



# NEWSLETTER

December 2019



## Introduction

As we move towards the end of the year, we reflect on an incredibly busy year again. Our dispensers have provided you with more medications than ever before and we've offered more appointments this year than ever before too.

You may have seen the national press reports indicating that the provision of healthcare is changing throughout the whole of the country. This is no different in Herefordshire and plans are afoot to start working differently. Further information is available in this Newsletter and it is important that you, as patients, are given the opportunity to read the proposals.

On behalf of the staff at Weobley & Staunton on Wye Surgeries, we would like to wish all our patients a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

## Home Visits - A Gentle Reminder

This is an important service, but because of the large area we cover, it is time consuming for the doctors. We are happy to visit patients when necessary but ask you please to come to the surgery if you possibly can. If you need a visit, please telephone **before 10.30 am** and not leave your request until later in the day. This allows the doctors time to plan their visits

## Car Parking Access to the Surgery

The Practice has no responsibility for the car parking on Gadbridge Road as this lies with the Highways Department and the local police. However, when visiting Weobley Surgery do please be considerate of the homeowners close to the premises. Residents have become increasingly concerned regarding inability to access their properties due to parking opposite or in front of drives or using the road behind the surgery as a turning circle. For those able bodied patients there is access to the car park at the Village Hall at all times only a short walk away from the surgery. There are however two Disabled parking spaces at the front of the Surgery. Thank you for your courtesy.

## Thinking of Travelling at the Last Minute?



Hoping to book a fantastic deal on the internet or to get a bargain at the travel agents? That would be great, but please remember we rarely have last minute appointments. You should attend the

surgery at least 6-8 weeks before departure. Sometimes you will require a course of vaccinations and sometimes these may have to be ordered in for you.

## Our Facebook page is now LIVE!

We now have a dedicated Practice Facebook page that will provide you with a wealth of Practice and Health information.



## In This Issue

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# Practice Update

You will, no doubt, have seen the recent press reports regarding the unprecedented demands on A&E and GP Surgeries. This has been no different for Weobley & Staunton on Wye Surgeries.

It is important to us that we provide you with the best service possible and therefore we would respectfully like to ask you, our patients, to help us meet your demands by accessing our services appropriately.

**Appointments** - All consultations are by appointment. These can be made by telephone, in person or on our website. Please ask at Reception for a PIN number to use the online services. Appointments can be made on the telephone from 8 am each morning.

Our appointment system allows patients to see the doctor of their choice by being able to pre-book appointments in advance. Please be aware that you may have to wait for an appointment to see the doctor of your choice, if this is not acceptable we will offer you an appointment with another doctor.

Please do not ring the surgery at 8am hoping to see a specific doctor for a routine appointment as this may not always be possible. We recommend that you only ring at 8am if it is important that you speak to a doctor on that day, this way we can offer the best service to all our patients and make contacting the surgery easier.

If your problem is an ongoing problem that has flared up recently then we appreciate you may wish to see the doctor who has been dealing with this problem for you. If you let the receptionist know who the doctor is they will endeavor to book an appointment with the same doctor.

If you would like to speak to a GP but do not need to attend the surgery, you have the option of booking a telephone consultation. This will save you coming into the surgery. Please telephone the surgery and ask for a telephone consultation. Because it is not always practical for you to ring and find a doctor free at a set time, we will usually take your telephone number and the doctor will ring you back.

Please be patient with us. We are a very busy surgery and always try to accommodate every request but demand for appointments is high and not every doctor works full time. We will do our best to always book you an appointment with the doctor of your choice but please understand that this may not always be possible

When the surgery is closed a recorded message will give you details about contacting the out-of-hours service. Out-of-hours services are generally busy so please think carefully before asking to see a doctor and only do so if you genuinely cannot wait until the surgery re-opens.

There are a number of options for you:

Taurus Healthcare is a company that has been set up by the GPs in Herefordshire to provide additional medical services to patients. There are now three primary care hubs (Leominster, Ross and Hereford) open in the county that provide GP and Practice Nursing services for our patients during the evenings and weekends. The hubs are staffed by local GPs and nurses, who will, with your permission, be able to access your medical records, thereby offering you continuity of care. To make an appointment you can ask the receptionist at either Weobley or Staunton on Wye Surgery to book an appointment for you. If you need to make an appointment at one of the hubs but the surgery is closed, please phone 111 and ask for an appointment at one of the hubs. They will then arrange this for you or alternatively you can ring direct on 0800 121 7221. The Hereford hub is open 6pm to 8pm on weekdays and 8am to 8pm on weekends and bank holidays.

You can telephone 111. NHS 111 is a service to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services in England. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straight-away to the local service that can help you best. That could be A&E, a doctor, a walk-in centre, a community nurse, an emergency dentist or a late-opening chemist. Where possible, the NHS 111 team will book you an appointment or transfer you directly to the people you need to speak to. If NHS 111 advisers think you need an ambulance, they will immediately arrange for one to be sent to you. Calls to 111 are recorded. All calls and the records created are maintained securely, and will only be shared with others directly involved with your care.

Call 111 if:

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service



## Staff Changes

Both **Claire Ray**, Dispenser and **Rachel Gray**, Admin Assistant have recently joined our Practice.

**Suzi Cox** joined our Practice a few months ago as Assistant Practice Manager after the retirement of Sarah Pithouse.

**Pip Thomas** will be welcomed back from Maternity Leave in August next year and **Jane Lewis**, has joined the Practice as a Receptionist.

**Dr. Holly Vaughan** will be leaving the Practice at the end of January to go on maternity leave for 12 months.

**Dr. Francesca Howells** and **Dr. Jamie Ballard** have rejoined the Practice as GP Registrars for six months following the completion of their training.

We will also have Medical Students joining us from Cardiff Medical School for approximately 12 weeks regularly.

The Practice is proud to offer this opportunity to doctors in training.



- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next

A&E is designed to assess and treat people with serious injuries and those in need of emergency treatment. They are open 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year. Typical reasons for going to A&E include:

- severe breathing problems
- chest pain and heart attacks
- severe bleeding
- major trauma
- head injuries
- lack of consciousness
- severe burns or scalds
- broken bones
- severe abdominal pain
- drug overdose



Normal cuts, bruises and sprains aren't usually considered to be emergencies since these can usually be treated at home or by your GP. A&E shouldn't be used as an alternative to your GP.

**Repeat Prescriptions** - Please give the requested 48 hours' notice for repeat prescriptions and when calculating the 48 hours take into account the weekends when the dispensary is closed. Prescriptions requested after 11.30 am on Friday will not be ready for collection until after 11.30 am on Tuesday. After 48 hours please collect your prescriptions promptly as we do not have the space to store prepared prescriptions. All prescriptions must be paid for when collected unless a valid exemption certificate is produced. Patients who have a number of prescriptions each month may find it more economical to purchase a pre-paid certificate. Please ask one of our dispensary staff and they will advise you.

## Military Veterans Covenant

GP Practices are supporting the initiative to become 'Veteran Friendly'. As per the Armed Forces Covenant, all veterans are entitled to priority access to NHS care (including hospital, primary or community care) for conditions associated to their time within the armed forces (service related). However, this is always subject to clinical need and does not entitle you to jump the queue ahead of someone with a higher clinical need. Since the initiative started we have asked all our new patients whether they have ever been in the forces on our registration form, however those patients that have been registered at the Practice for some time may not be aware of this. If you have ever been a serving member of the Armed Forces do please let the Reception Team know and they will ensure your records are annotated with this information.

Further information is available within the Practice's Military Veterans Treatment Priority Policy.

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender - Pride in Practice Accreditation



We as a Practice are working very closely with the LGBT Foundation towards their Pride in Practice Accreditation. More information can be found on our website or the link below:

<http://www.weobleyandstauntonurgeries.nhs.uk/info.aspx?p=2>

## Online Consultations

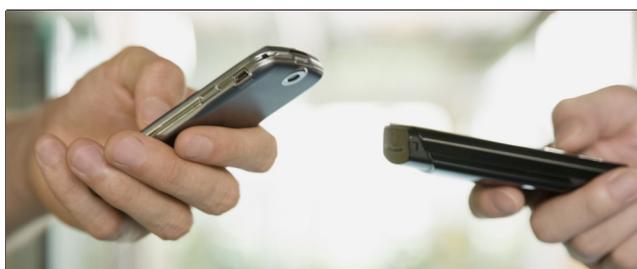
We are currently in the process of working with our clinical system provider to set up instant health advice from an Online Consult page that will be accessed by this webpage and the Patient Access app. Online Consult will allow patients to easily seek 24/7 support or access self-help advice, either for themselves or for those in their care and may even save you a face to face appointment. You will have access to 200 videos and over 75 forms that have been written, recorded and approved by a team of GPs with over 20 years' experience and Patient.info's clinical director, Dr. Sarah Jarvis. You will also be able to contact the Practice via this service to request a GP letter, request a sick note or ask a general query. Please be aware that all Online Consult forms submitted to the Practice will be dealt with within 2 full working days (ie. not counting weekends or public holidays) and **WILL NOT** be monitored over weekends and bank holidays and are for **NON URGENT** queries only. For emergencies and urgent help please dial 999.



## Text Messaging Service

Over the next couple of weeks we are introducing an extension to our text message reminder service. We already remind you of your appointment dates but we will be using text alerts to you know much more, including:

- when your medications are available for you to pick up
- when your fit note, medical report, letter is ready to pick up
- when your results have come back to the Practice, have been seen by the clinician, and they are normal
- when you need to come in for review of your long term condition
- when you need to come in for a medication review
- when you need to come back and discuss a non-urgent hospital letter or additional treatment with a clinician
- when you are due to come in for a vaccination or immunisation



Patients have reported the following benefits of using the service including:

- Convenience, avoiding the need to wait for a phone call to answer a simple question
- Immediacy, receiving correspondence immediately rather than waiting for a letter
- Safety, allowing prompting of overdue investigations when issuing repeat prescriptions
- Patient experience, for example, letting a patient know that their prescription is ready to collect
- Improved access and avoiding inappropriate appointments

Please ensure your mobile number is correct on your records by discussing this with a member of the Reception Team so that you will be able to take advantage of this service. If you do not wish to take advantage of this service then please let the Reception Team know and we can set the system to reflect your decision not to accept text messages.

## Social Prescribing

The social prescribing link worker role has emerged over the past few years and has mainly been pioneered by voluntary sector organisations, working in partnership with GP practices and other referral agencies. Link workers are employed in non-clinical roles. They are recruited for their listening skills, empathy and ability to support people.

Social prescribing link workers help to reduce health inequalities by supporting people to unpick complex issues affecting their wellbeing. They enable people to have more control over their lives, develop skills and give their time to others, through involvement in community groups. Link workers visit people in their homes, where needed. If you feel you may benefit from seeing a Social Prescriber please discuss this with your GP or nurse. Social prescribing particularly works for a wide range of people, including people:

- with one or more long-term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing

## Patient Confidentiality

The practice has a duty of care to protect patient information. Please be aware that our staff cannot and will not release information regarding a relative or friend's care and/or medication unless written permission has been given by the patient via a data sharing agreement. Patients can, if they so wish, indicate the type of information they are happy to be released and to whom on the form which is then transferred to their medical record. Please ask for further information from a member of our Reception Team.

## Results of Investigations

If you have had blood tests, urine tests, swabs or x-rays please contact the surgery for the results. The best time to telephone is between 12 noon and 1pm.



## Herefordshire One Record

Sharing records to improve patient care in Herefordshire - patients will soon benefit from an improved digital sharing system called Herefordshire One Record.

This will enable sharing of patient records between GPs and other health care professionals in the county to ensure patients get the best possible treatment when needed.

Patient information is often only available within a single organisation. Herefordshire One Record will allow health care professionals in multiple organisations in Herefordshire to view patient records.

The following organisations will soon have access to the electronic systems to share information:

- Herefordshire GP Practices
- Wye Valley NHS Trust
- St Michael's Hospice
- Taurus Healthcare (for extended and out-of-hours GP services)

In addition, 2gether NHS Foundation Trust will also have access to view the records shared by the above organisations. (Note: 2gether will have access to view the records shared by the above organisations but will not be sharing any records through Herefordshire One Record).

Herefordshire One Record will enable staff of these organisations to access up-to-date records that are held by the other organisations.

It means that medical staff involved in patient care (whether they are a GP, Practice Nurse, District Nurse or a Consultant at the hospital) can make more informed choices about the care and medical treatment needed by a patient. It also means that patients won't need to explain their medical history or conditions each time they see a different health care professional.

Through this new digital system the quality of patient care will be improved through not only the better coordination but reducing the time spent updating health records on different systems by clinical teams and having to request information from other health care providers.

It will assist with patient information being available in the right place at the right time and aims to help reduce admissions and readmissions and decrease duplicate testing. It will help our healthcare services in Herefordshire working in the most efficient ways possible. Herefordshire One Record roll-out will start Mid-September 2019.

Further information is available from the Herefordshire CCG website

<https://www.herefordshireccg.nhs.uk/your-services/herefordshire-one-record>



## Are you Fit and Ready for your Surgery?

Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) recognises that lifestyle factors have a significant impact on the health of our population and place an increasing burden on our health economy. This trend is set to continue unless we make some changes to our lifestyle choices and in our approach to healthcare delivery. We recognise that we all have a part to play in making our communities healthier and we must work closely with the patients we serve and our highly skilled health workers who provide the support services to achieve this end. We set out to inspire you to get involved and share responsibility by taking the positive steps to ensure that you are fit for surgery and our investing in your lifelong health. Our aim is to support you to reduce your individual risk of complications before, during and after surgery and have the best possible outcome of care and enjoy an improved healthier lifestyle. By optimising your health, you may be able to influence the immediate outcome of surgery and impact on the level of benefit that you get from the procedure.

Further information is available below:

[Optimising your Health Guidance](#)

[Are you Fit and Ready for Surgery Leaflet?](#)

## Helping Patients to Manage their own Online Referral

More referrals are being made electronically with the NHS e-Referral Service (e-RS). Using e-RS means practices have the chance to save time by helping patients manage their referral online.

The e-RS Manage Your Referral website is easy for patients to use. It allows you to book, check, change and cancel your appointments online without help from the practice.

Patients can take control and book their own appointment on a convenient date and time and at their preferred hospital or clinic if there is a choice. This means no more worried patients contacting the practice to find out what is happening with their appointment. Further information is available by clicking on the link below:

[Manage Your Referral Online Leaflet](#)

## NHS APP

### Try the new NHS App

If you're a patient at our practice you can now use the new NHS App, a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

You can use the NHS App to check your symptoms and get instant advice, book appointments, order repeat prescriptions, view your GP medical record and more if you have requested access to your information. If you currently do not have access to your records, please ask a member of the Reception Team who will be able to provide you with all the information you require to register.

If you already use Patient Access Online you can continue to use it. You can use the NHS App as well.

For more information go to [www.nhs.uk/nhsapp](http://www.nhs.uk/nhsapp)



## Social Media Patient Policy

There are many social media platforms that are widely used by both staff and patients; these include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn. At Weobley & Staunton on Wye Surgeries we have a Facebook page which provides a range of useful information for our patient population.

The Practice has a duty to maintain patient confidentiality and to safeguard vulnerable patients. You can help us achieve this by adhering to the Code of Conduct outlined in our Social Media Policy available on our Website.

## Patient Online Access

If you wish you can already use the internet to book appointments with a GP, request repeat prescriptions for any medications you take regularly and have access to your summary information (allergies and immunisation history). You can now also access your coded medical records.

Further information on what you can expect to see and what will not be included is available by visiting the link [Patient Access Online](#).

## Confidentiality & Medical Records

The Practice complies with data protection and access to medical records legislation. Identifiable information about you will be shared with others in the following circumstances:

- To provide further medical treatment for you e.g. from district nurses and hospital services.
- To help you get other services e.g. from the social work department. This requires your consent.
- When we have a duty to others e.g. in child protection cases anonymised patient information will also be used at local and national level to help the Health Board and Government plan services e.g. for diabetic care.

If you do not wish anonymous information about you to be used in such a way, please let us know. Reception and administration staff require access to your medical records in order to do their jobs. These members of staff are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as the medical staff. The Practice Privacy Notice is given below. However, the only website this Privacy notice applies to is the Surgery's website. If you use a link to any other website from the Surgery's website then you will need to read their respective privacy notice. We take no responsibility (legal or otherwise) for the content of other websites.

- [General Data Protection Regulation Policy](#) (Updated August 2019)
- [Information Governance Policy](#) (Updated October 2019)
- [Weobley & Staunton on Wye Surgeries v8.00](#) Privacy Notice (Updated September 2019)
- [Privacy Information Leaflet](#) (Updated August 2019)
- [Childrens Privacy Information Leaflet](#) (Updated August 2019)
- [Confidentiality Code of Practice](#)
- [Confidentiality Policy for Patients Under the Age of 18](#) (Updated November 2019)
- [Social Media Patient Policy](#)
- [Confidentiality Disclosure & Sharing of Patient Information Policy](#) (Updated November 2019)

Please be aware that our staff cannot and will not release information regarding a relative or friend's care and/or medication unless written permission has been given by the patient via a data sharing agreement. Patients can, if they so wish, indicate the type of information they are happy to be released and to whom on the form which is then transferred to their medical record. Please ask for a form from our Reception Team or download this below and return it to the Practice at your earliest convenience.

[Health Information Sharing Form](#)

## Children and Young Person's Access

Before a child develops the capacity to make an informed choice about their healthcare or who might have proxy access to their records, the usual position would be for the parents of the child to control access to their child's record and online services.

It is difficult to say at what age the child will become competent to make autonomous decisions regarding their healthcare as between the ages of 11-16 this varies from person to person. In accordance with Article 8 of the General Data Protection Regulations and Part 2, Chapter 2, paragraph 9 of the Data Protection Act 2018, from the age of 13, young people are able to provide their own consent and will be able to register for online services. The procedure for access is the same as per other patients.

People aged 16 or above are assumed to be competent to make an independent and informed decision about whether to ask for someone to have proxy access to their GP online services and record, unless there is an indication that they are not.



## Approaching a Child's 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday – The First Milestone

Access to the detailed care record should be switched off automatically when the child reaches the age of 11. This avoids the possibility of:

Sudden withdrawal of proxy access by the Practice alerting the parents to the possibility that the child or young person has been to the Practice about something that they wish to remain private, an example may be family planning advice, or

The young person being deterred from coming to the Practice for help

Both the child and the proxy will be contacted in writing around the child's 11<sup>th</sup> birthday to remind them that their access on behalf of their child is coming to an end. Subsequent proxy access will need to be authorised by the patient (subject to a competency test). In addition, parental proxy access may be reinstated if, after discussion with the parent(s) requesting access, the child's GP believes that proxy access would be in the child's best interest.

## Between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Birthdays

Decisions made at the first milestone can be reconsidered and changed later. Each case must be considered individually with the best interests of the child being paramount. For example, parents with online access on behalf of children and young people with long term conditions that require regular monitoring and medication may have a good case for continued access after their 11<sup>th</sup> birthday but this must be balanced against the risks that may arise as the young person becomes competent to make their own decisions about their healthcare.

The young person may decide, once they are mature enough to act autonomously. The competent young person may decide to:

Stop their parent's proxy access to their online services, where the parents still have access after the 11th birthday

Allow their parents to have access to their online services, or to allow limited proxy access to specific services, such as appointment booking or repeat prescription requests, but not to the medical records

Request access to their online services where nobody currently has access

Switch off all online access until such time as the young person chooses to request access

## Approaching a Young Person's 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday – The Second Milestone

Once a young person turns 16, the previous competence assessment by default is no longer applicable as they are assumed to have capacity unless there is an indication to the contrary. Where parents still have access to their child's online services when the child reaches their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, the parents' access should usually be withdrawn. Both the patient and the proxy will receive notification in writing that this access has been switched off.

When a young person is not competent to make a decision about access after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, for example, the child has a severe learning disability, and it would be in the child's best interest for the parents to retain access, they may do so.

Parents may also continue to have proxy access with the consent of the patient after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. In this situation where the 16 year old is competent they will be offered the opportunity to register for online services, following the usual protocols for identity verification, as a marker of their new autonomy.



## Feedback

You may wish to leave feedback with us when visiting the Practice using the Friends and Family Test feedback cards, via text, in person, or online via the NHS website.

We always welcome any constructive feedback with regard to our services and your experiences. It helps us to review our practices, policies and shape our services of the future.



## Contact Us

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