



# Patients' Newsletter

## Missed Appointments.

December 2005

**42 Doctor's Appointments  
56 Nurses' Appointments  
Amounting to 16 hours 20 minutes of valuable  
consultation time lost**

The surgery staff are keenly aware that it can be difficult for us to get to see the doctor of our choice, or even any doctor and that appointments with the nurses can be booked up weeks in advance. These are problems that the staff are addressing, (see below), but the cure lies partially in the hands of us the patients too. All we have to do is let the receptionists know if we change our mind about the need for an appointment, or if we cannot make it for some reason. It is inexcusable that so many people simply fail to turn up for appointments, or "forget" them, without letting anyone know. Appointments are too precious for that.

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### No funding for Saturday Surgeries

Health Minister, Patricia Hewitt, called upon doctors to open their surgeries in the evenings and on Saturdays, but then failed to provide the funding.

### Flu Awareness Days A Huge Success.

Whoever would have imagined that a visit to the doctor for a vaccination could be described as a pleasant social interlude? 850 flu vaccinations were given on just the first day, and for several patients there was the added bonus of a cup of tea, a biscuit and a chat with old acquaintances. Congratulations to the staff for a brilliant idea well-executed.

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### Patient Questionnaire—2005

The practice would like to thank patients who took the time to fill in our annual patient survey during the summer of 2005. The questionnaires have been compiled by the Health Authority and the surgery has been scored against the average for Shropshire County and also the national average. The results of the survey were discussed at length at the last Patient Group Meeting. The group felt that there was an overall improvement compared with the previous years. For example the way in which patients are treated by

receptionists has greatly improved.

However there are some areas that need to be addressed by the practice. When asked how quickly our patients get to see a particular doctor only 37% of patients were satisfied, compared with a Shropshire and National average of 60%. The doctors feel that this is mainly as a result of them all working part time in Ellesmere. Medical continuity has been provided in the medical records as opposed to by a patient's usual doctor. (contd. P3)

**Dispensary now open Monday—Friday  
8.30am—6.00pm**

## Keeping motivated in the New Year

As the end of January approaches it is quite usual for the good intentions of all those New Year resolutions to be slipping away and the motivation that is required is becoming more and more difficult to hold on to.

One way to help you stick to your goals, whether it be losing weight, developing a healthier lifestyle generally or keeping fit is to get together with a group of like-minded people with similar goals to your own. The main reason being that as your motivation levels begin to drop there will be people in your group who can help you remain focused and give you the support, encouragement and boost needed to stay on target.

So, if you are feeling as if you are the only one out there trying to develop a 'new you' and you are feeling unmotivated as the January blues take hold, why not find out what's happening in and around Ellesmere that may help you remain on target. Not only will working on your target be easier with a group of like minded people, joining a club or class of any sort is a great way of meeting people. Stick to your goals and, as spring approaches, you will begin to see and feel the benefits!

**Adult swimming sessions** are held at Rhyn Park, organised by Bob Walker, on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Telephone Bob for further information: 01948 710305.

**Jujitsu classes** for adults are held on Friday evenings 7.30pm - 8.30pm at Lakelands Sports Centre

**Running Club** to which all are welcome is on Friday evenings 6.15pm. The group meet on the main car park opposite the Co-op. All levels of fitness are welcome. Just turn up!



## Lakelands Sports Centre



runs a wide range of activities including:

\***Aerobics** on Tuesday evening with Danni 7.00pm

start

\***Circuit Training** on Monday evenings with John 6.00pm start

\***Women Only Club**, Wednesday 12.00pm - 1.30pm

\***Pilates** classes 6.00pm - 7.00pm every Friday

\***Kickboxing** sessions every Wednesday 6.00pm - 7.00pm

\***Yoga** classes every Monday 7.30pm - 9.00pm

**The fitness suite** is open every day housing a wide range of equipment. Call 01691 622543 for further information or to arrange an induction.

**Yoga classes at St Martins Centre** run weekly on a Tuesday evening 7.00pm - 8.00pm. For further information telephone 01691 688080. (Free if on means tested benefit)

**Weight Loss classes** are located at the following venues:

**Weight Watchers** at the Comrades Club, Tuesday at 10.00am and The Black Lion, Wednesday at 7.00pm.

**Slimming World** at Ellesmere Town Hall on a Tuesday at 7.00pm and Overton Village Hall on Thursday at 6.30pm.

There are many other clubs and classes in and around Ellesmere. The notice board within the surgery has additional information. Please call in for dates and times.

Good Luck with your goals and stay motivated!

**Appointments: 01691 622798**

**General enquiries: 01691 623256**

**Emergencies: 01691 622711**

**www.ellesmeremedicalpractice.co.uk**

**E-mail: emp@nhs.net**

**Prescriptions by e-mail will only be ac-**

*Patients' Questionnaire (contd)*

The doctors have decided that it will be better for patients and internal communication if a separate doctor is recruited to work in Coedpoeth and we have three partners (Drs. Greville, Willis and Manning) working four days per week in Ellesmere. This will happen as soon as a suitable doctor has been appointed in Coedpoeth.

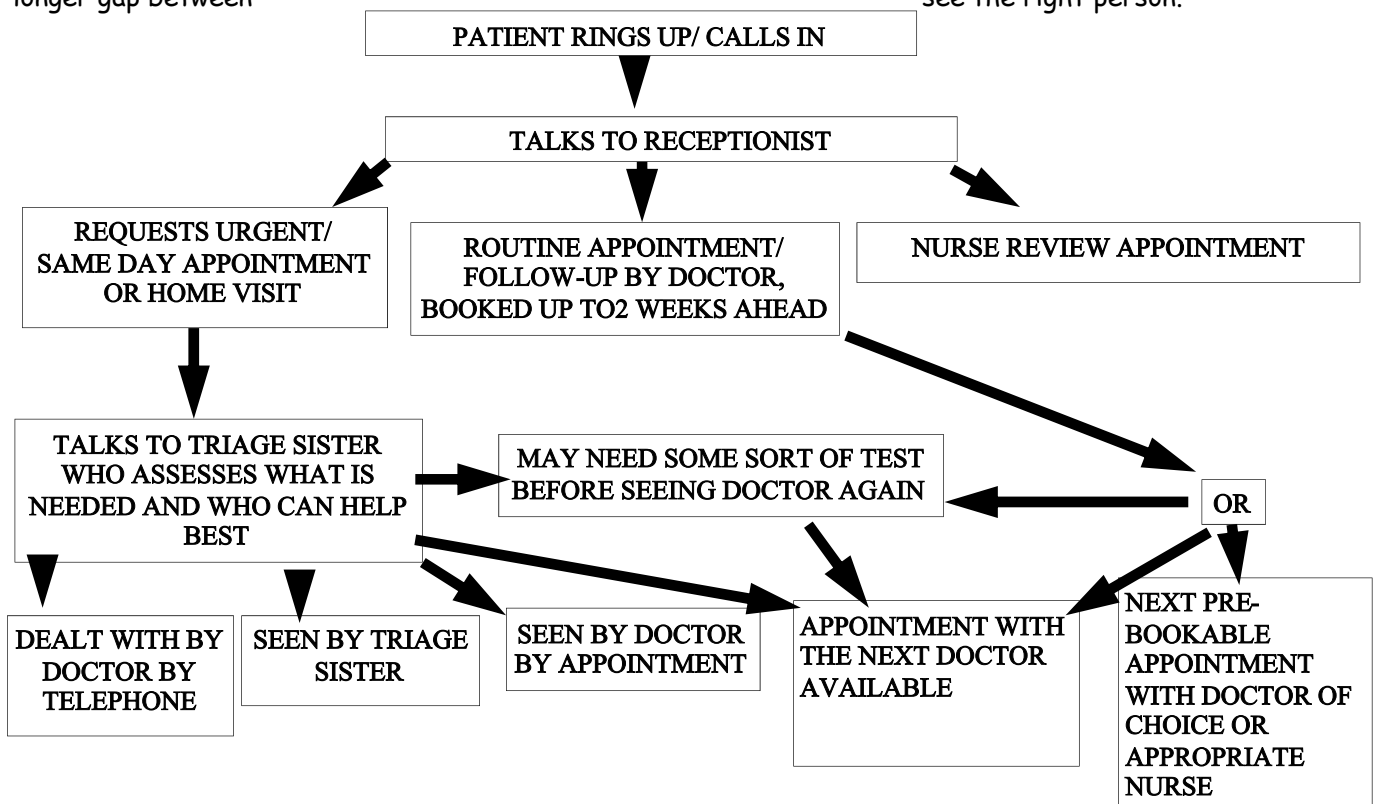
On the question of how quickly patients get to see any doctor the practice also scored lower than the Shropshire and National average. It is felt that this is due to our triage system. Quite often our triage or practice nurses can deal with a medical problem even though sometimes patients feel that they would like to see a doctor also. Even with full time doctors returning to Ellesmere the triage system will still remain and everyone is encouraged to look at the chart below on how appointments are made at the surgery. This is because the demand for urgent appointments (especially on Mondays) is considerable.

45% of patients compared with 57% of patients in Shropshire were satisfied with how long they had to wait for their consultations to begin. No one particularly minds waiting if there is a medical emergency that the doctor has to deal with. However the effect of retaining a triage system means that our doctors will be dealing with more complex medical problems than if we did not have a triage system. There is a case that the Doctors should either increase the length of appointment time or allow a longer gap between

appointments to try to prevent overrunning. The surgery has started to increase gaps between appointment times to try to prevent surgeries running late and also to ensure that our front door is open early enough to allow patients to get to their appointments on time. However this has not solved the problem and it is an area which the practice will continue to review.

The practice manager is working with the Communication sub Group of the Patients Group to come up with a solution to enable patients to get through to the practice more easily on the telephone. There will be much more on this in the next newsletter. Today, the appointment system at the surgery is designed to ensure that whatever our situation or condition, we are seen by a member of the practice team best able to deal with us. This might be with a doctor, or it might be with a nurse. It could be on the day, or it could be two weeks in advance.

When we patients first contact the surgery, that first conversation with the receptionist is very important. **It is the receptionist who makes the first decision as to where to refer us, and the more we can tell her, the better our chance of being sent in the right direction at the right time.** She is bound by the same rules of confidentiality as our doctors and nurses, so when she asks you questions, she is not being nosy, she is just doing her job well—getting just enough information from you to make sure you see the right person.



## Join the Mere Amblers

Would you like to be a bit fitter? Are you recovering from an illness or operation? Would you like to meet friendly local people?

The Mere Ambles take place every Tuesday in Ellesmere and are short easy walks aimed at those who, for one reason or another, have not taken much exercise recently. We meet at 1.00pm.

There are generally about 5 to 10 people of all ages and abilities in the group. Many of the people who join us are recovering from illness or operations such as a heart bypass, or are diabetic and want to start getting a bit of exercise. On the first and last Tuesday of the month we meet at the Wharf at the end of the canal in town and walk along the canal. On all other Tuesdays we meet outside the Meres Visitor Centre and either walk round part of the Mere, or go up over Castlefields depending on who turns up. We walk at the rate of the slowest person so no one gets left behind, and



everyone is very supportive. We have had people in wheelchairs join us and we welcome all abilities.

Diane who helps co-ordinate the scheme says, "we are reliant on volunteers to lead the walks and are desperate for new leaders to come forward. Anyone who already walks regularly would be ideal because they already know the benefits and if they could spare just one hour a month, then the future of the Mere Ambles would be more secure. There is a one day Training which all leaders need to do. After that it's just a simple commitment to whatever time you can offer whether it be to lead just one walk a month or more. Anyone who walks regularly, either with a dog or perhaps because they have recovered from an operation or illness and already know the benefits, would make ideal walk leaders. "

Contact: Diane Monether 01691 624448



## Did you know there is a Carers Support Worker based at your surgery?



My name is Angela Mandy. I am the new Carers' Support Worker for the Ellesmere GPs' Practice. In this role I can offer guidance, information and support specifically for family carers.

If you care for a friend, neighbour, partner or family member who is frail, ill or has a disability and is unable to live at home without your help, then you are a Carer. You probably don't receive any payment for this work: you may be trying to juggle work and family with the care that you give. You may live with the person you care for, or s/he may live a distance away.

**IF YOU ARE A CARER** then I can offer you support. This could be to answer specific questions you may have, how to access information, where to get equipment, benefits, respite care etc or simply for emotional support.

**If you would like to make an appointment** to speak with me in private please call the . surgery (01691622798/623256) or pop in when you are passing.

## CARERS' SUPPORT GROUP

On the 2nd Tuesday of every month I lead a Carers Group at The Ellesmere Comrades Club, Victoria Street Ellesmere, from 11am - 1pm. All Carers are welcome. The group offers Carers in similar circumstances an opportunity to come together to have a short time for themselves. The aim is to keep it as light as possible, a social time to relax. The group decides what they would like to do and I organise it! **Why not give it a try ?** You needn't stay for the whole time if this is difficult. If transport or respite for the person you care for is a problem we can help! If you can't make every month no problem! If you come once and decide it isn't for you that's fine. You don't need to come to the group in order to make an appointment to see me at the surgery.

I hope that this explains my role? If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to call me. I look forward to hearing from you.

**Angela Mandy, Carers Support Worker, . Ellesmere Medical Practice.**