

Lonsdale Medical Centre Newsletter

www.lonsdalemedicalcentre-kent.nhs.uk

Please log on to our website to find out the most recent practice news, changes and updates. Did you know that you can also make and cancel appointments online and much more!

News from the Surgery



News from the surgery

Dr Shiraz has safely delivered a baby daughter and is now starting maternity leave. We wish her and her husband many congratulations.

We have been fortunate in finding Dr Julia Wakeham, an enthusiastic and dedicated clinician, to join us as a partner for two days a week. We also welcome Donna who is joining our reception team in July replacing Margaret who has now retired.

As Dr Shiraz is now on maternity leave and Dr Phillips is working reduced hours, we remain understaffed in terms of medical practitioners and this puts pressure on our appointment system. We are relying on the hard work of our other GP partners and on locum doctors when we are able to source them. The situation will remain difficult until we are able to recruit another GP partner, which may take some considerable time given the nationwide shortage of available GPs. We have therefore decided that for the time being, in order not to compromise our service further, we will not register any new patients.

We apologise that the situation means you may have to wait longer than normal for a routine appointment, and we ask you to bear this in mind when dealing with our receptionists, who always do their best to help.

For those with *urgent* problems that require medical attention on the day, emergency appointments will *always* be available every day. In order for those who need our help most to be able to access it promptly, we would ask that you only book an emergency appointment if your problem really cannot wait, or cannot be dealt with by anyone other than your GP or a Nurse Practitioner

We would like to remind patients that coughs, colds, thrush and other common ailments are not medical emergencies, and can usually be managed very well by your local pharmacist with remedies easily available.

Missed appointments – Target Zero!

On a monthly basis there are approximately 200 missed appointments at significant cost to the surgery. If you are unable to attend your appointment whether it is with a doctor or a nurse, please let us know so that we can offer that valuable time to someone who may desperately need it. You can cancel your appointment online but you need to obtain your individual log-in details from the surgery first. If it would be helpful to receive a text reminder about your appointment, please inform reception and let them have your mobile number.

Name the Teddy Bear

One of our patients kindly donated a teddy bear to the surgery. We had a 'Name That Teddy Bear' competition with all donations going to the Hospice in the Weald. We raised over £50 for the Hospice and would like to thank everyone who contributed to this. The name of the teddy was Colleen and was won by a grateful patient who gave it to his granddaughter.

Patients attending appointments out of surgery hours

We would like to remind patients who are attending the surgery that the surgery doors are opened 8am until 6.15pm. If your appointment is before or after this time you will need to gain access to the building via the front door and buzz the 'Out of hours' button on the entry system so that the doctor can let you in.

Prescriptions

The surgery will only issue prescriptions for a maximum of two months. If patients are visiting abroad for more than this period medication should be obtained from a local doctor at their destination. It is not

clinically safe for the doctors to issue more than two months as our GPs cannot be responsible for a patients care if they have an extended stay abroad. Extenuating circumstances will be considered.

Counter signatories for Passports

Please be aware that the surgery no longer offers this service. Patients will need to get this done elsewhere and there are many people that can countersign passports.

Zero Tolerance Policy

We would like to remind patients that we follow a 'Zero Tolerance Policy' at the surgery. Staff at Lonsdale Medical Centre have the right to work free from any threat or fear of abuse or violence. If any patient is abusive or violent toward any member of staff or any other persons on the practice premises, the practice retains the right to have a patient removed from the list.

Continuity of Care

For continuity of care if a patient has been asked to return for review by either the nurses or the doctors wherever possible the next appointment should be booked with that clinician. This is important as the original clinician will be familiar with the patients' problem which helps with continuity. It also saves time for both the patient and the doctor in repeating information that has already been discussed previously. We appreciate that sometimes this can be difficult due to the clinicians working part time.

News from the Nurses

Blood pressures

It is very important to monitor your blood pressure. We have a blood pressure machine in the surgery that can be used when the surgery is open and you do not need an appointment to access this. If you do have high blood pressure (systolic (higher figure) is above 150 or the lower figure (diastolic) is above 90), please make an appointment with a doctor or Julie, our nurse practitioner.

Smoking Cessation

If you need any help or advice regarding smoking cessation we are now referring patients to the self-referral Smoking Cessation Service. The number is 0300 123 1220.

Weight for It

If you have a problem with your weight, the Council sponsor a range of weight management programmes to support individuals to lose weight and more importantly to keep it off. Patients can self-refer and there are programmes delivered across the borough at varied session times including evening.

The 10 week programmes **are free** and run by a nutritionist and exercise specialist. There are weekly weigh ins to track progress towards goals and help people make long term behaviour changes. Topics include: portion control, food labels, sugar control, physical activity and emotional eating. More information is available at the surgery.

PPG News and Events

PPG Walk

A fairly gentle walk has been planned on Sunday, 28 August at 10am from the surgery. The first walk is about 5.5 km long (but easily extended), mainly off busy roads, but wheelchair and buggy friendly, starting and finishing at the surgery. Hopefully it will take some people along paths that they have not previously enjoyed. It should take a maximum of 90 minutes depending on the speed of the group. Considering it is in Tunbridge Wells it is also not very hilly, with an overall ascent of 80 m. Please join us!

