

# Ivy Grove News



## Welcome

We are publishing our patient newsletter again in order to keep you all informed of the services at Ivy Grove Surgery. This comes at a time when we have decided to make some significant changes to improve how you can access our appointments system.

## Newsletter aims

With the newsletter, we will aim to keep you up to date with the latest health issues, and also developments occurring within the practice.

## Your feedback

We have plenty of ideas of what to put in the newsletter, but you may have some thoughts yourselves on what you want to see in the newsletter. Please send your ideas to our Practice Manager (address on page 4) or pass your feedback to our Patient Participation Group *Friends of Ivy Grove Surgery* – they are here to help you get the best from the surgery.



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## New Appointments System from May 6, 2009

We are responding to feedback and comments from the results of our recent *Improving Practice Questionnaire* survey. Some of the main areas centre around difficulties in getting through on the telephone, especially first thing in the morning, and getting an appointment. We are seeking to address these issues with some significant changes to our appointment system.

We want to move away from the maddening 8 o'clock morning rush where everyone is ringing into the surgery to try and book rapidly disappearing appointments for the day. The constant engaged tone and the frustration of missing an appointment causes stress to everyone concerned, on both ends of the phone line.

We want to introduce a system that is fairer to all, that does not depend on how fast or how often you can redial our telephone number. To this end, we want you to help us by deciding how best to see or speak to us. We will be introducing a phone advice session, a sit and wait session and concentrating on maintaining continuity for those patients with established medical problems. Please see page 2 for more details.

The reason we are doing this is that most cases seen in general practice are for conditions that can be dealt with effectively on a same day basis by any clinician.

We will be providing such a service where, if you need to be seen that day, you can come to the surgery at the specified time and simply wait to be seen. For more complex issues, booked appointments remain available and should be used wherever possible to maintain continuity and safe healthcare.

Do bear with us whilst we make these changes. Hopefully any teething troubles with the new system should be ironed out within a few weeks.

Please be aware that these changes are in response to patient feedback. Whilst it may not seem like it, particularly when you have had difficulty in booking an appointment, we do take all feedback seriously and we are constantly working behind the scenes to try and improve the situation. This may mean investing in extra staff or equipment, or it could involve changing how a service is provided. It could also include providing information on how to use a service effectively, or directing people to more appropriate sources of help.

We do not wish to provide a service that is being poorly received, but by the same token, we need feedback to indicate that the service we are providing is meeting your needs appropriately. We do want to improve our overall patient satisfaction and we hope that good results from the *National Patient Survey* will provide us with the funding to allow us to continue investing in improvements to the service that we provide.



## Why aren't we open on Wednesday afternoons?

Hopefully this will explain... Even though the surgery is closed to patients, we all still stay in the surgery and work!

**Week 1 (Clinical Governance)** - in this session doctors, nurses, and attached staff discuss significant events that have occurred in the practice. These are things like, for example, near misses, complaints, administrative, clerical and clinical errors that may have affected patients. We also review recent guidance and guidelines from NICE and SIGN (bodies which oversee guidelines and best practice) and conduct regular reviews of our prescribing practice to ensure we are keeping costs down and prescribing to current guidelines. We perform regular audits of our clinical work to ensure that we follow best practice and improve year on year.

**Week 2 (Business & Admin)** - in this session, we have our regular monthly meetings attended by the practice manager and the doctors to discuss all business aspects of running the practice, in order to make sure the practice runs smoothly and effectively.

**Week 3 (Education & Keeping Up To Date)** - in this session, we discuss interesting cases, have guest speakers come and speak to us on a variety of current topics, meet other community workers, and have journal club where we discuss latest papers and research and also a miscellaneous hot topics session.

**Week 4 (Patient Clinics)** - in this session, we do not actually close the surgery to patients, and instead we perform medical examinations, hold our baby clinics and carry out minor operations.

**Each week** - in any spare time left on the Wednesday afternoon (varying from nothing at all to an hour or so), each doctor devotes time to personal development, online learning, preparing for their appraisals, medical student and staff training and catching up on letters, dictation and paperwork.

**Occasionally** - we have whole team meetings on mandatory issues like security, child protection, fire training, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillator training..



## Appointment Changes in More Detail

Find out the best way to access our services whether you need advice or an appointment

Where possible, we want to enable you to access our service with just one phone call, rather than having to ring the surgery again and again every morning.

Want telephone advice from a doctor?

The duty doctor will be available to give medical advice, **urgent**

**telephone advice from 9.00am to 10.00am daily.** This is only for issues

for which you are sure that do not need an appointment. When you ring, please state that your request is for advice only. The duty doctor will ring you back, usually fairly quickly. If the duty doctor tries to ring you back twice and has not been able to contact you, we advise that you call again.

Need to see a doctor today?

We will have a **sit and wait service from 10.00am to 11.00am daily.**

You do not need to ring to book an appointment for this and in fact we would actively discourage you from ringing, especially at 8.00am for such an appointment. This will keep the phone lines free for those wishing booked appointments.

For the sit and wait session you may simply turn up at the surgery and ask the receptionist at the front desk to book you in. You will be seen by any doctor that is available – we cannot specify who will be seeing you.

This service is to accommodate same day issues, minor illness, acute pain and things that positively cannot wait until the next working day.

### One Phone Call – One Appointment

Babies, children and the acutely unwell will be given priority in this service and may be called out of turn if necessary.

If you turn up between the specified times, we guarantee that you will be seen. At any other time, doctors may be out of the building on visits, so we would respectfully ask you not to turn up for same day appointments at the surgery outside the specified times.

Remember, our highly qualified nurse practitioners are available to see you for minor illnesses. Please see page 3 for examples of the conditions that they are able to manage.

Need to see your usual doctor?

We will still have daily booked appointments in the morning and evening for those patients who have complex medical or psychological issues, ongoing problems and those who are seeing a particular doctor already.

We would ask that you maintain this contact with your doctor and ring to book appointments with him or her. This continuity is very important in order to maintain a safe working relationship between doctor and patient.

We do realise that many patients are in work, so a sit and wait service may not be appropriate. Every day we will maintain a few **slots for working people from 8.30am to 9.00am and 5.30pm to 6.00pm.**

We will allow booking at any time up to two weeks ahead. In our experience, allowing booking further in advance than two weeks leads to increased numbers of missed appointments, which does not help anybody, least of all those wishing to book appointments with us.



## Still not sure what to do? – A Summary

This simple guide should help you to get the help you need.

### If you have

1

- a long-term condition or a longstanding problem
- seen a particular doctor one or more times for an ongoing issue
- been called for a medication or condition review, or need a note
- a complex or time-consuming problem that can wait a day or two

*Book a routine appointment with your usual doctor (or nurse in the case of a condition review)*

### If you have

2

- a problem that has suddenly got worse
- a problem that cannot wait until the next working day
- an urgent or emergency issue
- severe abdominal pain, severe headache, breathlessness, acute dizziness

*Come to our sit and wait surgery to be seen by the doctor today*

**If you have acute chest pain, speech problems, weakness in your limbs, ring 999 – see page 4 on 'Get The Right Help'**

### If you have

3

- a minor illness & want self help
- a simple health complaint
- need of pharmaceutical or medication advice

*See your pharmacist or NHS*

*Direct for advice or speak to the duty doctor for advice*

### If you have

4

- a minor illness (for examples, see the list on the right)
- a family planning problem
- a wound or skin related issue

*See our nurse practitioners*

## NURSE PRACTITIONERS and minor illness

If you have any of the following conditions, our highly qualified nurse practitioners will be able to help you. Please ask reception when you ring.

- Simple chest infections/cough
- Upper respiratory infections/sinusitis/colds/flu
- Earache
- Simple soft tissue infections
- Sore throat
- Thrush
- Conjunctivitis/sore eyes/styes
- Fungal skin infections
- Medication repeats
- Acute asthma
- Eczema
- High blood pressure
- Nits
- Worms
- Rashes
- Cold sores
- Boils
- Fever (but not children with prolonged fever)
- Vaginal discharge
- Cystitis/urine infections
- Bites & stings
- Hayfever
- Minor bumps
- Infected wounds/removal of sutures
- Ingrowing toe nails
- Nose bleeds
- Simple bites & stings
- Missed pills/emergency contraception
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Indigestion
- Burns & scalds
- Minor sprains/strains

The above list comprises only examples. If our nurse practitioners are not able to help you, they will pass your problem on to the duty doctor or ask you to book another appointment with a doctor.

## Ring the surgery for other reasons?

### Q: What if I have an emergency?

**A:** A duty doctor is available each day to deal with emergencies that crop up. If your call is outside of the above telephone advice or sit and wait times, you will be directed to the duty doctor. This is only for issues that are considered to be an emergency and which cannot wait until the next working day. After speaking to you, the duty doctor will make appropriate arrangements to see you if it is considered necessary.

### Q: What if I need a visit?

**A:** If you think you will need a same day visit, you should ring before 11.00am that day. The duty doctor will ring you back.

Visits are provided on clinical need only, and are for those strictly housebound or those too ill to attend surgery. We do not visit children at home as we consider them to be very portable.

### Q: What if I just want my results?

**A:** If you need to ring to ask for your test result, please try to ring in the afternoons. The mornings are generally a very busy time for the surgery, especially on a Monday.

Please be assured that if you have a seriously abnormal or dangerous result, we will always contact you directly ourselves.

Please let us know if you change your telephone number.



## OUR PPG

The surgery has its own patient participation group (PPG) called *Friends of Ivy Grove Surgery* or FIGS for short. We hope to bring you more information about our PPG in a future issue.

Active involvement in our PPG from any registered patient is very welcome. Please ask to speak to our practice manager for more details.

## Get The Right Help

### • Minor illness and self-help treatment

Many conditions do get better with self-help treatment without the need to see a doctor or nurse. If you are unsure where to turn to for health advice, there are many options. You can ring NHS Direct for health advice, on 0845 4647, or you can speak to your pharmacist. If you have internet access, NHS Direct at <http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/> is a good place to start.

### • Ring 999 for more severe symptoms

There are instances where we recommend getting immediate help for your symptoms. If you have any of the following symptoms, **you need to ring 999**. Do not try to ring or book an appointment with your doctor as in these situations it is important to get into hospital immediately for treatment and avoid any unnecessary delay. Our receptionists are trained to advise you to call 999 in the circumstances.

- Central crushing chest pain especially with nausea, sweatiness or shortness of breath (possible heart attack);
- Facial weakness (droopy face), **A**rm or leg weakness or **S**peech problems, **T**ime to ring 999, even if these symptoms are shortlived (remember, in **suspected stroke, act FAST**);
- Loss of consciousness, becoming unrousable, with or without head injury;
- Severe uncontrolled bleeding;
- Anaphylactic shock (acute allergic reaction).



Should you have any comments, complaints or compliments about the service you have received from the practice please ask to speak to our practice manager, Mrs Charmagne Stephenson or write to us at the address below.

Contributions and letters to the newsletter are very welcome. Please address correspondence to the address below.

Edited by Dr M. Wong.



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## CHECK YOURSELF IN!

When you come into the surgery, please take time to familiarise yourself with the new confidential check-in system on the right hand wall just as you come through the entrance. It's very easy to use!

This new service was brought in as a result of feedback from our patient experience surveys. Patients did not want to wait in a long queue tailing back to the front door in order to check in with the receptionist. Delays caused by other queries at the front desk worsened the problem.

Please help us to work efficiently by using the new check-in system. Ask for a leaflet at reception.

## Website News

Visit <http://www.ivygrove.org.uk> for the latest news at Ivy Grove. Here you will find information on our services, recent news and an electronic version of our practice booklet. You can also request repeat prescriptions online. If you are looking for medical information, our list of health related links will be helpful to you. Check back regularly for updates. Our PPG (Patient Participation Group) will also have a section on the site to update you on their activities.

## Physio Direct

This is a new service set up by Derbyshire County PCT. All patients over the age of 16 from this practice can now refer themselves to physiotherapy for any back, neck, joint or muscular problems. **There is no need to see your GP before using this service.** Simply call the number below and you will either have a face to face appointment with an experienced Chartered Physiotherapist, or if you prefer, a telephone consultation can be arranged at your convenience.



**01773 826268**

Phone answered between 9am - 12.30pm, and 1pm - 3pm, Monday - Friday. 24 hour answer phone available at all other times. Physio Direct will call you back by the next working day.

## NEXT ISSUE

Next issue we hope to bring you some news on our Patient Participation Group, FIGS (Friends of Ivy Grove Surgery).

We also plan to tell you about various behind the scenes initiatives to help improve patient care and also information on some of our new services.

With your support, we can continue to provide you with high quality and friendly health care in a personal family orientated setting.

## REMINDER

We will be closed on the Bank Holidays in May (May 4th and May 25th). Don't forget to hand in your repeat prescriptions slips in good time!