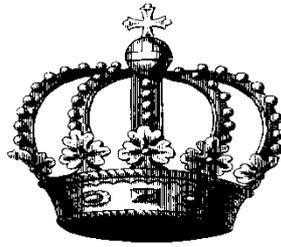


Dr D M Carr (Partner)  
Dr L Jones (Partner)  
Dr S Brookes (Partner)  
Dr A Shelley  
Dr H Pearce



The Crown Surgery  
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Practice Manager: Lucy Evans

Tel: 01785 850226

## **PATIENT NEWSLETTER** **SUMMER EDITION 2021**

### **MESSAGE FROM PRACTICE MANAGER, LUCY EVANS**

Thank you for your patience over the last year or so during the pandemic. It has been incredibly tough for everyone but you have all been amazing in your support for the surgery. You have been patient and understanding with us when we had to change the way in which we operated and respectful of the reason why it was necessary for us to do so – to keep both our patients and staff safe.

I am incredibly proud of how our surgery team has coped over the last 12 months and for their professionalism and commitment they have shown throughout the pandemic and during the vaccination campaign.

The response to the Covid-19 vaccination programme has been overwhelmingly positive and we would like to thank GP First for managing such a huge vaccination programme at Staffordshire County Showground on behalf of all the GP Practices across Stafford. **81,336** vaccinations were administered at the Vaccine Centre and we have completed all of the top 9 priority groups as set out by the JCVI! From July, any patients who have not had their first or second Covid-19 vaccination must call 119 to book an appointment at one of the national Vaccine Centres. To ensure that our phone lines are kept free for patients requiring medical attention we would ask that you do not call the surgery.

To help us with contacting patients we would ask that you advise us if you change your telephone number and ideally let us have your mobile number as it is often easier for us to send out text messages to patients.

As the restrictions are slowly being lifted we continue to ask that patients wear a face covering when entering the surgery. We also ask that patients arrive on-time and not early for appointments so we can ensure the waiting room is kept safe for all patients.

Our practice facebook page (The Crown Surgery) now has over 600 followers. This is a good way to learn what is going on in the practice and we regularly post information about various health campaigns.

We also keep our practice website up to date [www.crownsurgery.org.uk](http://www.crownsurgery.org.uk) which contains useful information about the practice and the services we offer.

*Lucy Evans, Practice Manager*

## **PRIMARY CARE NETWORK**

We are delighted to be part of the newly formed Primary Care Network working collaboratively with Mansion House Surgery and Cumberland House Surgery.

Together we make up the '**Stone & Eccleshall Primary Care Network**'. Our aims are to allow the member practices the opportunity to develop new services, improve efficiencies and ultimately, improve the care provided to our patients. We will develop new ways of working that will look to use innovative approaches to health care delivery and work with local stakeholders to create a culture of wellbeing for all our patients.

This new model of care enables us as practices to improve our services for patients and be more active in shaping other local health services. We want to encourage wellbeing through healthy communities so we aim to work more closely with local organisations.

### ***Our vision is to make General Practice more sustainable.....***

As practices our vision is to make general practice more sustainable, inspiring innovation and working with our patients, staff, partners and communities as one team. Although we acknowledge these are challenging times for the NHS, we firmly believe that by developing robust working relationships in the health and social care system we can ensure that we offer a valued quality experience to our population.

We already have a good track record for implementing new services that support our patients in their local communities and have demonstrated that mutually respectful partnership working with our patient groups and with partners can deliver change.

Throughout the year we will be developing our work further and are looking to our patients, staff, partners and communities to get involved.

## **STAFFING UPDATE**

We currently have a number of Locum GP's covering Dr Carr's sickness absence, these include Dr Khawaja (who will be covering July), Dr Singha, Dr Maccoll & Dr Wilson who will pick up various days.

We have welcomed three new staff within our Dispensing Team; Lydia Carr, Maisie Phillips and Tracey Richards.

We also have a new Healthcare Assistant due to start mid-July, Clair Preston. She will support the Nursing Team to undertake specific clinical procedures such as BP, health promotion, immunisations, wound care and much more.

We have also welcomed two new Primary Care Network staff, Gemma Barlow, Clinical Pharmacist who will resolve day-to-day medicine issues and consult with and treat patients directly and also Mark Edwards, Community Link Worker who will undertake assessments with patients of what care and support they may need and take a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.

## **PATIENT DATA**

The data held in the GP medical records of patients is used every day to support health and care planning and research in England, helping to find better treatments and improve patient outcomes for everyone. NHS Digital has developed a new way to collect data, called the General Practice Data for Planning and Research Data collection. The new data collection reduces burden on GP practices, allowing doctors and other staff to focus on patient care. If you don't want your patient data to be shared for purposes except for your own care, you can opt-out by registering a Type 1 Opt-out or a National Data opt-out or both. For further information please click on the following link; <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-collections/general-practice-data-for-planning-and-research>

## **LET'S TALK ABOUT CANCER**

Over the course of the Pandemic there have been many ways in which our health has suffered. One concern nationally has been the reduction in cancer detection rates. Cancer has not gone away because of Covid-19. It remains vitally important that everyone takes part in the national screening programmes when called. Bowel and breast screening programmes continue to operate. Cervical screening has continued to be undertaken in the practice throughout the pandemic.

Screening is important for the early detection of cancer but it is equally important to contact us if you have any symptoms or concerns. Things to look out for include but are not limited to:-

- New lumps
- Blood in your pee or stool
- Change in your bowel habit
- Persistent cough or shortness of breath (especially if you have ever smoked)
- Weight loss
- Abnormal fatigue

If you are concerned about your health in any way please contact us.

## **CHANGE TO DISPENSARY OPENING HOURS**

From Monday 28 June 2021, we are pleased to confirm that our Dispensary opening hours will return to normal. It will be open from 8.30am – 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 6.30pm.

## **INCREASE TO NHS PRESCRIPTION CHARGES**

NHS Prescription charges increased from 1 April – please note, in England NHS prescription charges have increased to £9.35 per item. A prescription pre-payment certificate (PCC) may save you money. They currently cost £30.25 for 3 months and £108.10 for 12 months which means if you have 4 or more items in 3 months or 13 or more items in 12 months a PCC is a cheaper way to pay for your medication. You can buy a PCC online at [www.nhsbas.nhs.uk/pcc](http://www.nhsbas.nhs.uk/pcc) or telephone 0845 850 0030 for the form you need to complete.

Please be advised that our practice policy is to supply one month of repeat medication at a time. NHS prescription charges and costs of an exemption certificate are based around 28 day prescription interval. Some patients mistakenly think that the prescription charges are kept by the practice, but we simply collect these for the Government and each month we forward on the fees. Some patients have medication that is being changed every month (e.g. blood pressure, epilepsy or diabetes) and we need to treat everybody equally. 1 month prescriptions minimise the waste that would result with longer prescription intervals and have helped make us a cost-effective GP practice for prescribing.

## **OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION**

Your GP will not generally give you a prescription for over the counter medicines for a range of short-term, minor health concerns. Instead, over the counter medicines are available to buy in a pharmacy or supermarket in your local community. The team of qualified health professionals at your local pharmacy can offer clinical advice to manage minor health concerns safely and effectively.

## **PRESCRIPTION ORDERING**

Our preferred method of prescription ordering is online via the NHS App or Patient Access. For safety we are unable to take prescription requests over the phone. You can also drop in your paper prescription to either of the post-boxes at the surgery. You should only order your prescription when you have a week's supply of medication left. Please allow at least two full working days for a dispensed prescription to be collected and 2-3 days for a prescription collected from pharmacy.

## **ANNUAL REVIEWS**

We are starting to call patients in for their annual reviews, this will normally be within your month of birth, and a catch-up programme is in place for patients born in April, May or June. You may receive a text message (if we have your mobile number) or a telephone call from the practice, asking you to book an appointment with one of our clinicians. The aim of the annual reviews is to ensure patients are receiving adequate levels of treatment to control their symptoms, are aware of measures they can take to help manage their condition and are being prescribed the most up to date and effective medication.

## **MAKING AN APPOINTMENT**

Our phone lines are open as normal at 8.00am and close at 6.30pm. Phone lines are currently very busy most of the day and we thank you in advance for waiting for us to answer your call. Our team answer all calls as quickly as possible ensuring they give each patient the time they need.

We know patients are frustrated because they are sometimes finding it difficult to get through on the phone. This is a combination of unprecedented demand (recognised nationally) and an increase in telephone consultations. Unfortunately there is no short-term fix to this problem but we are considering options for our telephone system for the future. As a result of patient frustrations, we have seen an increase in our reception staff experiencing incidents of verbal abuse and unacceptable behaviour, we will not tolerate this type of behaviour and ask that patients are polite and courteous to all our staff.

## **GP WORKING DAYS**

- Dr David Carr – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
- Dr Lucy Jones – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
- Dr Sarah Brookes – Monday, Thursday, Friday
- Dr Alison Shelley – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday (and one Friday per month)
- Dr Harriet Pearce – Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

Our doctors rotate the on-call clinician and extended hours surgeries.

When the surgery is closed, out of hours cover is provided by the NHS-111 service. Calls to the NHS-111 service are free from both landline and mobile phone.

## **REMINDER – STAFF TRAINING AFTERNOON**

The Practice and Dispensary will be closed on the first Thursday afternoon each month from 1.00pm to undertake various training. *(Please note this may change from time to time, to the second Thursday, to take into account Bank Holidays).*

## **BUILDING ISSUE**

Please accept our apologies for the lack of disabled parking and access to our public toilet, this is due to some safety concerns with the structure of the building within the area that has been cordoned off. We are in discussions with the Structural Engineer and Builders in order to get this rectified as soon as possible.

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