



# windrush

MEDICAL PRACTICE

## **WELCOME TO YOUR PATIENTS' GROUP NEWSLETTER FOR SPRING 2020**

Containing useful information which we really hope you will share with your family and friends of all ages.

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## **111 and what they ask you ...**

We have recently been able to experience the workings of the 111 service at first hand. This is (as you can imagine) very complex.

Our local call centre is based in Bicester and covers Oxfordshire, most of Buckinghamshire and parts of Berkshire. Occasionally it has to take “overflow” from other counties.

It is worth knowing what they will ask you – so that you are prepared. Here are the questions they start with:

- What number are you phoning from?
- Are you the patient or are you with the patient?
- What is the patient’s (or your) date of birth?
- What is the patient’s (or your) name?
- What is the first line of the patient’s (or your) address?

These are the key questions to get them underway and to pull up basic information about the patient in order to go forward. If you are not the patient, they will ask whether you are with him/her, what the patient’s name is and whether they are able to speak directly to the patient.

There are then complex and comprehensive algorithms which they follow in order to identify the preferred line of treatment for you. This may be a trip to the pharmacist or telling you to go straight to A&E (or any point in between).

Behind the call handlers there are clinicians with varying expertise who they can call on for you: these clinicians will ring you back as soon as they can.

We hear varying reports on the success of 111. The vast majority of these are good – patients have been reassured, guided correctly and glad they phoned. Nothing is perfect – and the 111 service does acknowledge that not everyone is happy. What is distressing is the number of calls which they receive which are abusive, threatening and disturbing.

So, if you call 111, just rest assured that they will do everything they can to help.

**Rough sleepers:** one of our GPs has found out what we can do to help if we see a rough sleeper. If you believe the person to be someone over the age of 18, you can send an alert to StreetLink.

They are available at [www.streetlink.org.uk](http://www.streetlink.org.uk) or you can phone them on 0300 500 0914.

The information you give will be passed to the outreach team closest to the rough sleeper. Please note that you will need to supply the *exact* location where the rough sleeper can be found.

Also – if you believe that the person may be under 18 or in immediate danger or needs urgent care, then dial 999 for the police or ambulance service as appropriate.

**Ambulance Response Times:** we thought it might interest you to know the current ambulance response times which have come from the South Central Ambulance Service (which serves our area).

- Category 1: Life-threatening calls. Responded to in an average of seven minutes and at least nine out of ten times within fifteen minutes;
- 
- Category 2: Emergency calls: responded to in an average of eighteen minutes and at least nine out of ten times within forty minutes;
- 
- Category 3: Urgent calls: responded to at least nine out of ten times within two hours: you may be treated by ambulance staff at the scene;
- 
- Category 4: Less urgent calls: responded to at least nine out of ten times within two and half hours: you may be given advice over the phone or referred to another service such as a GP or a Pharmacist.

## **Coronavirus**

As we go to print, so the Covid 19 or Coronavirus is in the news. To keep up to date please visit the Practice website, or sign up for our regular electronic bulletins via your patient group at [patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net](mailto:patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net)

## **Under the weather and you need to take time off work?**

### **You may need a Fit Note**

“Fit Notes” used to be called “Sick Notes” (the power of positive thought!). It is the official written statement from a doctor giving their medical opinion on a person’s fitness for work. They may also make recommendations for how the employer could support the employee.

If you are off work for *seven days or less*, your employer should not ask for medical evidence that you have been ill. But they can ask you to complete a form yourself when you return to work. This is called “self-certification”.

If you are off sick for *more than seven days* then your employer will usually ask for a Fit Note. To obtain this, please go to the Practice website, click on “Reception and Enquiries” and you will see the link to request the Fit Note. The seven days *includes* days when you would not normally work, such as weekends or Bank Holidays.

There are full details about this at <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/caring-carers-and-long-term-conditions/when-do-i-need-a-fit-note/>

### **Booklist to support children’s mental health:**

A new initiative has just been launched recommending books to help children, families and carers to understand their feelings and worries and to cope with tough times. This comprises of a special booklist; the books were chosen by children themselves, carers, librarians and health experts and they are endorsed by leading health organisations such as the Royal College of GPs. They are aimed at children aged 7 – 11 in Key Stage 2 with a wide range of reading levels to support less confident readers and to encourage children to read together with siblings and carers.

The Oxfordshire Libraries hold multiple copies of the books and if they haven’t got what you are looking for, then they can easily request that it is sent to them. The Library service also has many more books to help parents and children to navigate life – just ask at the desk.

Or if you have access to a computer then you can go to

<https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/news/booklist-released-to-support-childrens-mental-health/>

## **“A heart attack? It won’t happen to me ...”**

No – it might not happen to you ... but it might happen to somebody you are with at home, at work or while you are in town.

And if and when it does, you need to know where you can find the nearest AED (Automated External Defibrillator) which is available to the public 24 hours a day.

If you are in town, then you will find these superb pieces of equipment:

- Outside Pirate Fitness near front door, Bridge Street Mills;
- 
- In the phone box next to Lily’s Attic adjacent to Town Hall;
- 
- Witney Community Support, 2-8 Moorland Road – wall mounted right hand side of the building;
- 
- Witney Police Station on the wall outside Welch Way;
- 
- Witney Methodist Church, on the wall outside the front entrance;
- 
- Cogges Church Centre, outside on the wall.

At work or at Home – it is really important that you know where to find your nearest defibrillator: so for more information go to the App *Save A Life* and you can download the information directly from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Full details are at <https://www.scas.nhs.uk/news/campaigns/savealife/>

For those of you without access to websites, your PPG is putting together a leaflet to go in the Information Area: we hope to have it there in April 2020.

### **To contact your Patients’ Group ....**

Drop a note into our post box in the Information area –

Or e-mail [patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net](mailto:patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net)

If we can help you, we will.

## **Keeping well by taking notice:**

Some days it is really difficult to get going – it is an effort to put the kettle on and a real effort to start on that list of jobs you’re supposed to be doing.

So, cheer yourself up! Patient Access suggest that by reminding ourselves to ‘take notice’ can strengthen and broaden awareness. “Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your well-being and savouring ‘the moment’ can help to reaffirm your life priorities. Heightened awareness also allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations. They say we should we take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around us. Here are a few ideas:

- Cheer yourself up with a new plant to put on your window sill or table – or take a quick bit of time in the garden as those weeds are coming up already!
- Have a ‘clear the clutter’ day
- Take notice of how your friends and family are feeling or acting; why not give one of them a ring?
- Take a different route on your journey to or from work; or if you are not at work and have a bus pass, hop on a bus and have a ride around the district.

- Visit a new place for lunch or invite a neighbour in for coffee ...

One way or the other Life will look that little bit Better.

## **Patient consent form – for another person to share your medical records**

They say that we learn something new every day – and recently one of our Committee highlighted a key issue to us.

Health records are confidential, so you can only access someone else’s records if you are authorised to do so. To access someone else’s health records you must:

- Be acting on their behalf with their consent;
- Have legal authority to make decisions on their behalf (Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare);
- Have another legal basis for access.

You can get a paper copy of the form from the Reception desk or go to *Accessing Health Records* on the website to print a copy off.

## **Over the counter medication**

One of our lovely patients asked about buying her own paracetamol - and she needed them in large quantities. Well - we are all being asked to purchase some of our basic medicines which can be purchased over the counter. Why?

Let's take paracetamol as an example: over £70 million is spent in England alone on prescriptions for paracetamol alone.

A growing number of patients receiving these on prescription do not need these in large quantities.

Therefore, if we take less than 100 a month, we are being asked to purchase them over the counter.

If we take more than 100 a month, they will remain on prescription.

So, to obtain 96 paracetamol tablets, you *should be able* to purchase three packs each containing 32 from your pharmacist. Some pharmacists may not be willing to do this but it is worth asking.

This is *not* the only item which we will be asked to purchase: more details in future newsletters.

Going back to that £70 million ... if we are helping by buying our paracetamol then the money which the NHS does not use for that can be spent on key medical care.

It will be there for critical cancer treatments, for advanced heart condition care, for more nursing staff .....

Over the counter – and over to you!

## **Paying at the Dispensary:**

Our Dispensary staff ask us to note that as from the 1st January 2020 they are no longer accepting cash at the dispensary.

You are able to pay by card or by using Apple/Android pay. If you have any concerns about this change, please speak to a member of the dispensary team.

## **Do you pay a lot for your NHS prescriptions? This may be the answer ...**

It may be cheaper for you to purchase a Prepayment Certificate (PPC). This is (in effect) a “season ticket”. It covers almost all of your NHS prescriptions.

There are two PPC options to choose from:

- a three-month PPC costs £29.10 and will save you money if you need more than three prescribed items in three months;
- A twelve-month PPC costs £104.00 and will save you money if you need more than eleven prescribed items in a year.

As an example of the savings you can make:

- if you need three items each month you can save £220 with a 12-month PPC;
- if you need four items each month you can save £328 with a 12-month PPC.

That’s a lot of money to save! For full details and information on how to apply ask at your pharmacy or go to

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/save-money-with-a-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc/>

### **THE WINDRUSH MEDICAL PRACTICE**

Website: [www.windrushmedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.windrushmedicalpractice.co.uk)

Opening hours: **Monday- Thursday 0830 - 1830**  
**Friday 0700 - 1830**

Daytime enquiries: **01993 702911**

Dispensary: **01993 708452 (1030 – 1300: 1500 – 1600)**

Patient Advice and Liaison Office (PALS) for the  
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group **0800 0526088**

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