

Leckhampton Surgery

Summer Newsletter 2022

Working together for your health

Thank you to patients who have supported us at what is proving to be a tough time in the NHS, in particular Primary Care.

Our team are working nonstop and as efficiently as possible to provide the best care to all our patients. Your kindness and respect are greatly valued – it helps us do our jobs well.

We would like to reassure you that we are here for you when you need our services and we continue to offer both telephone and face to face appointments, depending on an individual patient's need. We have Doctors seeing patients face to face every day who need an examination, which has been the case throughout the pandemic.

The eConsult facility is still the easiest way to get in touch for routine requests and this can be accessed via our homepage (the purple button) at www.leckhamptonsurgery.co.uk and a GP will aim to get back to you within 72 hours. The service is available between 06.30 and 18.30 Monday to Friday. If you do not have internet access or it is urgent, please telephone the surgery as normal. If you have a medical need when we are closed please use the Out of Hours service by calling 111.

Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in missed appointments. Over the last 3 months, out of 4,672 clinician appointments offered, **202 have been missed**. This equates to over 4% of appointments and means we are wasting valuable time chasing up patients. If you are unable to make an appointment, please kindly let us know so the appointment can be reallocated to another patient.

Welcome

We would like to welcome;

- Dr Alison Ellis
- Dr Izzy Wisker
- Dr Bryson Odigwe

Goodbyes

We wish fond farewells to;

- Kate Nelson
- Debbie Elliott

Dr Pascoe-Watson's retirement

It is with mixed feelings that I announce my retirement at the end of September 2022.

I will miss being a partner after nearly 30 years here but I'm looking forward to having some more spare time in which to fulfil some ambitions that I have not had time for until now.

Having qualified from Bristol University Medical School 35 years ago I started at Leckhampton Surgery in 1993 and feel privileged to have been a family doctor in such an excellent practice. I have worked with numerous colleagues over the years and it really feels like a family to me. It has been humbling and inspiring to be involved in the care of so many families and patients during some of their most important life events, and I hope I have managed to be supportive and make a difference

The past 2 years have been so difficult for everyone and has inevitably changed the way that we deliver our service. Our dedicated staff have handled these changes and the extraordinary increase in workload with incredible professionalism, and I thank every single one of them for their dedication.

I intend to maintain my medical registration and look forward to working with the practice to help with locum sessions. I will continue to work as crowd doctor at the racecourse and may be able to offer some ENT services, so you may still see me around the town and surgery.

I am delighted that the practice is in such good hands going forward and I thank you all for your support for so many years.

Please stay positive, keep fit and healthy and be kind to each other.

Dr Jim Pascoe-Watson

Be Kind

Whilst most of our patients have been very understanding and supportive, we are still experiencing instances of unacceptable behaviour towards our staff. We would remind all our patients that Leckhampton Surgery does not tolerate abuse towards members of our staff. We understand that when patients contact us, they are sometimes feeling quite unwell and as a result of this may not be their usual selves. Please remember that our staff are here to help you. If a member of staff does experience any form of abuse, it is practice policy that they report it to the management immediately. Abusive behaviour may result in us asking a patient to register elsewhere. We will not tolerate verbal or physical abuse.

Surgery Closures

The surgery will be closed from 12.30-17.00 on the following dates for staff training;

Wednesday 14th September
Thursday 13th October
Tuesday 8th November
Wednesday 7th December

Pharmacy Help

Many of our patients already know about self-care and when it's appropriate to speak to a pharmacist first. We are now alerting those that may not consider this option to improve pharmacist interaction. They are a valuable resource within the NHS.

Once you have explained your condition to a patient advisor the following may happen if appropriate:

Patient Advisor

- Working within NHS guidelines from our GPs and the Local Community Pharmacists we may offer you a formal referral to consultation with a Community Pharmacist.
- The patient advisor will formally notify the nominated pharmacy in writing by email.

Patient

- You will be asked to give your consent to share your medical history. This means your pharmacist will see more information other than just your medications.
- You also get to choose which is your preferred pharmacy. (This can be different from your nominated prescription pharmacy)

Pharmacist

- The pharmacy will be in touch to either speak to you and/or call you in for a private consultation.
- If the pharmacist has any concerns, they will inform the medical centre team and we will direct you to the most relevant clinician either with us or another NHS service.

The Benefits

- Faster service and improved access for the patient.

- Patient assurance as the pharmacist can make an informed clinical decision based on all the information.
- GP Appointments can be used for patients needing urgent attention.

It has already been set up in other parts of the UK and has worked well. It has made a huge difference for patients and doctor's surgeries.

Covid/flu Autumn Booster Vaccination Programme 2022

We are in the process of organising the autumn vaccine clinics for our Leckhampton patients and will start sending out our invitations shortly. **Please wait for your invitation to the clinic** as we will be prioritizing our elderly and high-risk patients first.

If you are over 50 or have a medical condition putting you at higher risk of infection, you will be receiving an invitation for both a Covid booster and a flu vaccine.

The clinics will begin in late September and be run at the fire station. They are on an appointment only basis.

Please note that current guidelines advise that you shouldn't have a booster vaccine within 4 weeks of a covid infection and you need to wait at least 91 days after your last covid booster.

The Autumn boosters are likely to be either **Pfizer or the Moderna** vaccine, both of which have been shown to give good protection against new variants and are very similar to one another. There may be other vaccines used this autumn as well, but as yet we don't have full information on this.

There is evidence that the covid booster vaccine wears off over a period of time, particularly in our older patients, hence the advice to get an additional vaccine at this time in order to keep you fully protected.

You will also be offered your seasonal flu vaccination. We advise having both vaccines at the same time as you will build good protection for both infections ahead of the winter.

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Travelling abroad

If you want to travel overseas you will be able to use the NHS App as a Covid-19 passport. Alternatively, call 119 to obtain a paper copy.

Always check the Government website prior to departure to obtain the entry requirements for your destination.

Travel Consultation

We have restarted a travel advice service which had been suspended due to the Pandemic. It is a basic travel service, offering NHS funded vaccines only. The vaccines covered are Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Cholera solution prescription.

Currently we have at least a 6 week wait for an appointment, and we anticipate this may increase over the summer months. Therefore, if you need travel advice sooner or have a complex itinerary (3 plus countries or require anti-malaria medication) please seek private travel advice.

Secretarial Work

Non-NHS requests for letters/form completion

Due to high levels of demand and staff sickness/shortage, we have reluctantly made the decision to decline all non-NHS work currently. Unfortunately, this means that we will be unable to undertake any private medical form requests, firearms licensing renewals and insurance reports, etc until further notice. This is not a decision that has been taken lightly and is a temporary decision and will be reviewed as appropriate. If you require any further clarification regarding a request, please email leckhampton.insurance@nhs.net and someone will get back to you in due course.

Referrals to hospital clinics

We are aware that most clinics are experiencing very long delays due to the ongoing pandemic. Please could we highlight that during this unprecedented time appointments can take considerably longer to be allocated by the hospital. We are unable to expedite any appointments and appreciate your patience and understanding. We do understand that you may be concerned about the wait to be seen in secondary care, however we are unable to influence appointment times or chase up dates for outstanding appointments. Please contact the hospitals Customer Care Department on 0300 422 6360 to progress your enquiry if you feel you have been waiting an extraordinarily long time. For any general queries regarding a

hospital referral then please feel free to email: leckhampton.secretary@nhs.net and we will endeavour to get back to you in due course.

Contraception

If you require contraception, please contact the surgery either by eConsult or telephone. We are offering the full range of contraceptive services including coil and implant fitting. We have not reduced this service during the pandemic.

Phlebotomy

Due to increase in demand we have extended out Phlebotomy surgery times;

Tuesday- 13.10-17.30

Wednesday 13.10-17.30

Thursday 13.10-17.30

Sample Box

Patients are reminded to place all samples for testing into the big, red parcel box in the Reception area. Staff cannot take samples in appointments or via Reception. Samples must include your full name and date of birth, otherwise they will be rejected. Glass bottles should not be used for samples.

Blood pressure machines

We are strongly encouraging patients to purchase their own blood pressure machines from any local pharmacy or online. Alternatively, we have a machine in our waiting room that you can use during opening time and no appointment is required.

Micro suction

Micro suction is not something that is commissioned for NHS General Practice any longer. Patients are encouraged to self-manage and contact private providers, such as Specsavers, if required. If you have another problem with your ears, please contact a local pharmacy who will be able to help you with ear concerns.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We would like to know how we can improve our service to you and how you perceive our surgery and staff.

To help us with this, we have a patient participation group (PPG) so that you can have your say. We will ask the members of this representative group some questions from time to time, such as what you think about our opening times or the quality of the care or service you received. We will contact you via email and keep our surveys succinct so it shouldn't take too much of your time.

We aim to gather around a hundred patients from as broad a spectrum as possible to get a truly representative sample. We need young people, workers, retirees, people with long term conditions and people from non-British ethnic groups.

The PPG currently has a vacancy for the Chairperson role so if you are interested or are keen to join as a member, please visit our website (<https://www.leckhamptonsurgery.co.uk/practice-information/patient-participation-group>) and search for 'Patient Participation Group Registration'

National Primary Care for Clean Air Project

The surgery is proud to promote the National Primary Care for Clean Air Project.

If you suffer from long term lung disease including asthma or COPD, heart and circulatory disease, diabetes, dementia or are pregnant, you may be more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution.

Find health expert approved guidance with simple steps that you can take to tackle air pollution and protect your health at **cleanairhub.org.uk**

Leckhampton Surgery awarded Green Impact for Health Award

At Leckhampton Surgery, we accept that the climate crisis is a health crisis and we acknowledge our responsibility to reduce our impact on the environment. We applaud that the NHS was the world's first national health system to set clear goals to deliver net zero emissions.

Throughout the last year, our team have been working together to try to understand where our carbon footprint comes from and taking actions to reduce this.

This means looking at everything from the medicines we prescribe to our patients, to the consumables we use in our daily work, the utilities we use to power our building. It means reducing waste and looking at how and why staff and patients travel to our building. It means embedding a culture of sustainability in everything we do.

We're delighted to announce that, in March 2022, our efforts were formally recognised with a Bronze Award from the Green Impact for Health Scheme, which sets the standard for sustainable General Practice in the UK and beyond.

Making medical practice truly sustainable is a never-ending journey. There is still so much more that can be done. Our sustainability team will continue working on our processes and we hope we can come back to show you a higher level of award within the coming years.

We're excited about this journey, and about what a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable community could look one day look like. I want to thank you, our patients, for coming with us on this journey.

Dr Ben Lees

GP Partner, and Sustainability Lead

Go Volunteer Glos

Launched on 1st June 2022 during national Volunteers' Week, Go Volunteer Glos is a BRAND-NEW website for local people aged 16 plus who are looking to offer their time as a volunteer.

Using GoVolunteerGlos.org is the simplest way to find the widest range of local volunteering opportunities in the county all in one place, no matter what your interest is – anything from fundraising, to dog walking for an elderly person, to becoming a special constable.

People wanting to volunteer in Gloucestershire will now be able to use our website to match their skills, interests, location, and availability to the perfect volunteering role. That role could be helping at a one-off event right through to a regular commitment.

New to volunteering? There are so many benefits for you, as well as the people and causes you are helping. You can gain new skills, make friends, or get to know your community.

Whether you want to volunteer from home or get out in the community and meet new people, GoVolunteerGlos.org has something for everyone!

Register at **GoVolunteerGlos.org** and start volunteering your way.

Dr Bridget's Tandem Skydive

I recently retired from Leckhampton surgery and wanted to mark this occasion with a fundraising event. On May 28th I completed a tandem skydive at Netheravon airbase.

It meant so much to me to receive so many cards and good wishes. I feel it is time for me to give something back now.

I am keen to support our local Sue Ryder hospice and in particular the hospice at home team who have supported so many of my patients enabling them to stay at home at the end of their lives.

I also want to raise awareness of Myeloma which is a form of cancer of the blood. Myeloma UK is the only charity exclusively supporting this devastating illness.

You can still donate to either of the charities, by clicking the link below.

Many thanks

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/Bridgetskydive>