******Welcome to our Spring Newsletter**

**Spring Newsletter 2017**

*@TMCFrancesSt*

**Staff News:**

After four years of working at The Medical Centre we bid farewell to Ayesha; a member of our Medical Support Staff, we all wish her the best of luck in her new venture.

We are also delighted to introduce Niki the new Office Manager at The Medical Centre and Holly, Jordan and Sian to the Medical Support team.

**Hay Fever Season:**

Hay fever season is creeping upon us, now is the time to start prevention medications to help keep symptoms at bay. Waiting until your nose is streaming is often too late to take control.

**Minor Ailments Scheme**

**Available at your local pharmacy:**

If you don't pay for your prescriptions, you may be able to use the NHS Minor Ailment Scheme to get advice and, when appropriate, free treatment for certain common illnesses without seeing a GP.

Illnesses included in this scheme are;

 Back-ache, sprains and strains

 Colds

 Conjunctivitis

 Constipation

 Coughs

 Diarrhoea

 Earache

 Haemorrhoids

 Hay fever

 Head lice

 Headache and fever

 Heartburn and indigestion

 Insect bites and stings

 Mild eczema and dermatitis

 Minor fungal skin infections

 Mouth ulcers

 Nappy rash

 Sore throat

 Teething

 Threadworm

 Thrush

The NHS Minor Ailment Scheme is for adults and children from the age of two who want treatment for a minor illness included in your local scheme.

Medicines can be supplied free of charge to the customer if they are exempt from NHS prescription charges.

This scheme is convenient as there is no need to make an appointment at the surgery and many pharmacies are open at the weekend. Pharmacists can also refer you to see someone at the surgery if necessary. If you call up with one of the above ailments you will be directed to speak to your pharmacist.

**Travel Advice:**

Our Practice Nurses are able to give pre-travel advice before you go abroad, including;

* details of immunisations
* malaria prevention
* infection risks
* medical services etc.

Please contact the Surgery **at least six weeks before your trip**. Unfortunately, if we are not given enough notice we may not be able to help you because some inoculations take time to become effective.



**Same Day Appointments:**

**Appointments made through the triage system to see the Doctor are shorter than routine appointments at 10 minutes, please be mindful that these are to discuss one problem.**

**Your Patient Participation Group needs you:**

Come and have your say at our next patient participation group on 13th April where Sandy from Healthwatch will be coming in to discuss the services they provide.

**Staff training dates:**

The Medical Centre is closed for staff training from 12.00 pm on the following dates:

* 26th April 2017
* 24th May 2017
* 21st June 2017
* 28th June 2017

Please remember to collect prescriptions before 12pm.

**To access a doctor in an emergency please telephone and listen to message:**

**01302 349431**

**DNA Policy:**

When a patient fails to attend an appointment with a healthcare professional a note of the date and time is made in their electronic medical record. If a patient fails to attend 2 appointments with a healthcare professional within a 12 month period, the patient will then receive a letter reminding them of the importance of cancelling an unwanted appointment in good time and detailing the consequence of not cancelling.

If, following this, the patient fails to attend another appointment (3 appointment in 12 months), the Practice Manager will write to the patient informing them this will be brought to the attention of the Partners who will decide the next course of action. The usual course would be to remove the patient from our list without further discussion unless the patient is able to provide a valid explanation in support of them remaining on the list.

If you do need to cancel an appointment please give at least 24 hours’ notice. Please also remember that if you cancel an appointment it may not be possible to offer you an alternative appointment on the same day.

In the last 4 months we have had a total of 749 (did not attend) appointments which are shown below:

* **March – 216**
* **February – 193**
* **January– 174**
* **December – 166**

**Repeated DNA (did not attend) offenders may be removed from the Practice list.**

**To cancel appointments please call:**

**01302 349431**

REFLECTIONS FROM DR NICHOLAS MIDDLETON

In July this year I will be retiring after over 30 years at The Medical Centre. I joined the Practice in 1987 when it was still in our old much smaller premises at Bradford Row. I have seen enormous changes since we moved to our current premises in 1991.

I am proud to have been involved in a Practice that has been at the forefront of many changes in General Practice with the adoption of new ways of working and massive expansion of the role of Nurses within General Practice. I believe that through all this we have been able to provide a much improved and enhanced service to our patients over the years.

I am grateful for the support of my GP colleagues, Nurses and Administration and Managerial Staff and all their hard work over the years, the development of the Practice has been very much a team effort. There has been much excitement with some bumps in the road along the way which is just how life is.

I have been continually impressed with the way that so many of our patients cope stoically and humorously with everything that life throws at them along with their various ailments and appreciate their thanks. I’ll never forget the patient who told me that “I’ve never been the same since I fell through the ceiling”.

There have been huge technological advances in Medicine and I cannot imagine what GPs (if they still exist as such) will be doing in another 30 years’ time but I hope that the value of the Generalist Role with an overview and personal knowledge of patients and their families will not be lost.

In parting, I note one or two entries come across in medical notes which have aroused my curiosity over the years:

*On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.*

*The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.*

*Discharge status: Alive, but without my permission.*

*Skin: somewhat pale, but present.*

*Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities.*

*The patient was in his usual state of good health until his airplane ran out of fuel and crashed.*

*Patient was seen in consultation by Dr Jones, who felt we should sit on the abdomen and I agree.*

In conclusion -

Best wishes to all the patients of The Medial Centre and everyone who works there. It has been a privilege to look after so many patients and their families and to work with a great team. I will miss you. (Really).

Dr Nicholas Middleton