



# **Greensands Medical Practice**

**NEWSLETTER April-May 2017**

**Welcome to our latest Newsletter**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT BOTH SURGERIES WILL BE CLOSED ON:**

14/04/17 – Good Friday  
17/04/17 – Easter Monday  
01/05/17 – Bank Holiday  
29/05/17 – Bank Holiday

**Please call 111 if in need of medical assistance**

**CHANGES TO THE OUT OF HOURS SERVICE**

**With effect from 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

On 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017, the new Integrated Urgent Care Service will take over in Bedfordshire and Luton which incorporates NHS 111 and the Out of Hours Service. The new Service will be run by Herts Urgent Care.

NHS 111 is available for patients who need medical advice in a non-life threatening situation out of hours.

**Patients can access the new Out of Hours Service by telephoning 111, Monday to Friday between 6.30pm-8.00am and 24 hours during the weekend and on Bank Holidays.**

Patients will speak with a Clinical Advisor who will assess the patient, both clinically and socially. The patient will either be given telephone advice, a face to face appointment or a home visit. If a patient requires a face to face appointment, they will be allocated an appointment at one of the locations listed below:-

- Biggleswade Hospital, Potton Road, Biggleswade
- Bedford Hospital, Kempston Road, Bedford
- Town Centre GP Surgery, Luton
- Leighton Buzzard Health Centre
- Priory Gardens Surgery, Dunstable
- Highlands, Flitwick

**PLEASE NOTE: The current Out of Hours telephone number 0345 6010244 will not be in use from 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017.**

## **Website and Online Services**

We would like to take this opportunity to remind patients about our website  
[www.greensands.org.uk](http://www.greensands.org.uk)

The website contains up to date information on the Practice, our Doctors, Prescriptions. our Clinics and much more. It also provides a link to our online service "SystemOnline" which will allow you to book GP appointments, renew prescriptions & view a summary of your medical record. Please note that if you already have an online account for booking appointments and ordering repeat prescriptions you will need to apply to view a summary of your medical record. If you would like to register to use the online service please speak to a member of our reception team.

## **Do we hold your correct contact information?**

Please make sure that you let us know if you change your address and/or telephone numbers. Do we hold your correct mobile telephone number?

Is there more than one telephone number we can reach you on?

It is really important that we have the correct information for you and your family.

## **Results Line – 01767 260340 (Option 3)**

You can find out the results of your blood test by telephoning our results line between 1 – 2pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

## **New Practice Nurse**

We are delighted to welcome our new Practice Nurse, Alicia Ilett, to the surgery. Alicia will work at both the Potton and Gamlingay surgeries

## **Increase in NHS Prescription charges**

NHS Prescription charges will increase to £8.60 per item from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. Pre-payment certificates will not be affected by this change.

1 item - £8.60  
2 Items - £17.20  
3 Items - £25.80  
4 Items - £34.40  
5 Items - £43.00

## How do I Order my medicines

You can request your medication online (please ask in the surgery or see our website for details on how to do this) or by bringing in your repeat prescription to the surgery.

Please allow 48 hours for us to process this for you (or 72 hours if we are sending it to the Pharmacy to allow for collection times).

If you are being prescribed medicines on a repeat prescription, you will receive enough of each medicine to last you one month. There are some exceptions which are packaged in three monthly amounts, eg contraceptive pills and hormone replacement therapy – these will continue to be supplied this way.

28 day prescribing reduces the amount of medicine which is currently wasted when medicines are stopped or changed by Doctors. It also reduces the amount which is wasted when partly filled containers are thrown away.

As all your medication will finish at the same time, you should only have to visit the surgery once a month to collect your repeat prescription. It will also reduce the likelihood of needing to make an emergency request if you run out of medicine.

Research has shown that a very large amount of medication is wasted when Doctors prescribe for two months or more resulting in the loss of millions of pounds of NHS money. This money could be used to provide services elsewhere in the NHS. A Department of Health report estimated that for every £100 spent of prescribing, £4 is wasted. This means that across Bedfordshire and Luton alone, up to £3.5 million is wasted on unused or partially used prescription medication.

### **£3.5 million would buy around:-**

943 hip replacements

137 community nurses

230 drug treatment courses for breast cancer

3,500 more drug treatment courses for Alzheimer's

425 Heart bypass operations

Please do not stockpile medicines at home – only order those items on your repeat prescription that you need. Even if you do not order your medicines every month, they will remain on your repeat list for you to order at a later point. Please return unwanted medication to your local pharmacy for disposal.

## Changes to Patient Transport Services

The new telephone number to arrange patient transport is 0208 045 4254. Your suitability for this service will be assessed when booking transport against the guidance provided by the Department of Health. Please have your NHS number to hand when calling the patient transport service.

## **A&E Attendance**

It is estimated that almost half of all A&E attendance could have been treated by a GP, Local Pharmacist or basic First Aid. If a patient attends Hospital this is a costly resource for the NHS, particularly attendance at the Accident and Emergency Department which potentially limits funds for other patients.

We would therefore like to encourage Patients that before going to Accident and Emergency to talk to us first between the hours of 8.00am – 6.30pm as this may prevent an unnecessary Hospital attendance as we can deal with a number of minor illnesses within the practice.

Please contact us before going to A&E to see if we can help.

In the event of an emergency call our emergency line:

Potton Emergency Line: 01767 260229

Gamlingay Emergency Line: 01767 651546

If you have a non urgent enquiry please call our Enquiries line and select the appropriate option:

Potton Appointment Line: 01767 260340

Gamlingay Appointment Line: 01767 651544

For all emergency calls between 6.30pm – 8.00am Monday to Friday and all day Saturday & Sunday contact our Out of Hours Provider on 111 who again may be able to prevent you from having to attend Hospital.

## **Travel Health**

If you are travelling abroad and need advice on any vaccination or tablets required for your holiday, please ensure that you pick up a travel health questionnaire from Reception when booking your appointments with our Nurses. Ideally, plan this appointment at least eight weeks before your holiday to allow time for any vaccination course to be completed.

This questionnaire should be completed and returned to the Surgery at least one week before your appointment. The Nurse will look at your itinerary and plan your vaccination schedule beforehand. We are a designated Yellow Fever centre and provide a comprehensive travel vaccination service.

## **Specimen drop offs**

We have a visit from the Bedford Hospital courier service every lunch time to collect samples for analysis at the Hospital.

We would greatly appreciate it if you could please drop off your samples before 11.00am. Unfortunately, we do not have any way of getting specimens to the Hospital after this time. Please ensure your full name and date of birth are printed clearly on every sample otherwise it may get rejected.

### **Minor Illness Nurses**

Our Minor Illness Nurses are available to help with acute problems and illnesses and can prescribe medication where appropriate.

Appointments are available daily for the following:-

- Flu-like symptoms
- Fever
- Headaches
- Coughs and Colds
- Earaches / Sore throats
- Stomach pain
- Back pain (Muscular)
- Hay Fever
- Skin infections (Impetigo)
- Rashes
- Minor Accidents
- Cystitis
- Morning after Pill

### **Minor Injury Service**

We are extremely fortunate that we are able to offer a Minor Injury Service to all of our patients in Potton and Gamlingay Surgeries.

The following list gives guidance on the types of injuries and circumstances that lead to the use of our Minor Injury Service:

1. Lacerations capable of closure by simple techniques (stripping, gluing, suturing)
2. Bruises
3. Minor dislocations
4. Foreign bodies
  - a. Non-penetrating superficial eye foreign bodies
  - b. Accidentally introduced foreign bodies external to ears and nose
5. Following recent injury of a severity not amenable to simple domestic first aid
6. Following recent injury where it is suspected stitches/steri-strips may be required
7. Following blows to the head where there has been no loss of consciousness
8. Recent eye injury
9. Partial thickness thermal burns or scalds involving broken skin
  - a. Not over 1 inch in diameter
  - b. Not involving the hands, feet, face, neck, genital areas
10. Foreign bodies superficially embedded in tissues
11. Minor trauma to hands, limbs or feet

## A Reminder

**Coils and Contraceptive Implants** – Dr Jarvis is fully trained to fit coils and contraceptive implants.

**Vasectomy Clinic** - Dr von Blumenthal has a vasectomy clinic for patients of Greensands and the surrounding practices in Bedfordshire that hold a contract with the CCG for this service. If you are not a patient of this practice and your practice is unable to refer to us you can still see him for vasectomy counselling and surgery as a private patient.

For further information please call our Gamlingay Surgery on 01767 651544 option 2.

**Gynaecology Clinic** – A Consultant Gynaecologist from Bedford Hospital, attends for this clinic once a month at our Potton Surgery. Referrals to the clinic will be made via your GP directly.

We are fortunate to have these additional services which will save our patients from having to travel longer distances to be seen in hospital clinics and pay car parking fees.

## SMS Messages



We are able to send text messages to confirm and remind you of your appointments. If you are happy for us to contact you by text please ask a member of the reception team to add your mobile telephone number to your records.

Please make sure that we have the correct contact information for you at all times. Please ensure that you let us know if you change your address and/or telephone numbers. It is really important that we have the correct information for you and your family.

## Missed Appointments

Missed GP appointments cost the taxpayer £162m and missed hospital appointments cost £750m per year.

Unfortunately we still have a large number of missed appointments, last month there were **171 missed appointments** in total, 95 at the Potton Surgery and 76 at the Gamlingay surgery.

Please remember to call and cancel your appointment if you no longer need it so that it can be used for other patients.

We also operate a **telephone cancellation service** at both surgeries which is available between the hours of 6.30pm and 8.00am as follows:

Potton: 01767 260340 option 4

Gamlingay: 01767 651544 option 4

## Would you recommend our GP Surgery

### **The Friends and Family Test**

From 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014, if you visit our GP surgery you will be asked about whether or not you would recommend our surgery to your friends and family, if they need similar treatment or care. You will also be invited to tell us: ***If we could change one thing about your care or treatment to improve your experience, what would it be?***

Your response is anonymous and you will be able to post the postcard in a ballot box in our reception area on your way out of the surgery.

If you are unable to answer the question, a friend or family member is welcome to respond on your behalf.

The information will give our GP practice invaluable feedback on what you think of the care and treatment you have received, which along with existing ways of gathering feedback, will help us to make improvements and improve the experience for our patients.