

JANUARY/FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2019

OPEN SURGERY

Please remember open surgery on a Monday morning is for one problem only and is aimed primarily at things that can be dealt with within 5 minutes. Due to the numbers attending it is vital that only patients suitable for open surgery book into open surgery. If we continue to get patients booking in for multiple problems in existence for many months because they preferred not to wait until the next routine appointment, we will have to revert to normal surgeries on a Monday morning with a strict limit to the numbers attending. This is unfair for the vast majority of patients and reduces the flexibility we have within the appointment system. Please help us.

IMPROVED ACCESS AND EXTENDED HOURS FOR ROUTINE APPOINTMENTS

OK, the powers that be have decided that future investment in general practice is to take the form of 'extended hours' provided by St. Helens Rota where you may be seen by a GP or an advanced nurse practitioner. These are held at Albion Street and other sites currently used by St. Helens Rota. In a newer initiative, 'improved access' appointments are being provided by Unplanned Care 24 and are available from 8am until 8pm seven days a week. These will eventually be offered at four sites across the area but currently only the Rainhill site is up and running. All of these appointments are being offered through reception staff from each practice and require consent that your GP record can be viewed by the outside agencies.

While such widespread access to a clinician might satisfy those whose priority is to see any clinician at any time, the downside is that your own GP will not receive any of the increased funding and so will be limited in the number of appointments that we can offer at your surgery. There might also be an impact on the staffing of the essential emergency services (which is different again though offered by St Helens Rota locally).

YOUR REPEAT PRESCRIPTION

Well Pharmacy has informed the practice that some prescriptions sent via the Electronic Prescribing Service will soon be assembled at a central location and not in Rainford, freeing up time to focus on acute prescriptions and services. This will only affect a small percentage of scripts sent EPS and most patients will not notice any difference. If yours is a script that has been sent centrally and you need it before it returns, we understand that the pharmacists will be able to facilitate this. Please speak to Mark or Andy if you have questions.

MINOR EYE CONDITIONS SERVICE

Provides assessment and treatment of people with recently occurring minor eye conditions. Patients can self-refer or may be referred into the service by staff at their GP practice, a pharmacist, or another optometrist. Patients will need to telephone the MEC service providers to book an appointment. <http://centralmerseyloc.org/minor-eye-care-services-mecs/>
This service covers loss of vision, eye pain, red eye, foreign body in eye, dry/sticky/gritty eye, blepharitis, watery eye, in-growing eyelashes, double vision, flashing lights and headaches.

QOF POINTS

We are at that time of year again when 'points mean prizes' and we have to complete and submit our chronic disease management figures. This means those with asthma/COPD/diabetes/rheumatoid arthritis/dementia/epilepsy all need to have reviews documented within the last 12 months. If you have been invited and have not attended, please attend. This will help keep practice viable.