

# The Heavitree Practice

## NEWSLETTER

### Spring 2016

#### Extended Hours

As part of the government's drive to provide patients with GP access from 8am to 8pm 7 days a week, Exeter Practices are providing extra GP and nurse appointments from 6.30 to 8.00pm Monday to Thursday and from 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturdays and Sundays. If you need an appointment during these times please ask at reception and they can provide you with details of the Practice that is open and their contact details.

In view of this we have decided to discontinue our alternate Thursday evening surgeries and increase the days we open at 7.30am. This will also enable us to offer additional early morning blood tests - not possible in the evening as they have to be done before the lab collects at 3pm.

From April our extended hours surgeries will be:

- Monday from 7.30am – Dr Barker, Dr Morris and Jess Brown, phlebotomist
- Wednesday from 7.30am – Dr Thompson and Jess Brown
- Thursday from 7.30am – Dr Ball, Dr Chamberlain and Jess Brown
- Friday from 7.30am – Dr Barker and Angie Galpin, HCA

All appointments will be pre bookable by phone or online.



#### Did you attend?

In January we had 106 missed appointments, including 42 with the GPs.

This amounts to 28 hours of wasted appointments worth over £1000.

At the same time we were not able to provide appointments for everyone who wanted one and had to send people to the walk in centre because we had no nurse appointments available for patients needing post-operative care.

You can help by not booking appointments 'just in case' and letting us know as soon as possible if you can't attend.

We will be monitoring this closely over the coming months and writing to anyone who misses more than two appointments. We may restrict persistent offenders to on the day appointments or refuse rebooking of non-essential appointments such as travel advice and immunisations.

#### Can you help to reduce medicines waste?

£5.5 million is wasted each year in Devon on unused medicines. If you have regular repeat medication you may be able help to reduce this by:

- Telling your GP or nurse if any of your medicines aren't agreeing with you.
- Telling your GP or nurse if you have stopped taking any of your medicines for any reason.
- Checking what supplies of each medicine you have and only ordering what you need.
- If the pharmacy order your repeat medication, telling them if there are any items that you don't need this month
- Opening your bag of medication whilst in the pharmacy and giving back any items not ordered or not needed



## Friends of Heavitree Health Centre

As many of you will be aware we are very lucky to have this group of volunteers who help in the surgery, including driving patients to the surgery and for hospital appointments, delivery of prescriptions, providing a "sitting service", doing shopping, holding lunch clubs etc.

The Friends are a registered charity who fund their services from NHS and local authority grants, sales in their shop and donations from grateful patients. It has come as a great blow to them that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has decided to stop their £8,000 annual grant. They are appealing this decision and looking for other sources of funding but it is possible that they will have to reduce, or charge for, the services they offer.

If you can offer your help as a volunteer or in any other way please contact **Jackie Minto** the Co-ordinator of the Friends of the Heavitree Health Centre on **01392 277409**. There is an answer machine to record your message if no one is in the office.

### Easter Opening Hours

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April ~ 8am to 6pm

Good Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April ~ CLOSED

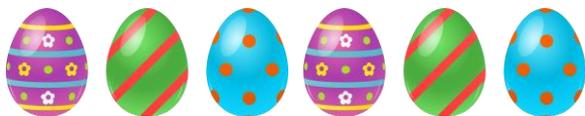
Easter Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April ~ CLOSED

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April ~ 8am to 6pm

For medical emergencies  
when the surgery is closed

Telephone: **111**

*the new 24-hour medical helpline*



### Don't run out of medicines

Make sure you have sufficient medication to last you over the holiday period.

Order online, via your usual pharmacy, by post, at reception or by phone (10.30am to 12.30pm and 2.00pm to 4.00pm)

If you collect your prescription from us allow 2 working days. If we send your prescription to the chemist you should allow 4 working days.

### Complaints

At the end of each calendar year we review all of the formal complaints we have received to see if there are any common themes and things we can learn from. These are shared with the Practice team and our Practice Participation Group (PPG).

In 2016 we received 8 complaints compared to 13 last year and none about our GPs.

Disappointingly 5 complaints included reference to the way information was given to patients by receptionists. Comments about 'a rude receptionist' also appear in the Friends and Family Test feedback and recently on an NHS Choices comment. Unfortunately patients are often unable, or reluctant, to identify the receptionist so it is difficult for us to address the issues directly.

We recognise that we need to be mindful that it can be that patients don't like what they are being told and their perception that receptionists are being unhelpful is heightened when clinicians subsequently bend the rules for them.

Nevertheless if you do have an issue please speak to Jane Shooter, Practice Manager or Sarah Johnston, Deputy Practice Manager so that we can investigate and take any action required.