

Ordering your Medication

At this time of year we encourage you to make sure you will have enough medication to last you through the holiday period. But please don't over-order drugs that you won't need. The cost to the NHS of wasted medication is eye-watering and that money could be used in so many better ways!

We do want you to bring back any medicines that you do not need, so we can dispose of them safely for you (waste medicine should not be put into your household refuse or down the toilet as it contaminates the water supply) but we want to keep the waste to a minimum.

It would also help enormously if you could collect your medication promptly after ordering, especially for larger packages or if it is sent for collection in the village shops or pubs, where space is an issue.

~ Thanks for your help ~

Portesham Patient Survey results

Thank you to those (around 1% of our patient list) who completed our survey in the autumn. We asked questions such as how you rate the care we give, and were happy to hear that 100% of patients felt it was excellent or good, and 100% of patients felt our clinicians listen and explain things so you feel very or quite involved.

Regarding our facilities, 97% of respondents felt they were excellent or good except the reception area (84%, with the comment that more privacy would be good) and the toilet (77%, where the siting of it near reception was felt to be not ideal.

On waiting times, 53% felt it was satisfactory to wait 3 to 4 days for a routine (non-urgent) appointment and 38% were happy to wait up to a week. Only 9% felt a 1-2 day wait was the maximum they felt was satisfactory.

We will put the full survey results on our website so do check that in a week or so to have a look.

If you missed the survey and have comments please ring or email us, fill in a feedback form at reception next time you are in, or you can talk in confidence to any member of our Friends of the Practice group. See the website or the noticeboard in the waiting room for details, or email them at:

enquiries @friendsofporteshamsurgery.co.uk.



Planning Ahead...

This time of year is busy for everyone so here are some dates for your diary:

Friday 22nd December: last day to collect prescriptions before Christmas. Please order in good time especially for the village collection points.

Monday 25th December, Tuesday 26th December CLOSED
Open again Wednesday 27th December as normal.

Monday 1st January: Surgery CLOSED

Tuesday 2nd January: open as normal

Advance Notice:

Wednesday 24th January 2018 and Wednesday 14th March 2018: Surgery CLOSED from 3pm for training. This gives us time to get the whole team together for "Protected Learning Time". We will re-open the following morning at 8.30am as normal.

When the surgery is closed please **telephone 111 for advice** and assistance from NHS Direct. This number is free to call but mobile users on pay-as-you-go tariffs will need at least 1p credit for the call to be connected. In an emergency call 999 immediately. Please see our website www.porteshamsurgery.co.uk for more advice.

Inside

- * *Meet our new partner!*
- * *A look back at 2017*
- * *Patient Survey Results*

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Reflections on 2017

This time last year we were writing about the local press reports that many surgeries might be closed and amalgamated into super-surgeries. We assured you that we weren't going anywhere, but it was a worrying time for everyone especially when we couldn't recruit a replacement for Dr Baird, who had to come out of retirement to help us when Dr Beale was off with a serious medical condition for almost a year.

What a difference a year makes! With Dr Jones starting in January, and our encouraging survey results (4th out of 96 Dorset surgeries in the 2016 GP survey of patient satisfaction), and increasingly close co-operation with the other West Dorset practices, we are more confident than ever that Portesham Surgery will be here for many years to come.

A recent London survey reported that almost a third of London's GP practices are, in one way or another, considering closure in the next 3 years, either actively planning to terminate their contract (3%), considering it (13%) or unable to rule it out (15%).

We consider ourselves incredibly lucky in West Dorset! We have an amazing team of staff and a relatively small list of patients which means we can continue to look after you in a modern, professional way but with the "old-fashioned touch". We know our patients well and can respond quickly to what you need. We enjoy our work and hope that this is reflected in the welcome you get here. We pride ourselves on being friendly and approachable.

We have a very supportive patient group which has restyled itself as Friends of the Practice, as they see this as their main role. Our recent in-house patient survey (see brief details overleaf) and our Friends and Family tablet survey at reception consistently show a high level of satisfaction.

We want to keep it this way, so we rely on you to tell us what we get right, and tell us if we get things wrong so we can improve. Thank you!

Meet our new partner!

We are very pleased to announce that Dr Elizabeth Jones will be starting with us in January 2018. She writes:

"I qualified in 2006 from Guys, Kings and St Thomas' medical school in London and then did my house officer jobs in Tunbridge Wells, before returning to London for another couple of years, including nearly a year based in the very busy A&E at St Thomas' which I absolutely loved. I then decided to become a GP and so moved to the Windsor Deanery for my training which I completed in 2013.

I grew up in Dorchester and it didn't take long for the pull of beautiful Dorset to call me back. I started working as a GP in Blandford in 2014 and have remained there until deciding to apply to be a partner at Portesham surgery. I am absolutely delighted to have got the job!

Since 2014 I have also worked weekends for the Out of Hours GP service and I will continue with this, as emergency work is still one of my passions. In my spare time I enjoy baking, working on my allotment, playing the flute and piano, anything arty and I am hoping to learn stone carving and dinghy sailing in 2018 so a busy year ahead! I am really looking forward to becoming part of the team here. I have always wanted to be a rural GP in a small caring practice and so I feel very happy to be coming to work at Portesham surgery."

Sadly this means that we will be losing Dr Smithers as a permanent GP here at the end of December, but we hope to see her still as one of our team of regular locums. We will miss her calm presence here at the end of the week!

