our new “teenagers practice information leaflet” for further information.

All our staff are sympathetic to teenage patients and provide a confidential service to all, including under 16s.

### **Patient Survey**

Overall we had a very encouraging response from the patient survey last year.

Thankyou to everyone who took the time to complete the questionnaires.

In response to feedback from the last patient survey we have produced a leaflet outlining exactly what will happen if you need medical help during ‘out of hours’.

Some patients expressed concerns regarding this. We hope this leaflet will help clarify the situation. We had a few negative comments from patients who weren’t happy about the time spent waiting for their appointment at the surgery.

We do try our utmost to keep to time but often there are interruptions, phone calls and emergencies to deal with during surgery time, this is more likely to happen if the GP is “duty doctor” that day.

We appreciate the inconvenience of a delayed appointment, so to help us run to time we would appreciate if patients: Tried not to “save up” all their problems for one 10-minute consultation. If you have more than one problem (unless they are very straight forward e.g. mole check), be prepared for your GP to ask you to make another appointment for this. Some problems take longer than 10 minutes to deal with properly.

Also please avoid asking Doctors or Nurses to issue prescriptions for or assess other family members during your own appointment.

### **Flu and Pneumococcal vaccinations**

All patients over 65 or with certain chronic medical conditions will have been sent an invitation for an annual

flu jab. The appointments will run from now until December. The vaccine is recommended for the following patients:  
All people over 65  
All people under 65 with diabetes, chronic heart disease, COPD, asthma (requiring repeated use of oral or inhaled steroids), severe kidney disease, long term liver disease, if you have had your spleen removed, or if your immune system is suppressed due to long term steroid use or cancer treatment.

At the flu clinic will we also offer patients the pneumovax, again this is for those over 65 or those within the “at risk” group, this vaccine protects against, certain forms of pneumonia, meningitis and septicaemia, unlike the flu vaccine it is given once only.

### **New Staff**

We would like to welcome some new staff members to our team.  
Ann Jones is our new receptionist.  
Bridget Riley is our new dispenser – you may recognise her from Boots.  
Gillian Melbourne will be starting in the back office shortly.

Martin Rees is our new practice nurse and Dr Rob Tatham is working as a regular locum GP.

### **Derbyshire Dales Careline**

This is a voluntary service that has been operating from St Oswald’s hospital for nearly 8 years. It gives a free, daily phone call to elderly and disabled people in South Derbyshire who are isolated and vulnerable. Many are people who are trying to stay living independently in their own homes and need a bit of extra support. The phone call is to check that the person is safe

and well, to have a chat, and to give help and information if needed. The calls are made by a group of over 60 volunteers who, because they get to know the people they are calling very well, are able to recognise and respond to problems and can alert other agencies.

The call is also a safety check because, if the volunteer phoning is unable to get a reply from the service-user or their nominated contacts, Careline will pursue to a satisfactory conclusion. To access this service you can be referred from hospitals, health professionals, social services, vicars, milkmen, friends, relatives, neighbours or yourself.

If you think that you or someone you know would benefit from being a careline service-user please call Pat or Julie on 07970 679190 and they will be happy to help.

We would welcome your comments or ideas regarding this newsletter or any of our other practice leaflets.