Issue 77 October 2023



STOKEWOOD SURGERY

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OLD ANCHOR SURGERY

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 Stokewood Surgery

Full information on the services and opening times of both sites can be found on our website: www.stokewood.co.uk



Latest News

Featured this month:

* List Closure
* Premises Update
* Staff Update
* Covid and Flu clinics
* Vaccinations
* Telephone System
* Car Parking



PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS

We do not take requests over the telephone.

Please use the NHS app or sign up for online access.

We accept emails to: WHCCG.stokewoodsurgery-prescriptions@nhs.net

If you request prescriptions by paper you will need to nominate a pharmacy where your medication will be prepared as we are no longer giving out paper prescriptions.

**List Closure**

Stokewood Surgery approached our commissioners, Hampshire & IOW ICB, to request a temporary list closure due to the delay in obtaining planning permission for temporary buildings. The request was made to protect the level of services available to our existing patient population until such time as we can increase our clinical staffing.

We were told on Monday that this request has now been approved and therefore, with the support of our ICB, Stokewood Surgery will not be taking on any new patients for the next three months. There is a possibility that this may be extended for a further two months. However, this is a temporary measure to cover the period until we have additional clinical rooms. We will, however, continue to register new babies, fostered or adopted children of existing patients and patients moving into care homes within our catchment area. We know many patients will be very relieved to hear that we have made this move to prevent added strain on our staff and patient services.

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**Premises Update**

We are very hopeful that planning permission will shortly be given for one Portakabin, containing two clinical consulting rooms. The Portakabin will be placed on the grass area behind the surgery. We had hoped initially to have two portakabins and four rooms but sadly the rising costs have required us to scale our plans back.

**Staff Update**

With the new Portakabin due to arrive in the Spring, Stokewood Surgery has appointed a new GP, Dr Tosin Akinbobuyi who will be joining us in March 2024. She is currently working in Chandlers Ford. We are also very pleased to welcome back Dr Areli Mendoza next month. Dr Leah Alexander will be staying on with until mid-January covering for Dr Lazell and Dr Richard Straughan will continue with us providing some much needed extra sessions.

We are however temporarily saying goodbye to Dr Chris Hooper this week, but he will be back in February, and we will also be saying goodbye to Dr Hannah Balhaj who commences maternity leave at the end of December.

Our practice nurse, Amanda Orme, is taking early retirement in December, and we know her patients, as well as the staff here, will miss her very much, but we have been very lucky to recruit two new practice nurses, Kate Partridge and Cat Mair, who will be joining us in early November, between them they will cover Amanda’s hours and some extra hours, increasing the number of practice nurse appointments we can offer. At the end of October we also welcomed Victoria Hingley, Advanced Nurse Practitioner.

Nonye Alozie, clinical pharmacist, who worked with us in 2022 returned in October and he will be assisting patients with hypertension and carrying out medication reviews.

We are also advertising (via Indeed) for new staff in our medical receptionist and admin teams. Posts are open to those seeing an apprenticeship via Boom Recruitment.

**Flu & Covid Clinics**

We have been advised that the categories for eligibility for the flu & Covid vaccination this year will be:

* Over 65s,
* patients aged 6 months to 64 in an at-risk group
* children aged 2 and 3.

The majority of patients eligible for vaccinations have now had them or been invited to book an appointment. If you have not had an invite and believe you are eligible, please contact the surgery to book your vaccination now. Housebound patients should also have been visited but if you have missed your visit, please contact the surgery to arrange this. Please do not call the Community Nurse Team, the Practice is responsible now for organising your vaccination.

We would like to thank all our patients who attended on our mass vaccination days, unfortunately due to some technical issues, we had longer queues than we would have liked, but thank you for your patience if you were stuck in the queue. We managed to give over 3,000 vaccinations in one day, giving a large proportion of patients protection from both flu and covid early on in the winter season.

**Vaccinations**

The practice offers a wide range of vaccinations including those offering protection against Meningitis (Men ACWY) for patients from age 17, Shingles for anyone aged 70 and over (you usually only need one dose of this vaccination in your lifetime) and pneumovax, protection against pneumonia, is available to everyone over 65, and again usually just one vaccination is required in your lifetime. You do not need to use eConsult to book an appointment for vaccinations, these can be booked via the NHS app or contact our reception team if you would like to any of these vaccinations.

Please speak to our team about any childhood vaccinations if you think you child has missed any.

**Telephone Service**

Following on from last month’s newsletter, we are gradually resolving a lot of the technical issues that plagued the new telephone system, with most callers now not experiencing the frustration of being cut off. We are told that the information on our last newsletter was very helpful regarding other ways to contact us so here it is again.

From the feedback received, here are some suggestions as to how we can cut lengthy call queues:

1. Use the NHS app to:
	* Cancel an unwanted appointment, even one not booked via the app
	* Check your blood test results
	* Book a blood test
	* Book a flu/covid vaccination
	* Access eConsult
	* Look up self help information
	* Request a repeat prescription and track it through the system
2. Complete an eConsult (during opening hours) if you require a GP appointment. This will be triaged by a GP.
3. Use the text link to book an appointment if you receive one
4. Avoid calling us between 8 am and 9 am unless you require a same day/acute appointment
5. Use our health pod for blood pressure readings and updating your smoking or health information
6. You do not need to ring and check your eConsult has arrived, all successfully submitted eConsults will send you an acknowledgement
7. Call after 2pm for results if you do not have a smartphone/NHS app
8. Check with the Pharmacy first to see if your prescription is ready
9. Use self-referral services (details on our website) – no GP appt required for:
	* Mental Health & Italk
	* Youth Mental Health services
	* Eye health & minor eye injuries service
	* Drugs and Alcohol services
	* Physiotherapy services
	* Sexual Health services
	* Referral for exercise
	* Smoking cessation advice
10. Please remain on the line if you are in the queue. If you ring off, you may get the engaged tone at your next attempt, extending the time it takes to get through to us.
11. Please avoid spending several minutes telling our staff how much you dislike the new telephone system, it prolongs the call and lengthens the wait for others in the queue.

And finally, please be kind to the call handler, they are not responsible for the issues with the phone system and we are all really are doing our very best to get the calls answered as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your patience.

**Cancer Screening Services**

During the height of the pandemic, a lot of patients missed out or delayed their screening appointments. If you missed an appointment for a cervical smear, mammography or bowel cancer, please contact the surgery. If you have the information sent to you from the screening services, please use the contact number supplied and they will help you with a new appointment or kit. Screening saves lives and every precaution to keep patients safe from covid-19 is being taken so there is no need to avoid attending your screening appointment.

**Car Parking**

With the return to more face-to-face appointments, the car park will be busier. Please walk or get a lift to the Practice if you can. Please park carefully and use only one space. Do not park in the covid parking bays unless directed to by a GP or use a disabled bay unless you have a disability.

Please do not park in the area marked for residents of Stokewood Close sheltered housing. If you are visiting someone in Stokewood Close, or are a resident, do not use the Stokewood car park spaces, not only are you **depriving a patient of a space** but these spaces are rented, **at considerable cost**, by the surgery, along with our premises.

If you park on any local roads near the Surgery, please be respectful of local residents and do not block driveways or paths/pavements. For visitors to Old Anchor branch site, please be aware that the Practice has only 6 parking spaces and the majority of spaces behind the surgery are private spaces for Old Anchor Flats. Thank you.

**eConsult – why is it offline when the Practice is shut?**

A consequence of ‘opting out’ of out of hours care is that a large sum of money is deducted from the surgery contract to pay for these services on behalf of our patients.  Unfortunately, we quickly found, as have many other surgeries, that not only were we paying for an ‘out of hours’ service for our patients but we were now getting a high proportion of the enquiries and work that was previously handled by pharmacies and out of hours services submitted to us via eConsult as patients avoided using the 111 service when we were closed.

It may be in future we are able to return to having it available out of hours again but at present, it will remain open only during our contracted opening hours.