

CASTLE GARDENS SURGERY NEWSLETTER

January – April 2018 – Issue 12

(website: <http://www.castlegardenssurgery.co.uk/>)

WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR

We would like to wish all of our patients best wishes for the New Year. As we step into the New Year perhaps we may wish to consider some resolutions to perk us up a little:

Power of a Smile: surely this should be a New Year's resolution for all of us - smile and laugh more! People who **smile** and laugh often are less likely to develop heart disease. **Smiling** also temporarily reduces blood pressure. It also releases endorphins that counteract and diminish the stress hormones.

Eat healthy: with more fruit and vegetables. It's important to strive for a healthy diet. Try and include five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. If you find yourself craving a sugary treat, try a juicy clementine or satsuma instead, or sweet dried fruits such as dates or raisins. Winter vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, swede and turnips can be roasted, mashed or made into soup for a comforting winter meal for the whole family. Explore varieties of fruit and vegetables that you may not normally eat.

Positive thinking: may provide better coping skills during hardships and times of stress.

Self Care: anything that you do to improve your health or mood is self care. Brushing your teeth, getting enough sleep and taking 30 minutes of exercise each day are just a few examples of everyday tasks that are actually acts of self-care. Taking good care of a long term health condition is a great example of self-care. Follow the link for further information: <http://www.selfhelp.org.uk/self-care/>

Low cost remedies: try not to let indigestion spoil your enjoyment, you can buy remedies at low cost and get free advice from your local pharmacy. **You will not need an appointment or a prescription.**



Bank Holiday Opening Hours 2018

Thursday 29th March: Normal Surgery hours

Friday 30th March: Good Friday – **CLOSED**

Monday 2nd April: Easter Monday – **CLOSED**

Tuesday 3rd April: - Normal surgery hours

Register for services: if you have not already done so register for our online services and SMS text message reminders. **WiFi** is coming to Castle Gardens Surgery, further details on page 4

Positive Message - Patients who Did Not Attend: during the month of November:

96% of patients **kept** their appointments.

Thank you.

It is easy to cancel or change your appointment by calling: **01805 623222**



Torrington Walk & Talk

As we progress through the winter into spring consider a bit of fresh air with the **Torrington Walk and Talk scheme**, provided by enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers who provide walks for health within the local community. Enjoy the benefits of walking and hopefully become fitter for life. Walking is a great form of exercise, available to young, old, for all abilities, with benefits of being safe, free and with low impact. For further details go to www.walkingforhealth.org.uk and follow links for [Torrington Walk & Talk](#) or telephone **01237 421528**.

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STAFF NEWS

Staff: We are sorry to inform you that Dr Lizzie Watson has decided to hang up her stethoscope and retire on 31st December 2017. We would like to thank Lizzie for her hard work and wish her well for the future. We are currently advertising for her replacement and will inform you when the vacancy has been filled.

We welcome Fiona Mc Donald, relief Practice Nurse to the team. Fiona joined us in October and will provide relief cover when available to do so for the nurse team.

Closed for Staff Training: The surgery will be closed on: **Wednesday January 31st** and **Thursday 26th April 2018** afternoons between **1300-1800**, for staff training. When the practice is closed, you are able to contact the out of hours service by telephoning the Surgery. A recorded message will offer you the following information:

- For urgent medical advice when it's not a 999 emergency when we are closed telephone NHS 111 on **111**.

STAFFING SHORTAGES



Castle Gardens has been experiencing a lot of staff absences since October 2017, particularly with our nursing team. We are very aware that this is having a significant impact on the delivery of our service.

We are extremely sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused patients, particularly those patients who may have been contacted on a number of occasions to have their appointments re-arranged. Staff are working hard to ensure you are informed and are prevented from making a wasted journey to the surgery.

In January and February you may find we have more Locum GPs than usual whilst we look to appoint a new Salaried GP to replace Dr Lizzie Watson.

We are doing our best to maintain the levels of service our patients expect from us, please bear with us and we hope to resume normal service once we enter the New Year.

PATIENT'S COMPLAINT

Some concerned patients recently submitted a letter of complaint to us regarding their concerns about the lack of confidentiality in our reception area, advising us that seated patients could also hear the conversations.

We are grateful for patient's feedback and we take this complaint very seriously. We have reviewed the letter and have taken some initial steps to improve confidentiality at reception by:

- **Returning the radio into the waiting room, which may muffle some of the conversations held at reception.**
- **Discussed with staff how to respond to telephone calls and the information communicated within the discussion, namely that staff have been advised not to repeat patient's name/ address/ DoB over the telephone.**
- **When appropriate we advise staff to transfer the telephone call to the rear of the office or offer a call back.**

We will continue to discuss options to improve reception area which might entail some modification to the layout of reception to help provide more privacy.

Patients are also advised that should they wish to speak to someone confidentially away from reception, please ask receptionist to make arrangements to do so.

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PATIENT TRANSPORT IN DEVON



Planning a journey to an NHS medical appointment?

Patients registered with a GP practice in Devon or Plymouth may be eligible for patient transport assistance. If you....

- are currently too unwell to use a car or
- public or community transport
- need skilled help to leave your home
- will require extra support on the journey

Information on Community Transport and Volunteer Car Schemes operating in Devon can be found at:

www.devonservices.org.uk/categories/transport/

You can also call the **Patient Transport Advice Service** on **0345 155 1009*** who can provide information and advice. [**Local rate call charges apply and are included in mobile bundles*]

SERVICE AND SUPPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Do you need an easy way to find services and support in your community for you, your family or someone you care for then search **pinpointdevon** for:

- ❖ help at home
- ❖ keeping healthy and staying active
- ❖ help getting out and about
- ❖ advice and advocacy
- ❖ money matter
- ❖ staying safe and more

www.pinpointdevon.co.uk/oa

CASTLE GARDEN'S SERVICE REMINDERS

Extended hours blood tests, Monday: 1830-1930: prioritized for those people unable to attend during surgery hours due to work. Practice Nurse and Healthcare Assistant appointments are also available.

Minor Injury Service: between 8.30am and 6.00pm, sit down and wait service.

Contraception/ Family Planning: We have doctors who fit the contraceptive implant as well as intrauterine devices here. These are pretty much fail safe forms of contraception and have low side effects. Dr Shawcross does implants and Dr Kaliciak fit coils, please make appointments as appropriate or to discuss if you would like more information.

Chlamydia: This is a not uncommon infection that one can have without knowing and in some circumstances can lead to fertility problems. Ask for a self-test kit from our nurses.

The Yellow sheet – self referral help sheet: Do take one of our useful NHS numbers sheets from our waiting room.

BLOOD PRESSURE [BP] MONITORS

Patients who may be required to monitor their blood pressure at home are advised to purchase their own, rather than being placed on our waiting list. Patients may also find this beneficial because it is likely they will need it more than once and therefore will not have to wait to loan another. Alternatively please discuss the use of a practice loan BP monitor with the Practice Nurse or Healthcare Assistant.

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Sign up to GP online services and you'll be able to use a website or app to:

- ❖ book or cancel appointments online with a GP
- ❖ order repeat prescriptions online
- ❖ view parts of your GP record, including information about medication, allergies, vaccinations, previous illnesses and test results
- ❖ view clinical correspondence such as hospital discharge summaries, outpatient appointment letters and referral letters

The service is free and available to **patients who register with a password for our system.**

For those patients who have not yet registered for SystemOnline you can do so by contacting reception for more information, who will advise how to organise a username and password. For reasons of data confidentiality, you will need to attend the surgery in person to collect your logon details and your password. You will be asked to **bring proof of ID to register.**

For further details about GP online services go to **NHS Choices GP Online Services:**

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhsengland/aboutnhservices/doctors/pages/gp-online-services.aspx>

SMS Text Messaging:

If you would like to receive text message notices for reminders about your appointments please contact our receptionist and give your consent. Alternatively please download a form from our website. Another advantage of registering is that you will receive **notifications throughout the year when our newsletter is published online.**

Website: <http://castlegardenssurgery.co.uk>

FRIENDS & FAMILY TEST (FFT)

Patients are reminded of the **NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT)**. We have a **FFT and patient suggestion box** together with feedback forms attached to the wall opposite reception. We welcome patients to complete these following their visit to the surgery. You can also submit an FFT on line at our website. The FFT question is:

How likely are you to recommend your GP to friends and family?

Recent feedback collated from patient's completing the FFT between September and November 2017 are as follows:

9 patients completed FFT:

8 via website/ **1** form completed, of which:

6 patients were extremely likely to recommend surgery

3 patients were likely to recommend surgery

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PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Minutes and details of the meeting in December 2017 have now been published on our website.

The group welcomes new members, patients who would be happy to be contacted via email and who would like to attend PPG meetings held at the surgery no more than 4 times a year. Any patient interested in joining the group please ask at reception for a registration form. Our next PPG meeting is on:

Wednesday 15th March 2018, 1730-1900

Further provisional dates for meetings in 2018 are:

Wednesday 13th June 2018, 1730-1900

Wednesday 12th September 2018, 1730-1900

Wednesday 12th December 2018, 1730-1900

[Attendance at our PPG meetings does require membership to the PPG.]

PPG Lead: Roz Sampson has advised members that she would like to step down from the PPG Lead role, whilst offering to remain as the Public Stakeholder Group Representative. Roz has been our PPG Lead since January 2014. The surgery and PPG members are very grateful for her contribution as PPG Lead would like to thank Roz for her valued support over the years.

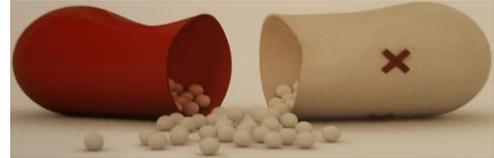
FLU VACCINES

Flu vaccinations are still available for:

- All patients **over aged 65years**
- All patients **under 65years** who the Department of Health have advised are clinically at risk will have **received a written invitation** to book their flu vaccination.
- **Pregnant mums:** are also encouraged to have the flu vaccination

Do not delay book now, call **01805 623222**

ANTIBIOTICS



Taking ANTIBIOTICS when you do not need them puts you and your family at risk. You may be feeling unwell but antibiotics aren't always needed.

Without effective antibiotics many routine operations like hip replacements, organ transplants, caesarean sections and treatment for sepsis or chemotherapy will become increasingly dangerous or impossible.

- ❖ Over-use of antibiotics can lead to the development of drug-resistant bacteria which can cause serious infections
- ❖ Antibiotics can cause side effects such as rashes, thrush, stomach pains, diarrhoea, reactions to sunlight and other symptoms
- ❖ Help conserve antibiotics so that they remain effective
- ❖ Your actions can protect antibiotics.

Further guidance and information go to NHS Choices at: www.nhs.uk/keepantibioticsworking or join the antibioticsguardian.com

HANDI PAEDIATRIC APP



A new mobile app that will give you up-to-date advice about common childhood illnesses and how to treat them, called **the HANDi Paediatric app**

Download free to any *Apple, Android* smartphone or tablet.

For further information go to **NEWDEVON CCG**

WEBSITE:

<https://www.newdevonccg.nhs.uk/information-for-patients/handi-paediatric-app-101832>

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PATIENT SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

Home Fire Safety Programme – offers an opportunity for patients to receive advice about home fire safety:

Cooking safely: over 60% of accidental dwelling fires start in the kitchen? This means that you are six times more likely to have an incident in your kitchen than in any other room in the house, statistics show that you are most likely to get distracted between 1700 – 1900.

Have you checked your appliances lately: Faulty electrics, appliances, wiring and overloaded sockets cause around 7,000 house fires across the country every year. One of the main focuses is white goods which include cookers, dishwashers, tumble dryers, washing machines and fridges.

Smoke Alarms: Stay alive and stay safe with a [working smoke alarm](#). This will greatly increase your chances of escaping from a fire unharmed. Check that a smoke alarm is fitted on each level of your property:

- once a year, change your battery or consider buying a ten-year alarm which will not require frequent battery changes
 - regularly check your alarms by pressing the button
 - 3 – 6 months - vacuum and wipe the smoke alarm casing to ensure dust isn't blocking the sensor chamber (for mains wired alarms, switch off first).
 - In the event of a fire, get out, stay out, call 999.
- Have you thought about [making the call](#), to request a **free Home Safety visit to give fire safety advice and discuss an escape plan?** If your smoke alarm is not working or you need extra equipment for example a hard of hearing smoke alarm, carbon monoxide alarm or fire retardant throws/bedding please call on our **free phone no 0800 05 02 999**. The visit takes approximately 45 minutes from one of our technicians, who will come in branded vans and always have identification with them that can be authenticated. Please also note that if you wish to have a joint visit with a family member/friend/carer we can also arrange this, please advise when you make the call.

Drink Wise Age Well Prevention: support can be offered to patients over 50 years of age :

- free, confidential support and advice for patients, their family/anyone concerned about how alcohol is affecting them
- advice and support in your community, including visits in their home
- free local activities and social opportunities to meet new people, or develop skills
- free training on starting the conversation, recognising and responding and alcohol's impact as we age
- free alcohol awareness sessions for local organisations and employers

For further information call:

0800 304 7034 or visit Drink Wise Age Well website:

<https://drinkwiseagewell.org.uk/about/where-we-work/devon/>

361energy is a local charity offering advice and assistance in North Devon to those in fuel poverty or who may be struggling to pay their bills. We help in a number of ways:

- We run regular drop-in clinics all over the region where members of the public can come for advice about bills and tariffs. We invite you to bring your energy bills and we can ensure that you are not paying more than you need for you electricity, gas or water by checking that you are on the cheapest tariff.
- We do free home visits to those who are eligible; during these visits we will look at your bills, switch your tariff if appropriate, saving you money. We'll look at the fabric of your home and at the way you use energy. We can signpost to Income Max to check that you are getting the right benefits. We also give away free 'easy measures' such as LED light bulbs, Radiator Reflectors, and draught-proofing.
- We also ensure that eligible people are on the Priority Service Register.
- We inform people about Smart Meters.
- 361energy work with vulnerable people of all ages. We often have a presence at local events and supermarkets, so do come and talk to us.
- All of our Home Energy Advisors are fully trained.
- You can pick up a leaflet about us in the Bickford Centre or see the poster in the entrance of The Plough.

For further information visit 361 Energy at:

<http://www.361energy.org/>