

## **Kingstone surgery: Tales from the dispensary**

You may be wondering what makes Kingstone Surgery tick. Obviously, you know all about our receptionists, our nurses, our doctors and our wonderful practice manager; but a crucial role is played by something you might be less aware of: our dispensary.

A dispensary is a bit like a high street chemist, but located inside a GP surgery which does not have a high street pharmacy nearby. It can supply almost all the drugs that we prescribe, and ours issues on average 9-10 thousand items a month- which makes it a busy place. It has six regular staff – Anne, Jenna, Emma, Caroline, Vik, and Rachel, helped out by Teshk, who has not only qualified as a doctor but also as a pharmacist. There is also no retiring from the dispensary! Those who try, still come in and regularly provide extra support....

There are many pharmacy services on the internet who will advertise for your custom, as well as chemists in Hereford and elsewhere, but we would prefer you to use our in-house service. The dispensary is not only convenient for our patients, but also cross-funds the rest of our services, which means we can employ more doctors and nurses than we would otherwise be able to, and that helps keep waiting times down.

We of course are still careful never to cost the NHS money unnecessarily, so we won't usually write prescriptions for medicines like paracetamol that you can buy over the counter.

Here are five things that our dispensary team would like you to know:

- Please use our monthly repeat ordering system. This will make sure your medicines are available when you need them, which is particularly important when there are public holidays like Christmas, Easter, etc. To do this, when you pick up your medication, tick on the right hand side of the script which medications you will require next month and put it in the white letter box.
- Please only order what you need. Wasted medicines cost the NHS £300 million every year. This is why we will only issue one month's worth of medicines at a time.
- Our new telephone system can put you straight through to a qualified dispenser, if you have any queries.
- Some medicines still suffer from post-Brexit supply issues, which have been exacerbated by COVID, which means that – on rare occasions – we are unable to order them in. We will let you know about any hold-ups as soon as we can.
- If you haven't used the repeat ordering system and need medication you can do this in person or over-the-phone, although it's easiest online. Please remember that the turnaround time for a routine order is three working days. That gives us time for a doctor to see the request, ensure it is safe and approve it, for the dispensers to order in the medicines and to prepare them for you.
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Often people forget to collect their medications. We will now text you if your prescription has not been collected for five weeks, so please make sure we have the right mobile number for you on file.

Wishing you a happy Christmas and New Year.