

Friends of the Practice

Our Friends have been busy in the garden again and are planning another afternoon's clipping (and sipping tea) on Tuesday April 2nd from 2pm. They would welcome any other enthusiasts for what is usually a companionable couple of hours!

Tea and Chat



On **Thursday 4th April** the Friends are hosting another Tea and Chat from **2 to 3pm** as part of Wellness Month. This emphasises the role we can play in our own mental and physical wellbeing, through healthy eating, exercise, and leisure activities. There will be lots of information on courses, groups and helpful tips, including a leaflet about our local village events, activities and services compiled by the Friends. If you know of any useful contacts or community initiatives we could include in the leaflet, do let us know.



The Tea and Chat is held in our waiting room and members of our staff are around to answer any non-clinical questions and listen to your ideas, worries and anything else you want to get off your chest! As well as tea we hope to have some diabetic cake to try (since it coincides with National Diabetes Prevention week).

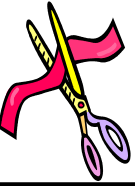
The Friends meet monthly at the Surgery and act as a conduit between the staff and patients as well as helping in many practical ways. They currently have a vacancy for a representative from Abbotsbury and also for the Winterbourne Steepleton/Martinstown area, so do talk to us here or at the Tea and Chat if you might be able to help, or email enquiries@friendsofporteshamsurgery.co.uk

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SURGERY SNIPPETS

Spring 2019



Closed for Protected Learning Time

In common with all surgeries in West Dorset, **we will be closed on the afternoon of Tuesday 19th March from 3.30pm.**

This is one of half-a-dozen afternoons during the year when we can call on telephone cover by NHS 111 in order to run whole-practice training and attend planning meetings with our neighbouring practices. Do please let us know if this will cause you any difficulties and we will do our best to find solutions.

News from the Nursing Team

You may have noticed that our waiting time for nursing appointments has been longer recently. This is partly because our nurses are training in new specialities—for example our diabetic patients are increasingly being supported more in Primary Care with fewer trips to hospital clinics—and partly because we are keeping an ever-closer eye on those of you with long-term conditions, including doing more regular reviews and blood tests.

The good news is that we are extending our nursing hours from 1st April when we will have two late nurse clinics each week, giving more choice of appointments for both working patients and school-age children. Our Health Care Assistant Tabby will also now be working on Thursday afternoons when we will be trialling a dedicated ECG clinic.

Tabby will also now offer a general clinic (for things like B12 injections, BP and weight checks) on a Monday afternoon.

Changes to Ear-syringing service—please turn over

Nursing news continued...

Because of the severe pressure on appointments and the need to make sure we can fit patients in for the more essential services such as blood tests and dressings, we have taken the decision to **stop offering an ear-syringing service** here.

Many patients have been used to coming to us if they have trouble with ear wax, but the NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) guidance on ear syringing has recently changed. Their advice is that most ear wax can be cleared at home by the patient applying oil twice a day for up to two weeks, and if this does not clear the problem, then ear microsuction is safer—which we cannot do.

Our GPs and nurses will still see you if you have the symptoms of an ear infection or other hearing problems but for straightforward management of waxy ears, there are alternative clinics available including Specsavers. Details on how to manage earwax at home, and the specialist ear clinics, are included in our Ear Syringing leaflet which is available from reception.

Travel Service

It's the time of year when many of us are making travel plans. We offer a thirty-minute travel consultation when our nurses review your itinerary and your current immunisations. Most routine boosters can be done on the spot during this consultation, and specialist vaccines can be discussed and ordered if you require them.



Please be aware that some vaccines need to be given several weeks before you travel, and we do prioritise clinical appointments for dressings and urgent reviews, so please book your travel consultation in good time as you may have to wait a couple of weeks before we can fit you in with an appointment.

The consultation and routine vaccinations are free on the NHS but some more specialised vaccines and malaria tablets are not covered by the national immunisation programme. See the poster in reception or our website for a rough guide to our charges or talk to the nurse at your appointment.

Dispensary News

Thank you for your patience as we adapt to some new systems in our dispensary brought on by changes to European legislation— Brexit has not come in time to rescue us!

We are making great progress in reducing the number of telephone orders and most people are happily ordering each month when they collect, or emailing ad-hoc orders to

Portesham.dispensary@gp-j81609.nhs.uk.

Thank you so much to those who have made the change—it really does help. If your only way of ordering is by telephone do tell us when you ring, and we will make a note on your home screen so we don't keep asking if you have another way of ordering.

Remember that no ordering is automatic—if someone else collects for you, or you take your repeat slip home because you are not sure what you need, or if we deliver your medication to one of the remote collection points, we won't know what you need unless you tell us by post, dropping off the order or by email or SystemOne.

We are still finding prescriptions left uncollected for longer than five days after your collection date. The new regulations will force us to dispose of uncollected medication so please do your best to collect on time, or change your collection date if you will be away because of holidays etc.

It is very helpful if you can avoid collecting your prescriptions before 10am wherever possible, as this is always a very busy time when the team is unpacking the daily deliveries as well as dealing with urgent prescriptions from the morning appointments. We know many of you collect when you are passing on your way to work but we are open every day until 6.30pm so it may be quicker and quieter if you collect on your way home.