



Prescription Delivery Service

We are pleased to announce that we will be offering delivery of repeat medications to patients who are housebound and find it difficult to get their monthly prescriptions. Living in a rural area means there will be a number of patients who we expect will want to take advantage of this service. It is not something that is supported by NHS funding so, as the service expands to meet demand, we will be looking for volunteer drivers.

The introduction of the delivery service comes at a time when we are looking carefully at the whole process of dispensing medication and how we can improve it. We have had a handful of patients request home delivery with some having had negative experiences of using alternative pharmacies, which delays the process and potentially increases the risk of breaches in confidentiality. We are therefore acting on this feedback to introduce the service ourselves, which will keep turnaround time to a minimum.

Our patient participation group has been involved in coordinating volunteer drivers for patients who find it difficult to get to hospital appointments. The prescription delivery service will work in a similar way. Please let us know if you would like to be considered for home delivery of repeat prescriptions.

As we look at the process of how we dispense medication, we have invited the NHS Improvement Academy to assist in this work. The academy has experience in improving quality and safety in many aspects of healthcare. They have given us very good feedback in terms of how we work as a team, how accurate our dispensers are and how our turnaround time is faster than average too.

Mistakes do happen from time to time, however. Whenever a mistake, or even a near miss happens, we investigate its root cause, look at our systems and see how we can prevent further events happening in the future. Our dispensers carry out a 7 point check to ensure we give the right medicines

to the right people. Our receptionists are also involved in safety in checking that prescription requests are correct and that medicine is given out correctly, once dispensed.

Our dispensers work through 8000-9000 items a month as well as ordering medicines, checking stock levels and processing deliveries from the medication suppliers. In short, they have a busy time. It is such an integral part of the work we do, we are keen to perfect the process.

The NHS Improvement Academy is helping us look at every part of the dispensing system, including ordering of medication and prescribing. Our aim is to further improve accuracy. This is a work in progress but is a project that is already showing some benefit with us having been asked by the academy to share good practice with other dispensaries.

Staff update

Following the good news of Dr Hallam giving birth to a baby boy last year, we are pleased to report she is returning to work in June. Dr Pope joined us principally to cover Dr Hallam but over the last year has become a very popular doctor and we are very lucky that she is able to stay on.

We are aware of proposed housing developments in several villages and are focused on maintaining our capacity. We are continuing the tradition the practice has of a higher than average number of doctors for the population. This is enhanced further by the junior doctors we have had for the past 2 years. The latest trainees with us are Dr David Good and Dr Fatima Tahir, who are offering 20-30 minute appointments.

Rachel Edmond, our healthcare assistant, enjoyed her work so much she has decided to start a nursing career. She has left the practice to start her nursing course and we wish her all the best in this. Louise Gibbs, our principal healthcare assistant has an ever-expanding role and will be playing a more active part in helping people with careplans, keeping them up to

date and even more personalised. We are currently looking for a new healthcare assistant to join us and support the work that Louise does with phlebotomy, ECGs, health checks and other important tasks.

We are also saying a sad farewell to two of our dispensers. Gilly Loukes is retiring, having previously been our dispensing manager and, more latterly, our senior team leader. We are hopeful that she will continue to be seen at the practice, covering some dispensary shifts. Another of our dispensers, Sally Phillips, is also leaving. She has relocated to the coast and is enjoying a different lifestyle, with a new job closer to home.

So - you will see some new faces in dispensary and reception. We have a new senior dispenser called Kath Sykes, a dispenser called Judi Corbally and a new receptionist called Jo Cook. They are a very welcome addition to the team and we are pleased they are joining us.

Flu vaccinations

Well done to all patients who had their vaccine in the autumn. We had a high uptake and are aiming to improve further. Further to speculation that the vaccine was not appropriate for the virus that emerged in December, NHS England have reassured a more effective version this year. We will be holding flu clinics as usual and these start in the middle of September.

Please look out for adverts for flu clinics which will be in the surgeries and on the website (www.springbankhealth.co.uk) in August.

Pregnant patients:

Please remember to get a flu vaccine and also remember your whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine, after 28 weeks, to protect your unborn baby.

Thank you for the wonderful feedback

Thank you to everyone who has used the iPad screens to leave feedback on our friends and family test. So far, we have had over 200 patients give feedback in this way and it has been overwhelmingly positive, with 98% of respondents saying they would recommend us to their friends and family. We also have some paper forms at reception if you would prefer that.

The screens are easy to use and it takes just 10 seconds to leave some feedback so please do look out for them in the corridor when you leave your appointment. We need to continue to gather this feedback as it is one of the ways the NHS measure our performance. The feedback received has been very encouraging. We have had a number of patients say they would highly recommend us and then go on to tell us what we could do better. This has been invaluable as it helps guide our priorities.

Such feedback has led to us shortening the average waiting time to under 8 minutes. We are also starting to offer early morning appointments on a Friday in addition to the late opening on a Monday evening. These appointments are designed for people who work full time.

The pre-ordering system for prescriptions has also come from patient feedback. Pre-ordering means you are able to collect your prescription and then order for the next month at the same time.

Other ways of giving us feedback are via the NHS choices website or the patient participation group.

We are given feedback by NHS England who compare us to other GP practices. We score much higher than the average practice in patient experience and satisfaction. This is based on a survey done nationally every 6 months, posted to over a million households nationally. We are particularly proud of our nurses, with 98% of patients giving them positive reviews.



Antibiotics Advice

There is a massive drive nationally for us to be careful about when we prescribe antibiotics as so many are given unnecessarily. They are becoming less effective and there is limited development of further antibiotics. We try to follow national guidelines with the medicines we prescribe, including antibiotics. As the guidelines are updated, antibiotics feature less and it may be that the following kinds of problems are best dealt with without antibiotics.

Sore throats

Almost all sore throats, including tonsillitis, do not require antibiotic treatment and the average duration of symptoms is 7 days whether you take antibiotics or not. Regular painkillers have been shown to be more beneficial than antibiotics.

Earache

This commonly affects children, especially

under the age of 5, before the ear canal has matured. 80% of the time, the earache will resolve by itself in 3-4 days. Paracetamol has been shown to be more effective than antibiotics.

Chesty coughs

If you are a non-smoker, a chesty cough is likely to improve all by itself, even if it lasts for 3 weeks. However, if you have complex problems such as diabetes or other conditions or medications which suppress your immune system, we would want to see you sooner.



Patient donations

Thank you for your donations to the surgery which have allowed us to buy some important medical equipment. The generosity of our patients has enabled us to purchase pulse oximeters to check the oxygen levels in blood by a simple probe that clips on a finger. This is important in assessing how people's lungs are working. We have also been able to purchase examination equipment for testing people's nerve function by measuring their sensation to touch. This is a key part of assessing people with diabetes and whether or not their nerves are affected. We are always fundraising to improve our equipment and services and please do consider if you are able to help at all, or contact the patient participation group.

Our Medical Staff:

Dr A O'Donoghue

Dr R Tatham

Dr C Hallam

Dr J Hunter

Dr H Pope

Nurses:

Christine Edmond

Shona Harrington

Kyla Honing

Healthcare Assistant:

Louise Gibbs

Who should you see for your appointment?

Our nurses have special qualifications in:

Contraception
Minor injuries
Minor illnesses
Diabetes
Asthma/COPD
Vaccinations/travel health
Medication reviews
Cervical smears
Complex dressings and wound care

Our healthcare assistants do:

Blood tests
ECGs
Blood pressure checks including 24 hour checks
Hearing tests
Health checks
Dressings

Our receptionists are trained to signpost you to the most appropriate clinician to maximise the overall appointments available to you.

Medicines for Africa

We are collecting unused medication at both Green Hammerton and Tockwith. This is then delivered to third world countries by a charity called Intercare. The medicines go to Africa and they are keen on any medication with at least 6 months before expiry. They also need to be in the box which is usually where the expiry date is stamped. The project was initiated locally by Reverend Shaw, vicar of Marston Moor Parish. We are also grateful to the primary schools in Tockwith and Green Hammerton for providing art work to promote this service. The posters are brightening up the entrance to Tockwith surgery and are also in the waiting room at Green Hammerton.



