**ST JAMES SURGERY, 89 WASH LANE, CLACTON-ON-SEA CO15 1DA**

**THE SURGERY, CHURCH SQUARE, ST OSYTH CO16 8NU**

**Please visit us on www.stjamesandstosythsurgery.co.uk**

**PATIENT NEWSLETTER NUMBER 15 – SEPTEMBER 2017**

It is rather a long time since the last newsletter from St James for which I apologise. Sometimes we just try to get through the work and keep the surgery going as best we can with all the changes that come along. However, now seems a good time to bring you up to date with what has been going on inside St James.

**PRACTICE MATRONS AND EMERGENCY CARE PRACITIONER**

As you will have noticed, over the last year or so, we have successfully employed three Practice Matrons, Mrs Shelley Bird, Mrs Margaret Dewing and Mrs Nancy Barrett. All these highly skilled nurses can prescribe and have been a huge asset to our surgery. All our matrons worked in the community before joining our surgery. We have also been successful in employing Mrs Rachel Jefford as our Emergency Care Practitioner. Rachel has previously worked as a paramedic and also at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford in their A & E department. The skills that these clinicians bring to our surgery have been very obvious and we have had many letters of praise from grateful patients.

**NURSES**

Our nurse, Cherry, had a baby boy in May this year and they are both very happy and healthy. To cover Cherry while she is off we have recruited Mandy who joined us in May and has settled in really well. Some other good news is that both Sarah (respiratory nurse) and Tracey (diabetic nurse) have both passed their prescribing courses and will be able to prescribe within their areas of expertise and for minor illnesses.

**DR NATALIA ALBU**

Some of you may have already seen her but we are fortunate to have Dr Albu working at the surgery one day a week at the moment. She has been here on Fridays during August but from September will be here on Tuesdays. She does not have a personal list at the surgery so will see any patients and we welcome her to our surgery. You can book appointments with her online (more details about that shortly!)

**DR ALISON COOKE**

From September we are also delighted to welcome Dr Alison Cooke who has recently finished her GP training in Chelmsford. She will be working here three days a week, Tuesday, Thursdays and Fridays. You can also book appointments with her online.

**FLU CLINICS**

A very important message for us to relay to our patients at this time of year is the dates of our flu clinics**.** Flu is a very nasty illness.  **We ask you please to support your surgery and have your flu jabs with us.** We have to buy in a lot of flu vaccines in order to supply a free one to all our eligible patients. We have flu clinics on the following dates:

**30th September, 14th and 21st October at Clacton**

**7th October at St Osyth**

Please telephone the surgery to make an appointment as soon as you can.

**ONLINE ACCESS**

I did mention this in my last newsletter (March 2016 – still available on our website) but there is a big push for as many patients as possible to sign up for online access to be able to book appointments, order prescriptions and access their medical records.

Booking appointments online is an easy way for you to access the surgery when we are closed to make a doctor’s appointment convenient to you. We aim to have appointments on the computer up to six weeks ahead if possible and this should allow you to make or cancel routine and review appointments without having to telephone the surgery.

To sign up to online access full details are available on our website. Please complete the relevant form or come into reception to ask for a form to sign up. Once completed you will need to come to the surgery with valid photo ID e.g. passport, driving licence or bus pass. You will then be given the details to enable you to set up your own password and security questions. Once this is done you will have online access. For confidentiality reasons this service is only available for over 18s.

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**PRESCRIPTIONS**

Once signed up to online access you can easily order your repeat medications via your computer at any time of day or night. It would be very helpful to us if you could nominate a chemist from which to collect your prescription. It saves you time coming into the surgery and save us time at the reception desk. Also, if you nominate a chemist we can send your prescription directly to them electronically which saves a lot of printing and reduces “lost” prescriptions. Please give your consent on your prescription request for us to send your prescription electronically to the chemist. Ordering your medication this way means you can track the progress of your prescription and see when it has been sent to the chemist. Please still allow two working days when ordering your medication as this will give us time to deal with any queries that may arise.

**GP NETWORK**

These are changing times in general practice and in order to make sure that we keep ahead of any changes, we have teamed up with some other like-minded practices to form a Network. This will not change how we work on a day to day basis but does mean that we can bid for contracts as a larger entity which is what the Government expects. We are included in a network which comprises The Hollies at Great Bentley, Mayflower Surgery in Harwich and East Hill, Abbey Field and Parsons Heath in Colchester. We are not merging or creating a super-surgery, we are working together behind the scenes to make sure the services we offer you are of high quality, consistent and sustainable.

Thank you for your time.

Heather Knappett, Practice Manager