

## *JANUARY 2022 PATIENT NEWSLETTER*



Welcome to our January newsletter

### **UPDATE**

We rapidly increased our vaccination capacity in response to the Prime Ministers call for all adults to be offered boosters by the end of the year. 80% of our eligible population received their booster by the end of 2021, condensing a 7 week plan into 14 vaccinating days.

The continued success of our vaccination programme is thanks to support from our own wonderful staff, volunteers, returning vaccinators and a team from the Forces, allowing an increase in our capacity to provide more than 12,000 appointments over the 2 weeks. Additionally, our community pharmacy colleagues, and the Large Vaccine Site at Kings Park all worked tirelessly to provide the necessary appointments.

This was all achieved during one of our busiest times of the year. Although significantly stretched, we continued to offer all our regular services during this time. We strive to continue this into 2022- with ongoing vaccine clinics for those not yet boosted, as well as a continuing offer of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> jabs to those who have not completed their initial course.

As we move through the current surge in Covid cases our own healthcare and administrative staff are not immune to the need for isolation as a result of infection or close contact. We add a layer of caution to ensure we do not put vulnerable patients at risk. With around 10% of our workforce absent currently our services are more strained than ever. We do not have access to support staff or clinicians who can readily step in to fill gaps, and we trust that patients understand our ongoing need to prioritise those most in need of our care.

Wishing you all a healthy 2022.

Dr Andy Rutland – Clinical Director

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## GETTING CARE WHEN AND HOW YOU NEED IT



Did you know that on average GP Practices in England are providing over 4 million appointments each month? This is an increase of over 700,000 per month compared to before the pandemic.

The overall number of GPs has reduced since 2015, whilst at the same time the population of the UK has increased from 65m to 68m people. This means that today the same number of GPs have responsibility for the health needs of an additional 3 million patients.

This is reflected here at Shore with requests for GP consultations increasing by 50% since before the Covid-19 pandemic. On average we now provide 239 Sessions per week of GP time (a session being a nominal half day) compared with 221 in 2019.

Additionally, in light of the national GP shortage we have increased our wider clinical team to include Paramedics, Physiotherapists, Nurse Practitioners, Mental Health practitioners and Pharmacists. These roles provide additional capacity for our patients as well as relevant expertise.

Online consultations may not be for everyone, but they do provide more flexibility in how patients contact their surgery and how Doctors can manage demand. Shore Medical on average previously handled 2500 “e-Consults” per month between January and March 2021 – this has also risen dramatically recently to over 12,000 per month. Since July we have also now switched back to more face to face appointments as a first option rather than following a telephone call.

## INTRODUCING KLINIK



To help improve service further, in the coming weeks we will be launching a new online access system which will be available to our patients 24/7. Klinik will offer our patients the opportunity to book appointments, request medication, submit queries and seek advice via a simple online system. By using Klinik for non-urgent enquiries, you will help us keep our phonelines accessible for those who cannot use online services and for those with urgent medical problems. Klinik will also help you get the right help from the right person within our team, be that a GP, Nurse, Nurse Practitioner, Physiotherapist, Paramedic or Pharmacist.

We are very excited to offer this to our patients and hope that it will enhance and improve the care you receive.

Our website will be updated with more information soon

We are also trying to recruit more GPs and have a new Doctor who started with us in November. Recruitment of Doctors is incredibly hard as there are simply not enough coming through the system after training. In 2015 the NHS was assured that the government would recruit an extra 5000 GPs. In 2018 this promise was raised to 7000 extra GPs but the reality is that since 2015 there are now 2000 fewer GPs in England due to retirements and simple burn out of existing Doctors who feel they can no longer work the 60 hours plus week in week out that is required.

All of this puts pressure on systems throughout the Practices, the extra appointment demand and use of online consultation has led to a 200% increase at times in telephone calls. Wait times have increased and this is just as frustrating for our staff as it is for patients. The challenges are significant, and our teams are working incredibly hard at a time of unprecedented demand. So please remember to be understanding and recognise our staff are doing what they can to support the best care for our patients.

The NHS does require protection, by Governments, but also by its patients. Before contacting your surgery, ask yourself – do I need to? Is it something minor that I could speak about with my Pharmacist? Have I checked NHS online for help? Could I send an e-Consult request instead of using the phone? Have I checked the Practice Website which may provide an update on vaccinations and other useful information?

We understand that a person's health is their most important commodity and all of our staff work in this profession because they want to help. But we cannot do it without the support of our patients.

## SHORE NEWS

We are aware that due to the high levels of demand that patients may have experienced a reduction in services compared to before Covid-19. As a Group our Partners and staff are constantly looking at ways we can improve and manage our patient's health needs in the most effective way.

We are pleased to announce the following changes we have made to our services to benefit looking after our patients;-

### FERNSIDE SURGERY



As you may have been aware our practice at the Fernside Surgery was converted to be our 'Red Site' during the height of the pandemic. This meant that we had somewhere we could actively send those patients with Covid-19 for medical care whilst protecting other patients when attending the other surgeries. We know this meant those patients of Fernside had a bit further to go for care but hope the reasoning behind this decision made sense. We have been slowly returning the practice to normal operation and as of Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November the Surgery resumed to full operation.

This means that every day we have staff on site between 8am and 6:30pm along with GP and Nursing staff providing care from this practice once again.

### WESSEX ROAD SURGERY



As many patients will know the Practice has had a reduction in GP staffing following the retirement of one of the GP Partners earlier this year. It is our pleasure to announce the arrival of Dr Jennifer Hall who started at the practice on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November. This will bring the GP team at the practice back up to full strength and increase appointment availability to patients.

### SHORE SERVICES



Since the creation of Shore Medical in 2019 we have been looking at what other help patients may need. In this time, we have created the following teams to help our patients; -

- Frailty & Visiting Team – looking after those patients who are housebound and in care and helping to reduce the need to go to hospital.
- Children’s Mental Health Team – we have our own in-house team to assist when needed.
- Adult mental health worker, looking after those patients in difficult times.
- Specialist Diabetic Team – made up of GPs Specialist Nurses and support staff to look after our Diabetic population to improve their care and wellbeing.
- Specialist Pharmacy Team – we have a team of 6 pharmacists plus technicians to effectively review and manage patient medication.

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## VISITING OUR SURGERIES

If you are visiting one of our surgeries, please help to keep yourself and our staff safe by wearing a face covering and following social distancing guidelines. Cases of covid-19 are still having a huge impact on our workforce and the services that we are able to provide

**NHS - “face coverings and social distancing measures will remain in place across healthcare settings so that the most vulnerable people can continue to safely attend hospital, their GP surgery, pharmacy or any other healthcare settings for advice, care and treatment.”**

## VACCINES, VACCINES AND MORE VACCINES



Shore Medical has been one of the leading groups in the delivery of the vaccination program. We started back in December 2020, managing to get the first 1000 patients vaccinated before Christmas. This has been an enormous undertaking for our staff.

At a time when demand for appointments is higher than ever before, our GPs, Nurses and admin staff have already administered over 107,000 Covid. These are the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and now booster jabs and we are continuing to provide clinics.

This has required over 7000 hours of clinical staff time – Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics and Pharmacists along with a further 3000 hours from our management and admin staff with help from our wonderful volunteers.

To put this in perspective this equates to an extra 4.5 full time clinicians and 3.5 full time non-clinical staff, all whilst doing their usual jobs Monday to Friday. The effort has been monumental but worthwhile in getting this vital protection to our patients and helping things return to normal as quickly and safely as possible.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINIC

We really need some volunteers to help manage the queues and keep the car parks safe. If you have a few hours to spare please email [vaccinequeries@dorsetgp.nhs.uk](mailto:vaccinequeries@dorsetgp.nhs.uk)



## COMMUNITY

### Health Champions weekly coffee mornings

Our Health Champions meet every Thursday and are a much-appreciated part of our patient community, they offer help and support in the way of coffee mornings, gardening clubs and other various voluntary roles.

On the first Thursday of every month a member of the Practice Team also attends the group (where possible). Dr Alex Todd (GP Partner) and Steve Middleton (Compliance & Finance Director) met with the group on 2<sup>nd</sup> December

If you would like to join our Health Champions Group, please go to our website for more details using the following [LINK](#)

## DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU MAY BE EXEMPT FROM PAYING FOR YOUR PRESCRIPTION?



To find out more details and for information on prescription prepayment certificates, please visit the NHS Websites below

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-help>

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/prescription-prepayment-certificates-ppcs>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

You can stay connected with us and follow our regular updates on social media using the below:

instagram @shore\_medical

<https://www.facebook.com/shoremedicalGP/>

## OUR NEXT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER IS APRIL

