

Missed appointments – over 2500 in the last 18 months!

Each edition of the Newsletter has carried updates on the continuing story of missed appointments, also known as “DNAs” (Did Not Attend). In the eighteen months to the end of September this year, patients did not turn up for over 2500 appointments that they had made, some even made on the day of the appointment. These are appointments made to see a doctor, and advanced nurse practitioner or a nurse.

The problem is not just here in our Practice. Survey findings show that there are approximately 14 MILLION DNAs each year, in England alone, which is equivalent to more than 60,000 each day.

The question is what can Practices do to improve the situation? Some practices would text patients to remind them of an appointment and ask if the patient still wished to attend. This has all but come to an end after the Department of Health withdrew funding for SMS messaging, i.e. ‘texting’, in April.

Practices across England operate a range of sanctions for this, from gentle reminders to stern warnings. So, for example, some Practices send a warning letter to a patient who fails to turn up for an appointment they have made. If a patient is sent three of these letters, one of three things happens, depending on the Practice’s policy:

- The patient is warned that they may be refused permission to pre-book appointments if it happens again;
- The patient is warned that they may be removed from the Practice list if it happens again;
- In practices with the most severe policies, the patient is then automatically barred from pre-booking appointments or even removed from the Practice’s list although this does not appear to be carried out in cases of mental health or dementia.

It has been found that reducing the time that one can book ahead does help to reduce the number of DNAs – as our own Practice has found. We would be interested to know what you think about this and what you think is the best way forward. Let us know by dropping a note in the Suggestion Box in the Surgery and we will discuss the matter with the Doctors, on your behalf.

Information for this article was found on the website www.gponline.com, a website for healthcare professionals.

PUBLISHED BY THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Newsletter Editor: Mike Turner

You can read this and all previous issues of the Newsletter, together with the minutes of all the PPG meetings, on the practice website at: www.wolstantonmedicalcentre.nhs.uk/ppg



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Issue 10 October 2017

Progress – An article by Dr Ralphs

Having discussed several issues and some good news at a recent Patient Participation Group meeting I was asked to pen some comments and thoughts for this current newsletter.

The Good News

The graduation ceremonies at Keele University, during July, saw two doctors receiving awards.

Dr Edwards was awarded a PhD. This was gained after many years of study and endless weekends working on his research project. This is a tremendous achievement, most GPs and Doctors dare not start due to the time and effort and “brain power” needed.

Dr Fisher (he retired 12 years ago) was awarded an Honorary Doctor of the University in recognition for all his work with education and partnership working with Keele.

Dr Garvie and Dr Croft also attended the ceremony, names some of the older patients may remember!

The following is from the Keele web site:

Dr Michael Fisher, MB ChB, DCH, FRCGP—*Doctor of the University*



In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development and sustainment of primary care and general practice in the region and his significant contribution to the university.

As chairman and then Provost of the Midland Faculty of the Royal College of General Practitioners, Dr Michael Fisher served on the National Council RCGP and initiated the Medical Audit Group in Staffordshire.

He was also instrumental in establishing the Keele Research Practice Network facilitating the GP Academic Training Scheme linked to the MMedSci.

Continued over...

Wolstanton as a Research Practice

We are now lucky enough to have a practice with a number of very capable researchers including (in addition to Dr Edwards)

Dr Cottrell and Dr Clarson (both have a PhD), Dr Burton is studying towards a PhD and Dr Shapley has an MD (very similar to a PhD).

Wolstanton Medical Centre has a great tradition with research and education and some may remember Dr Alistair Ross (an ex-partner here) who was the first Senior Lecturer in General Practice at Keele University in 1979. This heritage and experience over decades allowed us to win a very prestigious award recently.

Keele University wanted a local practice to be an "Academic Research Practice" to work closely with them on research and implementing best practice. Dr Cottrell, Dr Edwards and Dr Ralphs presented a "vision" for this and we have been successful in being chosen as **the** Keele Research Practice. We are very excited about this and I think it will mean some great opportunities for our research doctors and better care for our patients. I will write more about this in future newsletters and you may see us in the press, who knows!

Part Time Doctors

One issue with our very capable research doctors is that they don't work 5 days a week. They spend some of their week at Keele undertaking research. So what does this mean for me the patient?

Well, if a patient wants to see a doctor they may not be available on the days when a patient wants to be seen. This is very frustrating for everyone and we are looking at ways of making this better for patients and the doctors alike. I know we have a great group of very capable doctors and wouldn't swap them for any others but the fact that they don't work 5 days a week may cause some loss of continuity of care i.e. seeing the same doctor every time.

We make sure our note keeping allows another doctor to know what your problem is when you next visit so rest assured we understand this is important.

New Doctor

We now have a new doctor! Dr Andrew Davy will be working one and a half days per week and has been with us since August. He is a locally trained doctor who harks from north of the border and continues a long line of GPs from Scotland including Dr Garvie and Dr Grindley, who both left a number of years ago and whom some may remember.

Dr Alwyn Ralphs

Surgery opening hours

Monday to Friday 8.00am—6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 11.00am

To book an appointment, please call **01782 627403**

The Practice Staff

DOCTORS

Dr Mark Shapley
Dr Alwyn Ralphs
Dr John Edwards
Dr Elizabeth Cottrell
Dr Sarah Pritchard
Dr Claire Burton
Dr Lorna Clarson
Dr Abi Nguyen (on Maternity leave)
Dr Shubha Hebbar
Dr Arun Aumeer
Dr Starla Yarde
Dr Andrew Davy

ADVANCED NURSE PRACTITIONERS

Vicky Shone RGN
Julie Broad RGN

NURSE PRACTITIONER

Julia Nixon RGN

Advanced Nurse Practitioners & Nurse Practitioners are highly experienced nurses who have undergone additional training to manage certain problems without the need to see a doctor. They are able to prescribe certain drugs, and are always able to seek further advice from one of the doctors immediately, if necessary.

PRACTICE NURSES

Helen Mountford
Caroline Higgins
Joanne Edwards

Appointments can be made with the Practice Nurses for assessment and treatment of minor ailments, cervical smears, dressings, ear syringes, immunisations, etc

HEALTH CARE ASSISTANT

Jo Parton

MIDWIFE

Claire Barlow (01782 672100 or 01782 672181)

DISTRICT NURSES

District Nurses can be contacted at 11am most weekdays at the Ryecroft Centre on 01782 427300.

HEALTH VISITORS

Katy Shone
Gill Hooper
Irene Cartlidge

The Health Visitors are based at Porthill Clinic and can be contacted on 01782 427420

PRACTICE MANAGER

Lynne Cooper

ASSISTANT PRACTICE MANAGER

Joanne Webb

RECEPTIONISTS

Angela (senior)
Janet
Karen
Charlene (part time)
Joy
Natalie
Rebecca
Natasha
Abbie

SECRETARIES

Amelia
Laura
Charlene (part time)

ADMINISTRATION

Debbie
June