

Lyme Bay Medical Practice

Summer Newsletter

August 2022



Issue No 1

Introduction – Dr Forbes Watson

Welcome to our Practice Newsletter.

I write at a time when the NHS continues to be under huge pressure. It seems that Covid is largely under control for now but that could easily change if we see more new variants, so we must continue to be aware and take reasonable precautions. We will encourage the wearing of masks in the surgeries for the foreseeable future and are now actively preparing for the autumn vaccination programme.

Demand for services has never been higher and General Practice is offering 12.5% more appointments than pre pandemic. We try to offer as timely access as possible, however we accept it is not always as quick as some would want and we apologise for that.

As I am sure you have heard the NHS has significant workforce challenges which have been compounded by Covid absence – Lyme Regis and Charmouth are not protected from this. I also know many of you are frustrated by waits for hospital services. This is slowly improving but unfortunately will take a considerable time to correct and we in General Practice have little influence.

The Practice was recently inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and I am pleased to report maintained our 'Good' rating. I am also pleased to report we have recently recruited an experienced pharmacist to the team, who will work closely with our Nurse Practitioners and GPs to deliver a range of services including medication advice, long-term condition reviews and minor illness assessment and treatment.

I would like to thank staff for their hard work and commitment and you for your support and understanding during these challenging times. I wish you well for the summer.

How to Make an Appointment

The surgery has both face to face and telephone appointments available daily. We offer the following booking methods:

For all appointments, please ensure you can provide the following information for the patient:

- **name**
- **date of birth** and
- **home address**

If calling on behalf of any patient over the age of 16, including parents or guardians, we will require written or verbal consent from the patient to discuss their medical records with you.

Urgent ('Triage') Appointments

For all urgent matters, please telephone the surgery between 0800 and 1200 when you will be asked to give a brief outline of your symptoms. If appropriate, you will be added to the triage list for a Nurse Practitioner (NP) to call you back that morning.

Following your call with the NP, if they are unable to help you over the telephone, they will direct you to the most appropriate healthcare professional. This could mean prescribing medication over the phone or asking you to attend the surgery at short notice.

Please ensure that the telephone number you provide for the NP to call back on is in a good signal area and that you are available for their call. They will not be able to make repeated attempts to contact you.

NB: If you are suffering from chest pains or shortness of breath please call 999.

We have a Minor Injury & Illness service at Lyme Regis Medical Centre. Where possible please give us a call before attending. We do not have X-Ray facilities, so if there is any likelihood of broken bones, concussion or severe wounds, please call 111.

Routine GP Appointments

There can be a variable wait for a routine or follow up face to face appointment, therefore please book your appointment as soon as possible. You are more likely to be offered an appointment with your preferred clinician if you are able to book early.

E-Consults

If you have an ongoing issue which you feel cannot wait until the next available GP appointment, but is not considered 'triage' you can complete an 'E-consult' form which you can find on our website. Please complete the E-consult form with as much information as you can, sending photos where appropriate (e.g. for a rash or mole). Our Nurse Practitioners review these forms, normally within 48 hours, whereby you can expect to be contacted.

Clinical Services Available

At both the Lyme Regis Medical Centre and at Charmouth we offer access to the following Clinical face to face appointments.

- ✓ **General Practitioner** – The GPs offer both face to face and telephone appointments, home visits (housebound patients only) and some minor surgery including steroid injections. They also deal with completing medical forms for patients, numerous medical assessments including for insurance and driving, requests for letters, requests for sick notes and reviewing blood test results and letters from other providers.
- ✓ **Pharmacist** – The Pharmacist offers both face to face and telephone appointments for adults over 18, and can help with complex medication queries, long term condition reviews including hypertension, heart failure and diabetes, medication reviews and minor illnesses, and can prescribe where necessary.
- ✓ **Nurse Practitioner** – The NPs triage the urgent daily appointment requests, offer long term condition review appointments including Asthma and Diabetes, cervical smear appointments, minor injury and illness appointments. NPs are able to assess, diagnose and prescribe for undiagnosed health problems and refer to secondary care where appropriate. They offer appointments to both adults and children.
- ✓ **Practice Nurse** – The PNs offer appointments for wound dressings; INR checks (anticoagulation); dopplers (leg scan); baby & travel immunisations; NHS, Carer & learning disability health checks; travel vaccinations; removal of sutures and staples; some injections including B12, Shingles, influenza, and pneumococcal. They also offer appointments for long term condition reviews including diabetes, asthma, hypertension and heart failure.
- ✓ **Health Care Assistant** – HCAs can offer face to face appointments for Phlebotomy, ECGs, Blood Pressure checks, INR checks, and some injections including flu and B12's.
- ✓ **We can also offer Remote GP Consultations (LIVI)**

LIVI is offered in partnership with local GP Practices in West Dorset. LIVI is a digital health provider which provides GP telephone appointments or video consultations to enable patients registered at our practice to improve access, patient experience and outcome. You can speak to a LIVI GP about any health concerns or symptoms, and they can provide advice, medication, referrals where appropriate, and sick notes. LIVI GPs can help with a wide range of problems including, but not limited to:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| * Acne/skin problems | * Abnormal blood results | * Headache & migraines |
| * Allergies | * Constipation | * Insomnia/sleeping issues |
| * Anxiety & depression | * Eye inflammation | * Medication queries |
| * Asthma | * Urinary tract infections (female over 16 only) | |

They are unable to help with the following:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| * Chest pains/signs of heart attack | * Severe abdominal pain |
| * Ongoing seizures | * Difficulty breathing |
| * Signs of a stroke | * Signs of Sepsis |
| * Severe injury or heavy bleeding | * Physical examinations |
| * Sudden or rapid swelling of the eyes, lips, tongue or mouth | |
| * Males with urinary tract infection symptoms | |

You may be offered a LIVI GP appointment when you call to book an appointment as these appointments are generally available within a few days. The LIVI GPs have the same access to your medical records as have all clinicians at the Practice. If an appointment is booked for a patient between 2-16 years old, the patient must be present with their parent/guardian for the appointment.

Please be aware the appointment time will be approximate and the call may show as from a withheld or out of area number so please accept the call.

Practice Statistics

May-July 2022

12,838

Attended Appointments

298

Patients Did Not Attend Appointments

15,992

Telephone Calls Answered

168

New Registrations

24,741

Medications Prescribed

1,017

E-Consults Processed

292

Home Visits

9,014

Total Patients Registered

Our website is getting a new look

Our website is currently being refreshed to provide a better patient experience, so the site may look a bit different as our redesign progresses.

We are working with our Patient Participation Group members to obtain their input to ensure that redesigned content and layout provide the information, advice, and access to the relevant services that our patients need.

Your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

- GP Practices are required to have a 'Patient Participation Group' (PPG) to give patients a voice in how the Practice does its job, sharing experiences and suggestions that may improve the service. Practices are expected to collaborate with PPGs on matters that affect patients generally. The PPG encourages good communication by the Practice, helping it to explain its own and associated services.
- Every patient of this Practice is automatically part of the PPG. You may use this membership however you wish.
- You can get PPG information from its section of the Practice website, from its noticeboards at the Medical Centre and Charmouth sites, from each PPG contribution to the quarterly Practice newsletters, or by attending meetings arranged by the PPG.
- The PPG Co-Chairs are David Edwards and David Hardman, with Joanna Scotton as Secretary. They lead a steering group of members willing to take part in bi-monthly meetings that include Practice representatives, and often invited speakers. Would you like to help with this work?
- You may prefer to join the 'virtual' group for people sufficiently interested but not able or wishing to make such a commitment. You will receive agendas and Minutes of steering group meetings and be welcome to attend any you find particularly relevant.
- The effectiveness of the PPG relies on hearing from its patient-members about any questions, problems or ideas that they have. So please let us know. You can get in touch by dropping a note in the locked red 'Messages for the PPG' boxes at the Medical Centre and Charmouth sites. You can also contact the PPG by emailing DOCCG.PatientParticipation.lymebay@nhs.net.

Meetings planned for 2022:

- Tuesday 20 September. 2.30 pm at Lyme Regis Football Club.
Main topics: (1) Prescriptions and pharmacies (2) Youth input to PPGs.
- Wednesday 26 October. 7.00 pm at Woodmead Halls. Public open meeting.
Topic: Mental health services for young people and adults.
- Tuesday 22 November. 7.00 pm - 8.30pm at Lyme Regis Football Club. AGM open to all.
Topic: The future of GP services: Dr Forbes Watson.

Checking In Kiosk

A new checking in Kiosk has been situated in the Reception area of the Lyme Regis Medical Centre. Please use this to check-in to allow the Receptionist to deal with patient queries and other requests. If you have two sequential appointments, please book in twice.



Reminder

Please ensure that we have your correct home address, landline, mobile and email contact details. We also need to have your permission to be able to send SMS text and email messages, including copies of our newsletter. To agree to this function and to update your details please email administrator.lyme@dorsetgp.nhs.uk



New Practice Clinical Pharmacist – Amanda James

We are pleased to welcome Amanda James to the Practice. She is a clinical pharmacist with 6 years experience working in a GP Practice in Swindon. She has recently moved into the area after holidaying here for many years. Amanda will be offering face to face appointments in Lyme Regis and Charmouth, and telephone appointments for medication queries and reviews, long term condition reviews and minor illnesses.

Vitamin D

- ✓ Vitamin D is responsible for increasing the absorption of calcium, magnesium and phosphate from the diet and is involved in many other biological effects in the body. Its role in calcium use in the body is essential for bone health. Deficiency of Vitamin D leads to Rickets.
- ✓ In 2010 the British Medical Journal published an article which stated that 55% of the adult population have insufficient levels and 16% have severe deficiency during winter and spring.
- ✓ Why would that be?
 - The major source of Vitamin D synthesis is in the skin through a chemical reaction that relies on sun exposure. In the northern hemisphere and during winter and spring the sun is not strong enough to maintain high enough levels of Vitamin D production.
 - Other factors that could cause you to have low levels include skin pigmentation, use of sunscreen, concealing clothing, being elderly or living in a care home, inability to absorb from the diet, liver and kidney problems and anti-epileptic medication.
- ✓ How can we increase our levels of Vitamin D?
 - Dietary sources are eggs; beef liver; oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, tuna, sardines; mushrooms; and foods with added vitamin supplement. We can also take a supplement on its own. The NHS recommends a dose of at least 400IU daily, particularly over the months October to March. These can be purchased cheaply in many pharmacies, health food shops and supermarkets.
- ✓ How much sunlight do we need to produce enough Vitamin D in the skin?
 - Manchester University is carrying out a project into Vitamin D production and it recommends people with lighter skin types to have a daily sun exposure of 10-15 minutes per day April to September; darker skins need 25 to 40 minutes per day. You would need to expose your lower arms and lower legs at midday. Importantly, levels of sunlight exposure that make your skin look pink or sunburnt are too high and should be avoided. People with very light sensitive skin may not be able to do this and would need to take year round supplements.

Practice News

We will continue to let you know of any upcoming events, or ways you can get involved in Practice activities and how you can make a positive impact at your Practice.

Your feedback on this newsletter is welcomed, and we would also be delighted to hear of any ideas and content you would like to see in a future edition. You can send these to us by emailing administrator.lyme@dorsetgp.nhs.uk

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and look forward to the next copy in the Autumn. This will include information on Community Services provided by Dorset HealthCare, and on prescriptions.