

# THE BANKS AND BEARWOOD GAZETTE

September 2016

## Staff News

Dr. James La Bouchardiere left the Practice at the end of July 2016 in order to pursue other interests. He will continue to provide locum sessions at the Practice from time to time. We would like to take this opportunity to wish him all the best in his new venture and to thank him for his dedication and commitment to the Practice and our patients over the last few years.

Dr. Chantal Simon will be leaving us at the end of December 2016. We wish her the best for the future. We know she will be missed by all the patient and staff.

Nurse Helen Drake left the Practice at the end of August and we have welcomed two new Nurses during August / September. Shelley Edgar, an experienced Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Zoe Friskney, Practice Nurse, will work at both the Banks Medical Centre and Bearwood Medical Centre sites.

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## GP Appointment Booking.

In an attempt to prevent the very large number of GP appointments that are being wasted when patients do not attend, we have taken the decision to make changes to our appointment system. In the last 6 months, 885 GP appointments have been wasted. This is equivalent to 31 working days. We have attempted to improve the situation by writing to patients who miss their appointments, but this has not helped.

From August 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, the majority of appointments with a GP will only be available to book a couple of days ahead. We will continue to offer same day access to a clinician for patients with medical symptoms which require this and there will be a few appointments that can be pre-booked with a GP two weeks ahead. This change will not affect appointments with the Practice Nurses or Phlebotomist.

Please ensure we have your correct mobile telephone number so we can send you a text to remind you about your appointment. If you no longer need your appointment, please remember to cancel it in good time, so it can be used by someone-else. If we have sent you a text reminding you about your appointment, you can cancel it by replying Cancel.

## Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccinations.

**If you are eligible, please have your flu vaccination at the Practice so that this important funding stream does not leave Primary Care.**

We will once again be offering the flu vaccination to eligible patients. Patients born on or before March 31<sup>st</sup> 1952 are eligible to receive the annual flu vaccination and the "one off" pneumococcal vaccination free of charge on the NHS.

Patients with certain chronic health conditions are also entitled to receive the flu vaccination each year. During the 2016-17 flu campaign, children born between 1/9/2011 and 31/8/2014 will also be eligible to

receive the nasal flu vaccination. Flu clinics will be running in late September and October. Invitations will be sent by text / telephone wherever possible. If you know you are eligible to receive the vaccination, please book your appointment at reception from September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Help us to help you ...**

It is of considerable help to the doctors if patients who feel they require same day access to a GP (an appointment, telephone call or home visit) could ring as early as possible in the morning. There are generally more GPs available during the mornings, however we are increasingly finding that patients are leaving it until lunchtime or after to contact us, which makes it difficult for the GPs to plan their workload for the day.

Local pharmacies are able to help and provide advice on many medical conditions and speaking to the pharmacist may save you a trip to the GP Practice.

### **Prescription requests**

We ask that you allow **2 full working days** for us to process your repeat prescription requests and longer if you collect your items directly from a local pharmacy or if your items are not on repeat. Please allow more time if your request is over a bank holiday.

To order your repeat prescriptions please put the request in writing to the surgery or your local pharmacy or via our website at [www.bearwoodmedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.bearwoodmedicalpractice.co.uk). We do NOT accept requests for prescriptions by telephone as this is how mistakes can occur. Please ensure you know the name of the item you require. Lots of tablets are the same colour and size so asking for the “big white ones” or the “little blue ones” creates further problems and a longer delay! Many local pharmacies offer a prescription delivery service. If you wish the pharmacy to deliver your prescription please be aware that it will take 2 full working days for the prescription to reach the pharmacy and longer for it to be delivered.

### **Sickness certificate requests / forms and letter**

The production of an on-going sickness certificates is not a medical emergency and will not be treated as such. Patients who require on-going sickness certificates MUST order these in advance allowing 3 working days for the GP to produce the certificate. Sickness certificates can be back dated. Other forms and letters will take a minimum of 5 working days to be completed.

**Please take responsibility for your health. Being organised and ordering your prescription / sick certificate before you run out of medication or before your sickness certificate runs out, results in fewer problems and delays for everyone (patients, GPs and Practice staff).**

### **And finally ....**

We understand that our patients are often worried and concerned about their health or the health of a loved one, but please speak to us and treat us in the way that you would like to be spoken to. We aim to deal with everyone politely and respectfully but ask that you do the same for us. Thank you.