

Christmas is almost up on us and 2018 draws to a close. It's been a year of change.

We said 'farewell' to three GP Partners during 2018 and a new , multi-disciplined practice team is emerging which will enable us to adapt to the changes in the way primary care is delivered. There are some new faces in the team but the culture and core values of the practice are the same as they ever have been.



Our normal surgery opening hours are
Monday – Friday 8.00am to 6:30pm
 †**On the day appointments available from 8.30am each day**†
 We are closed on **Christmas Day , Boxing Day and New Year's Day.**
 Call 111 for advice when the surgery is closed.
Always Call 999 in the case of a life threatening emergency

Did you know you can now book routine appointments between 5pm-8pm every weekday evening and on Saturday and Sunday mornings? Ask Reception for more information.

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|  | <p><u>Repeat Prescriptions</u></p> |
| | <p>Remember to leave plenty of time when you are ordering your repeat medication if it's due in the run up to Christmas. We need at least two clear working days and at such a busy time its sensible to leave a little extra time in case there are any complications or delays.</p> |

We know that Christmas can be a difficult time for some people. If there's something troubling you, you can contact the Samaritans on 116 123 or by emailing Jo@samaritans.org. You don't need to be suicidal to call them. They are there 24 hours a day and 365 days a year for anyone who needs help. www.samaritans.org



May we wish all our patients and their families a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Practice Team Update



In the Autumn we said 'goodbye' to two of our GP Partners. Dr Colette Nugent, our Senior Partner, retired in October after 31 years at the practice and Dr Sarah Aylward left in November to join another local surgery. Sarah joined us in 2013. Louise left our reception team in June to develop her career outside of healthcare. We wish them all well in whatever they do in the future.

We have two new GPs who have joined us since the last newsletter. Dr Adam Marnell joined us after completing his GP Speciality training with us in August and continues the long Ainsdale Medical Centre tradition of training GPs who go on to join the practice on a permanent basis. Dr Shonalee Illingworth joined us in November having recently relocated from London to develop her career. We welcome them both to our practice team.

On December 5th we welcomed our new Foundation stage doctor, Dr Rebecca Kane to the practice. However this meant it was also time to say goodbye to Dr Nicole Blakemore who finished her training rotation at the practice.

At the beginning of December we began a new partnership with Ashburton Prescribing which enables us to bring the expertise of a prescribing pharmacist into the team. Jo Woodcock is the pharmacist who has been assigned to our practice and she will use her specialist skills to support the GPs with the considerable workload of prescribing and medicines management. She will support the reception team in dealing with medication queries without having to revert to a GP and will liaise with the community pharmacists to ensure that any issues they have are handled quickly and consistently. We welcome Jo to our team and hope that this new development will have a positive impact on our patients.

Dr Stuart Bennett has reduced his clinical commitments at the practice in order to further develop his specialism in Cardiology. This means he will no longer do surgeries at the Practice on a Tuesday.

Dr Simon Foster has taken over the role of Senior Partner and we are currently going through the recruitment and selection process for a new member of the reception team.



We are getting really good feedback from our patients about our new photo wall.

We know that our team is evolving quickly to meet the ever-changing demands of providing primary care and we thought it would be a good way for patients to identify which clinician they were seeing.

If you have any ideas on what we can do to keep patients better informed about changes at the practice please do let us know.

Patent Participation Group



We have a very active Patient Participation Group at Ainsdale Medical Centre but we would love to welcome new members especially from groups of patients who aren't represented in our current membership.

We meet five times a year in the early evening , often with a speaker, and the members also help the surgery throughout the year by conducting surveys and helping us manage the flu clinics.

In July our Practice Manager , Paul, chaired a Q&A Session between our local MP, Damian Moore and representatives of PPGs from nine GP surgeries in the Southport area. We hope this could be the beginning of more collaborative efforts between patient groups in the future.

At the June meeting we were joined by David Simister from the West Lancs and Merseyside Myeloma Support Group. Since that meeting we have been able to facilitate an opportunity for David to speak at a GP Learning Event for practitioners from across Sefton in March 2019.

Our PPG now has its own website and Twitter and Facebook accounts and is using social media more to engage with patients and with other patient groups round the country. You can visit the website at <https://ainsdalemcpatients.org.uk/> and follow them on Twitter and Facebook under the name @ainsdalepts or Ainsdale Patients

The next meeting is on Thursday February 7th 2019 between 6:30 pm and 7:30pm and a speaker will be announced in the New Year

Our group is chaired by Helen Graham. Contact Helen on ainsdale.patients@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

Helping Patients

We continue to develop our reception team so that they can continue to provide a responsive, efficient and compassionate service to all our patients. The whole team is currently completing an Autism Awareness training course. Other development initiatives are planned for 2019.

Primary Care Networks

Ainsdale Medical Centre is part of a local initiative to work more collaboratively with other GP practices in Ainsdale and Birkdale. Additional funding has been provided by NHS England to help practices meet and identify ways of improving the quality of care they provide to patients by sharing expertise and working more closely with other providers in secondary and community care as well as voluntary organisations.



We have recently installed a CCTV system at the practice to safeguard the comfort and safety of our patients and staff as well as providing enhanced security when the building is closed.



We continue to support a charity, chosen by the staff, each year. This year we have been raising funds for Alder Hey Childrens' hospital. We will be counting up our combined funds raised in the next couple of weeks. Additional events support other charities. On December 6th the team raised £100 for the Alzheimer's Society by taking part in Elf Day.

Flu Vaccinations

We want to say a big thank you to all our patients for their support during this year's flu vaccination programme.

This year has been challenging for GP surgeries across the country with the requirement to provide different vaccines to patients under and over-65 years old. Significant supply issues meant that the delivery of the over-65 vaccines were made over an extended period of time. For the first time we had to restrict who we were able to vaccinate until our final delivery of vaccines at the beginning of November.

We know this was difficult for patients to understand but we are very appreciative that you all supported us and turned up for our community clinics in large numbers once again. We worked very hard to make our immunisation programme accessible to everyone. We are on track to meet our vaccination targets and this is vital to create a strong level of immunity within the community throughout the difficult winter period.

Thanks to everyone for their patience and support. Special thanks are due to Ken Lowe for his tireless work in organising the Health Fair and to Rebecca and the team at the Methodist Church for all the support they give us every year.



When you get a sick note after seeing a doctor at a hospital it should be for the length of time he expects you to be off work. If the hospital doctor prescribes medication they should give you enough to last you for two weeks (if necessary) so that the paperwork advising the GP has time to be sent out and processed at the GP surgery. These are contractual requirements of every hospital in the country and its helpful for patients to know this before they see the doctor.

Getting the Most Out of Your Appointment with the Doctor

See the Right Person for Your Treatment



Continuity of care is very important to both Doctors and patients. If you have seen a Doctor about a certain problem, we would recommend you see the same person again, even if this means waiting longer. Some GP's have more expertise in certain fields, for example, Cardiology, Dermatology, Womens' Health. The receptionist can direct you towards them. If it is a new problem, then generally it is less important to see the same doctor. If you have multiple chronic illnesses it is good to have a relationship with your registered GP, who oversees your medication.

Prioritise Your Symptoms



The standard time for an appointment with our GPs is ten minutes. Time can be tight so it is very helpful if you let us know at the start what you hope to get out of the appointment. Be realistic about what can be achieved in the time available. If you have several problems, it may not be possible to safely cover them in ten minutes, so please don't be offended if we ask you to make another appointment. It is however, very helpful to know at the start all the problems you intend to mention. We really want to avoid the 'hand on the doorknob' situation, where after 9 minutes the patients says, 'actually the main reason I've come is that I've been having chest pain for the past week'.

Let us Know What You are Thinking



It may sound obvious, but it is really helpful to know what you are thinking when you come in to see us. What are you worried about? What do you think the problem is? What do you think the doctor is going to do? How you think the problem should be tackled? There are often different ways of approaching a problem and it is amazing how much patients with the symptoms may differ in their thoughts on how to treat it. If we know what you are thinking, or worrying about, then we can address this.



GP's refer to this kind of interaction as 'ICE' - Ideas, Concerns and Expectations. Trying to establish the patient's ICE are a key part of training to be a GP.

Ask the Doctor Questions



The flipside to above is that it is also helpful for you to know what we are thinking. At the end of the consultation, we should between us have an idea of what the problem is, or might be, and a plan for how to tackle it. This could be all sorts of things – taking some medication, going for some tests, making some lifestyle changes, or even doing nothing. If you are given medication we should tell you what it is for, and any common side effects to look out for. You should also have an idea of how we think things may evolve, and what to do

if things are changing or not going as expected. If you don't understand what we are talking about then please ask us!

DID YOU KNOW?

Safety netting is an important part of a consultation. It involves telling patients about things that might happen which would require further medical attention. For example, signs that an infection that is getting worse, or something that may require further investigation.

'Red Flags' are another medical term referring to symptoms that might indicate a more serious problem. These should be discussed during most consultations.

Dress Appropriately



If you come to see the doctor because you have a sore knee the doctor will need to examine it so wear clothing that can be easily removed or rolled up. If you need to be examined for anything, taking off many layers of clothing and redressing uses up a lot of your appointment time and can be a reason why clinicians run late.

Appointment Times



Don't be put off by a doctor or nurse running late. This is often due to them having to give bad news to a previous patient or dealing with an emergency before you arrived. We all might need a bit of extra time unexpectedly one day so although it might not be convenient to you, please be considerate to the needs of other patients on any given day.

Talk to our Receptionists



As GP's each day when we are consulting, we see patients that didn't necessarily need to see us. It may be that we could have dealt with the problem on the phone, or through a message, or it could be that there is a more appropriate service.

Please don't be offended if the receptionist asks about the nature of the problem – they are not being nosy but trying to work out the best way to help you.

Home visits

HOME VISITS



It is always better for a patient to be seen by the Doctor at the surgery where they have access to comprehensive equipment, an examination room and access to clinical systems. We do understand that some patients are genuinely housebound and getting to the surgery is just not possible.

We expect patients who are able to attend appointments elsewhere, for example the hospital or dentist, to come in to the surgery to be seen. If your friends or relative can take you to other appointments, then we would also expect them to bring you in to the surgery. We are very grateful for your co-operation with this as it also saves valuable GP time. We will phone patients prior to visiting them to ensure that a visit is appropriate or whether the problem can be managed in a different way.