

VERNON ST & THE LANES NEWSLETTER

COVID₁₉

A Difficult Few Months

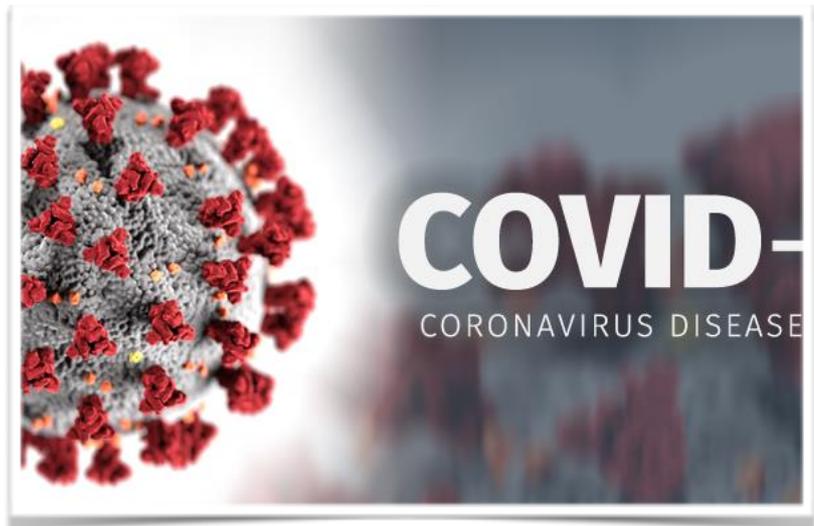
The Covid-19 pandemic has been a massive challenge for many of us and we have all seen many changes in the way that we live and work. We hope that this newsletter finds you and your family well and we send our sympathies for those of you have lost loved ones during this time.

Initial Changes

Back in March we had to rapidly adapt and move all of our consultations away from traditional face to face contacts and on to the phone. This was to protect staff and patients. We closed The Lanes branch surgery to clinical contacts as part of this process and locked the front door at Vernon Street to enable strict triage of patients coming in and out.

We want to thank you for your support during this time of huge changes, and for the many messages of support and well wishes that we have received –

**Welcome to our first newsletter.
We hope that this helps to keep you
more informed about what is going**



on in our practice.

Our ongoing response

As we have moved through the past few months this crisis has led us to re-think how we deliver care to our patients. It has seen big developments in IT, as well as the increased use of telephone consulting and contacts via the website. We can now offer secure video consulting and increased correspondence and transfer of documents like sick notes and blood forms via email and text which has allowed us to keep people safe at home unless clinically essential to see them in surgery. For those patients that we have needed to see for monitoring blood tests and checks we have set up an outdoor clinic in the carpark at Vernon Street which has worked really

New Ways of Accessing our services

Footfall – for those of you who are able, accessing the practice via the website for both medical and administrative problems will reduce demand on the phonenumber and improve accessibility. Waiting times will be reduced and your question can be answered more quickly by the most appropriate person. This service is available 24/7, and so you can submit your request at a time that is convenient for you rather than having to wait for the phonenumber to be open. It will be looked at and actioned by an appropriate member of the team and you will receive a reply back directly and an appointment booked if this is deemed necessary.

We appreciate that this is not going to be possible for everyone, but we would encourage all those with internet access to use this system.

Prescription Ordering – Again, for those who can access the internet, we would encourage all patients to sign up and manage their repeat medications online. For those who can't then all prescription requests should go through the Medicines Order Line (MOLS 0115 855 0260 from 8am - 4pm Mon – Fri or email ddccg.southMOLonlinerequests@nh.s.net with The name of your GP practice, your name, Your date of birth, your contact telephone number for a call back). All prescription requests should be made with at least 2 working days notice.

Text and email – you may be asked to send a photograph of a rash via secure text or email prior to or after your appointment to increase the clinical information available. We can also send out documents like sick notes, blood test forms, blood pressure monitoring charts and advice leaflets.

well (helped by the good weather that we have mostly been experiencing!)

Should a face to face appointment be required following a telephone consultation, these are being held at The Vernon only at this time. This enables us to maintain an extremely high level of infection control, ensuring the team and patients all remain safe.

The Future

We are now starting to think about what the future looks like, and how we can positively use what we have learned in the past few weeks whilst keeping patients and staff as safe as possible. We want to reduce the previous problems people had getting through on the phone and long waits for appointments. We want to continue to use the technology to help patients to get the right help that they need, from the right person. We have a fantastic practice team with a wealth of knowledge and experience, and we want to utilise all of those skills with clear supervision and oversight by the GP's. We must use our GP capacity wisely, especially for those patients with complex problems and those with multiple problems that need our knowledge and experience.

Meet the team - Clinical Staff

We are proud of our skilled multidisciplinary team at the surgery and are keen to ensure that patients have contact with the right clinician for their problem. Many concerns can be addressed by clinicians who are not GPs, and in turn this ensures that we can best use our GP capacity to manage the most complex and vulnerable of patients. It is important to note that **all clinical staff are supervised by GPs** and we work closely together as a team.

GPs: Dr Peter Iddon. Dr Caroline Williams, Dr Merryll Watkins, Dr Vickie Wright.

We are the senior clinical staff. Our experience and skills are best used for complex medical problems and for people with frailty and multiple long-term conditions. We supervise all of the clinical staff day to day.

GP registrars Dr Makarim Elshibly

Qualified doctors who are at the last stage of their specialist training to become independent GPs.

We remain committed to providing the best quality healthcare that we can for you, when you need us and want to thank you for your support during this time of huge changes, and for the many messages of support and well wishes that we have received – each and every one has been very much appreciated. We also want to acknowledge how amazing our staff have been in dealing with frequent and significant change.

With our best wishes as we move forward together,

The Partners, management team and staff at Vernon Street Medical Centre

Advanced Clinical Practitioners – Mike Barnwell, Lyn Bott.

Our ACPs are highly skilled and experienced practitioners with a wide scope of practice, providing high quality care. They can assess, investigate, diagnose, prescribe, refer and treat most clinical problems. They do not see children under 1 year.

Practice Pharmacist: Sharon Khella

Sharon deals with many of our medication related problems and as an experienced and highly trained pharmacist is best placed to advise on medication related issues. She also assists the nurses with the long-term condition management.

Practice Nurses: Lauren Tasker, Clare Hill, Rosie Duckels. Susan Du Toit

Our fantastic practice nurses provide a range of services for you. They undertake all long-term condition reviews such as diabetes, heart disease, asthma and COPD. Alongside this they perform smears, injections, dressings, spirometry, ECGs, vaccinations and travel advice.

Healthcare assistant Debbie Philips, **GP Assistant** Heidi Henshaw and **Phlebotomist** Kirsty Robinson

Our HCAs and clinical support staff complement and support all of the other team members and provide clinical tasks such as phlebotomy, ECGs, dressings and BP checks, initial diabetic checks and the NHS healthchecks for those aged 40+.