

The Baronscourt News

Volume , Issue

September 2008

Welcome to the Autumn 2008 edition of the Baronscourt News

Included in this edition –

Protected Learning Afternoon

Flu Campaign 2008/09

Telephone Consultations

Text Messaging and more.....

Protected Learning Afternoon

The next staff protected learning afternoons will be on:

Wednesday October 15th 2008

Wednesday November 26th 2008

The Practice will be closed from 12 noon on both days.

Do we have your correct information?

Occasionally we may need to contact you and it can be frustrating for both the Practice and its patient if the information we hold on our system is incorrect. If you have moved address and/or changed your phone number recently please inform one of the reception team members or contact us via the website. Twice recently a GP has had to visit a patient unnecessarily about test results because we did not have the correct phone number.

Did Not Attend (DNA)

In the last month we have had 147 appointments wasted due to patients not attending. If you find that you no longer require the appointment you have booked please let us know!

Flu vaccinations 2008/09

The Flu vaccine campaign will be underway by the beginning of October

Patients who are eligible are aged 65 and over and or/have:

- Chronic respiratory disease including, Coronary Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, cystic fibrosis
- Asthma that requires continuous or repeated use of steroids either in inhaler or tablet form, or with previous episodes requiring hospital admission
- Chronic Heart Disease including those who have had a heart attack, suffer from angina or heart failure
- Patients with Kidney Disease
- Patients with Liver Disease including chronic hepatitis
- Diabetics
- Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment including those receiving chemotherapy, large doses of steroid tablets, and those with HIV infection.

For those who fall into the above categories but **do not wish to have the flu vaccination please contact us** so that your records can be amended. Carers will also be considered to protect those most at risk should their care receiver fall ill. A carer is considered to be someone who provides help and support to another person who could not manage without their help; this could be due to age, physical or mental illness or disability.

How we can help you!

We want to be able to improve how you access the healthcare professionals within the Practice. We aim to do this by being able to provide you with an appointment as soon as possible. To be able to do this we require you to allow us to take your problem to the trained healthcare professional who is best able to deal with it. As explained in the previous newsletter this does not always have to be the Doctor! So to arrange for you to see the most appropriate person we need to identify what your requirements are, and to do this, the receptionists will be required to ask you for details of why you need to see the Doctor.

Telephone Consultations

There are some problems, which can be dealt with over the telephone without the patient actually needing to see a Doctor

If you have a problem which:

- **does not** require a Doctor to examine you,
- **does not** require blood or other tests,
- **is not** associated with severe pain or unusual bleeding
- **does not** relate to a possible psychiatric problem; then it may be possible to discuss it with a doctor during a telephone consultation.

Arrangements can be made via the receptionists for a Doctor to 'phone you at a given time (+/- 30 minutes). The Receptionist will ask you for details of the problem to allow the Doctor to prepare and to ensure that it is an appropriate problem to be dealt with by telephone.

It may still be necessary to ask you to come in to the surgery, if the problem turns out to be more complicated than first thought. It may be that another member of the Practice Team is better placed than a Doctor to deal with it. Please note that there are only a limited number of telephone consultations available and only appropriate problems will be dealt with through this system.

Text Messaging

It was reported in the last newsletter that we had started to introduce an automated appointment text messaging system. We hoped text messaging would be an effective way to remind our patients when their next appointment was. Our aim being that patients would automatically receive personalised text reminders with their appointment time approximately 24 hours before their appointment. This was introduced to hopefully prompt patients to telephone the surgery if they no longer required to be seen. It was hoped that this would help reduce the number of missed appointments but unfortunately we have seen non-attendance increase to 147 wasted appointments for the last month. There are some patients who receive text appointment reminders and still choose not to attend. From the positive feedback many of our patients are delighted with this service but like any service if it

does not achieve its aim we will have no option but to remove it. So please remember if you receive a text appointment reminder and no longer require the appointment please let us know.

Staff updates

We have now said a fond farewell to Dr Hala Gammoh, our GP trainee for 2006/07 who finished her time with us at the beginning of September after returning to us after her maternity leave on June 30th to complete her GP training. We hope you will join us in wishing her all the best for the future.

Dr Linda Watson, our GP trainee for 2007/08 started her maternity leave at the beginning of August, as yet we are still waiting for the happy announcement.

There have been many changes within the Health Visiting Team over the last year and many of you will remember Fiona Lindsay, who went on to maternity leave in August last year. Unfortunately due to a severe shortage in Health Visitors within the locality it was decided that Fiona was not to return here and she has now been moved to Summerside Medical Practice. Fiona will be missed but we wish her all the best!

This Practice does not have a GP trainee year 3 (previously GP registrar), for 2008/09 but we do have a GP trainee year 1 with us for six months. Dr Mai Alsammak is a fully qualified doctor who has broad experience having spent several years working in hospitals. Dr Alsammak will be with the practice until February 2009 training in General Practice. Dr Ryan is Dr Alsammak's trainer for the six months that Dr Alsammak is with us. Since August 2006 we have had a Foundation Doctor (FY2 Doctor) training with us. Dr Alison White is our current Foundation Doctor and will be with us until December. Dr White is also a fully qualified doctor who is here to gain experience in General Practice. Dr Bronte-Stewart is the FY2 doctors mentor. You will be able to book appointments with Dr Alsammak and Dr White in the usual way.