



Working together for better health

NEWSLETTER

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www.dronfieldhealth.co.uk

Telephones

We recognise that during busy periods it can be difficult to get through to us on the telephone.

At times our staff are used as a directory enquiries service by patients. They also have to deal with many enquiries about prescriptions that have gone astray at the chemists and chase up results for tests and appointments that have been organised by the hospital (and not us!).

All this ties up our telephone lines and makes it very frustrating if you are trying to get through to book an appointment.

However we do recognise that there is tremendous pressure on the appointment system.

We do listen to patients' comments and are making some changes to our telephone system which we hope will make it easier for you to get through.

Please remember that you can also book appointments and order prescriptions on-line.

We'd also ask that you enquire about test results for investigations ordered by us at the surgery after 10 a.m.

A difficult winter has been predicted for the NHS and we're all working extremely hard to offer our patients the best possible service—please work with us and use the NHS responsibly this winter.



Welcome

We welcome **Amie Hardwick** to the reception team.

Dr Lisa Ogbuagu joins us for four months as a GP registrar.

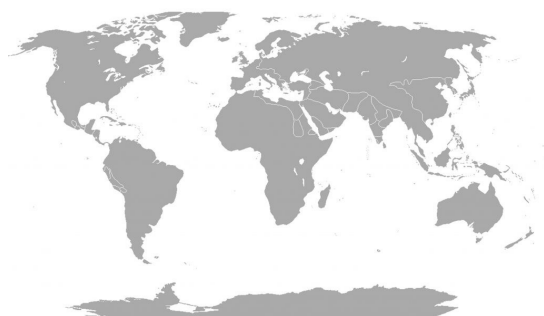
Travel Vaccines

Our practice nurses are fully trained to give you up-to-date travel advice.

We do ask you to fill in a brief travel questionnaire before your appointment with the nurses so that they can accurately plan your travel requirements .

Please be aware if you are travelling abroad in the near future that there are supply problems with some **Hepatitis** vaccines.

This manufacturing problem is clearly outwith our control and we have not been told when supplies are likely to become available.



Home Visits

Home visiting is one of the great strengths of General Practice in the UK and allows for continuity of care in the housebound or the terminally ill.

You may then be surprised to learn that we not infrequently receive home visit requests for patients only to be told not to visit on a certain day as they'll be at the hairdressers or visiting relatives !

In the time taken to visit a patient at home we can easily see 3 or 4 patients in surgery so please only request a home visit if you are genuinely unable to leave the house.



Bowel Cancer Screening

If detected at an early stage and before symptoms appear bowel cancer is easier to treat.

Bowel cancer is the third commonest cancer in the UK.

Being overweight, a low fibre diet and a family history put you at increased risk.

The NHS offers two types of bowel screening:-

- **Faecal Occult Blood (FOB)**

All men and women aged 60-74 are sent a home test kit every two years to collect a stool sample.

Unfortunately many patients don't return the kit and risk having an undetected bowel cancer.

If this test is positive you will be offered a colonoscopy.

If you're over 75 you can still be screened for bowel cancer by calling the Freephone helpline to request a FOB kit—0800 707 60 60

- **Bowel Scope Screening Test**

This is a one-off test now being offered to men and women at the age of 55.

It involves a thin flexible instrument looking inside the lower part of the bowel.

Again we would encourage you to attend for this invaluable test.

Unfortunately the UK is lagging behind in cancer detection and survival rates—bowel screening is one simple way to improve this.

Procedures of Limited Clinical Value

We're all aware of the financial pressures the NHS is currently under.

Our local Clinical Commissioning Group is obliged to remain within budget and has taken the difficult decision to stop funding certain procedures under the NHS. These are procedures that have been shown to have limited clinical value and therefore cannot be justified in the current economic climate.

Examples of such procedures include :-

- Varicose veins surgery
- Hernia and gall bladder surgery for patients with no symptoms
- Removal of benign skin lesions
- Injections for back pain
- Removal of ganglion cysts

As GPs we are therefore no longer able to refer patients for a variety of procedures so please do not be offended if your GP tells you they cannot offer you NHS treatment for certain conditions.

We are also now no longer able to prescribe a number of medications that similarly have been found to be of limited benefit.

It's certain we'll see more and more of this rationing unless NHS funding is increased significantly

