

# UNDERWOOD SURGERY

NEWSLETTER 04/17

## Accessing Medical Advice

Our waiting time for a routine appointment is between 1-2 weeks. However it can be a challenge for us to provide appointments a week in advance when doctors are on leave or after a Bank Holiday. So please think ahead if you can. For example, if your doctor asks to see you again in a month, you can book on the way out or even better organise online access and book directly via the internet.

### Non-urgent advice

If you need non-urgent advice from your usual doctor concerning an existing problem you can ask for a telephone consultation. Your GP will normally have a spare telephone appointment within a week. If you are not sure who your usual GP is then ask a receptionist.

### Urgent advice (our triage service)

We now have up to 100 patients a day needing urgent advice or appointments. The receptionist will ask you to give a brief description of the problem and will then put your call onto the triage clinician's screen. You will be phoned back generally within an hour by one of the GPs or our Nurse Practitioner Linda Hume.

### Other options

The triage service will only work if we are not overloaded so please consider not requesting a triage appointment and using one of the following options instead:

### NHS111

If you need urgent advice related to recent injury or minor illness then please consider dialling 111.

### NHS Choices

If you have access to the internet you can get lots of medical advice from resources such as NHS Choices ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)) or you can try seeing your pharmacist. Almost all

pharmacies now have a private consultation area where you can sit down with the pharmacist and not be overheard.

### Urgent prescription requests

If you need an urgent prescription then this may be refused if it has not been agreed by your usual GP. You will be offered to speak to the triage doctor to authorise the script. Sometimes this can be our error, but often it is because patients haven't booked a follow up appointment in time. Please ensure you have enough medication and know how to get a repeat script.

### Sick notes

Many patients phone the triage doctor for sick notes. Doctors are required to have evidence in order to provide a sick note and generally this will be organised by your usual GP. Please plan ahead and make an appointment to see or speak to your usual GP for a sick note.

### Choice Plus

The triaging clinician may offer you an appointment later in the day. However we also have the option of offering additional appointments via the Choice Plus scheme (see over).

### The Electronic Prescribing System (EPS)

EPS means that after a telephone consultation you may not need to attend the surgery for a prescription. The doctor will check your preferred pharmacy with you if this option is chosen and your prescription will be sent straight there electronically.

### Contact by Mobile Phone

It is helpful if you can give the surgery a mobile phone number or alternatively an email for us to use appropriately. This will help the triaging doctor who can send the details of a booked face-to-face appointment to you, links to leaflets and confirmation of treatment plans and diagnoses.

Why not sign up to have this Newsletter emailed to you. Please read the 'News' section of our website for details on how to do this.

### UNDERWOOD SURGERY MOVE?

We are investigating whether we should move the Surgery to a site opposite the Brewery Development on the old Black and White Coach Station Car Park. This will allow the surgery to work closer with other surgeries and provide additional services such as appointments at weekends.

We will discuss any further plans with our Patient User Group and publish any further developments on the Website.

### CQC RATING

We have received a **Good** rating from the Care Quality Commission. To view their report in detail visit their website: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/provider/1-199764710/services>

### FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

In the last 6 months 92% of patients who have filled in one of our cards have said they would recommend us to friends or family.

### Choice Plus

The Gloucestershire GPs jointly run an independent company (GDoc) to provide additional GP services. In Cheltenham GDoc organises additional medical clinics at the Healthy Living Centre (on Hesters Way opposite Gloucester College) and at the Chapel at St Pauls Medical Centre (on Swindon Road opposite the main sorting post office).

These appointments are generally for acute problems so once you have contacted the triage doctor you may be offered an appointment at one of these centres. You will be given an appointment time to see a GP. Parking is free and there is a pharmacy nearby.



We may ask your permission to share your computer record with GDoc (see below for details concerning this).

In future the plan is to offer more appointments in the evenings and weekends and in addition to allow patients to book directly in advance.

### Sharing the whole of your GP Record with other Organisations - Data Sharing Module (eDSM)

The Underwood Surgery uses a computer system called SystemOne. This system is now the most commonly used GP software system across the NHS. We may suggest that you share your electronic record with other care services for example the Choice Plus appointments above. If you do this it will mean that when you temporarily register at another surgery or attend an A&E department the doctors with your consent can have access to all your records if you give them permission when you attend. This is an extremely useful tool to help with your care particularly if you have complex problems.

The above issue has recently been highlighted by a number of national papers: "The medical records of 26 million patients are embroiled in a major security breach amid warnings that the IT system used by thousands of GPs is not secure. The Information Commissioner is investigating concerns that records held by 2,700 practices - one in three of those in England - can be accessed by hundreds of thousands of strangers."

We don't believe that sharing your record is a concern. It can only be read by another NHS organisation if a user has an electronic card which should register that they have accessed it. They can only do this with your permission and any attempt to view will be audited. We will only share your record with your permission, for example to link with GDoc or another GP practice in the country if you are going to be away from Cheltenham for a while.

If you would like this option turned off then please contact us. We will send a text to patients who have this option to inform them.