

PATIENT NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2016

ST RICHARD'S ROAD SURGERY
and GOLF ROAD SURGERY

IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

Doctors and availability

Following Dr Dharmasena's retirement from the practice at the end of November 2015, we now have a vacancy for a full time doctor.

We are currently advertising to replace Dr Dharmasena however; all practices are finding it difficult to recruit as fewer doctors are choosing general practice as a career.

The clinical team are finding the increasing level of the clinical and administrative workload unmanageable and this is jeopardising the practices ability to provide safe care for their registered patients. A decision has therefore been made to stop accepting new patient registrations; unless it is the registration of an immediate family member of patients who are already registered (e.g. new birth, or students returning from college), and only if such relatives reside permanently at the registered patient's address. This condition will apply until we manage to recruit, or find alternative ways of working. We have agreed to monitor the situation and review this decision on a monthly basis, and hope to start accepting new applicants again as soon as possible.

As a practice we are currently exploring alternative ways of working, which includes the use of other allied health professionals e.g. Paramedic Practitioners; who some of you may have already seen following home visit requests.

We ask patients to work with us during this period of change and to let us have feedback both positive and

Negative; as we need to understand how these changes are affecting our patients.

Feedback can be sent to us in writing, or via the practice website using the contact us proforma.

www.strichardsroadsurgery.nhs.uk

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind patients that reception staff are only able to offer appointments for specific doctors where there is availability.

If there is no availability with your chosen doctor, you will be offered the next available appointment with another doctor, or another health professional, if this is appropriate.

Please remember, the reception staff are here to help you however, they cannot provide you with an appointment if there is not one available. Our reception staff are following protocols agreed with the doctors, so please do not shout or get angry with them. If you have a problem with any services provided by the practice, please ask to speak to someone. Please do not take it out on our reception staff they are only trying to help you.

ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES

For more advice on how to access services and health advice in and out of hours please read the articles below:

- **Health Help Now**
- **Online Services**
- **NHS111**
- **Surgery opening hours**

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FY2 DOCTORS

Please be aware from August 2015 we will have newly fully qualified 2nd year foundation doctors (FY2) working in the practice.

These qualified doctors are gaining experience of general practice before finalising their speciality pathway. These doctors will have slightly longer consulting times.

If you would like to see the FY2 doctor, please let the receptionist know.

If you would prefer to see one of our regular doctors and would **NOT** like to see an FY2 doctor, please let reception know.

Health Help Now

The CCG have developed an innovative new web app for local people, which aims to help patients find the right treatment and advice for their needs.

Health Help Now enables the user to select their symptom or need, and then locate their closest service based on the recommendation made by local GPs, paramedics, psychiatrists, hospital doctors and other health professionals. Health Help Now also offers a wide range of advice for common symptoms in all age groups.

The Health Help Now web app can be found online at www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net and is free to everyone who lives, studies and works in Medway, North and East Kent.

On-line Services:

If you previously used our on-line services, please speak to reception if you have not completed an application to register for our new on-line services.

Once you have completed an application form, which can be downloaded from our website at:

www.strichardsroadsurgery.nhs.uk

You will need to make an appointment to have your application checked. We will need proof of your identification e.g. passport, photo driving licence, or another acceptable form of photo ID and proof of your current registered address. Please speak to reception for more information regarding acceptable ID. Once approved for on-line registration, you can:

- Book appointments on-line
- Order your repeat medication
- View a summary of your care record

from your home computer or on the go via your smart phone or mobile device:

NHS Friends and Family Test

The NHS Friends and Family Test provides Practices with patient feedback on how they are doing.

All you need to do is go to the link below after your appointment and let us know.

iwantgreatcare.org

Postcode: CT14 9LF

Good or bad your comments are really important to us and will help us to improve the services we provide for you and others.

It is quick and easy to do too.

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Surgery Opening Hours

Monday – Friday 08:00 – 18:00
(Telephone access until 18:30)

Extended Surgery Opening Hours

Alternate Monday and Tuesday
evenings 18:30 – 20:00
and
Saturday mornings 08:30 – 12:00

Please note there is no telephone access during extended opening hours

NHS111

If you need medical help fast but it's not a life-threatening situation, you can call NHS 111. When you call 111, a trained adviser will ask you questions to find out what's wrong, give you medical advice and direct you to someone who can help you, like an out-of-hour doctor or a community nurse or send an ambulance.

If you don't speak English, tell the adviser what language you want to speak and they will get you an interpreter.

You can call 111 any time of the day. The call is free, from landlines and mobiles.

When should I use it?

You should only call 999 in an emergency – for example, when someone's life is at risk or someone is seriously injured or critically ill.

For health needs that are not urgent, you should call your GP surgery during normal opening hours.

Call **111** if we are closed and you need medical help fast, but it's not life-threatening.

Alternatively, if a health professional has given you a number to call for a particular condition, you should continue to use that number.

COMING SOON

Text Messaging Reminder Service

We are currently working with our Patient Participation Group to introduce a text messaging reminder service. The service will enable patients to:

- receive a text reminder of their appointment date and time, a day or two prior to the appointment
- cancel their appointment on receipt of the text reminder
- receive text reminder when other chronic disease reviews are due

The practice can also communicate with patients regarding services e.g., when appointments for flu vaccinations are open and can be booked

Patient Participation Group

If you would like to be part of the Patient Participation Group, or a Virtual Member of the Group please pick up a registration form from reception or download one from our website.

Patient Participation Group Meetings 2016/17

- Friday 15.01.2016 St Richard's Road 10:00 -12:00
- Friday 15.04.2016 Golf Road 16:00 -18:00
- Friday 15.07.2016 St Richard's Road 10:00 -12:00
- Friday 14.10.2016 Golf Road 16:00 -18:00
- Friday 13.01.2017 St Richard's Road 10:00 -12:00

If you are between 16 and 24, or a parent with younger children and have some time to come along to some of our meetings we would be interested in hearing from you.

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Things not working as they should be!

If things are not working as they should be, then please let us know.

Occasionally things go wrong and we hope to be able to resolve these quickly. However, sometimes we may need to completely review a system or process if we find it is not working. In order to do this we need your help, so please let us know if you are experiencing problems with any of our services.

THE SURGERY WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES/TIMES

PROTECTED LEARNING AFTERNOON CLOSURES 2016:

- 21 January 2016
- 25 February 2016
- 17 March 2016
- 21 April 2016
- 19 May 2016
- 16 June 2016
- 21 July 2016
- 15 August 2016
- 20 October 2016
- 17 November 2016

Bank Holidays and other Closures:

New Year's Day	1 January 2016
Good Friday	25 March 2016
Easter Monday	28 March 2016
Early Spring Holiday	2 May 2016
Late Spring Holiday	30 May 2016
Autumn B/Holiday	29 August 2016
Boxing Day	26 December 2016
Christmas Day (substitute)	27 December 2016
New Year's Day (substitute)	2 January 2017