

# HEALTHY TIMES

The Newsletter for Faringdon's  
**White Horse Medical Practice**

**Autumn 2016**



## News items

Inspection report	p2
New eye care scheme	p2
Community Directory	p4
Memory Support Group	p4

## Surgery Updates

Online bookings	p2
Double length appointments	p3
Hearing clinic	p4
Ear wax treatment	p4

## Your Health

Emergencies check-list	p3
Flu jab dates	p4
NHS ★★★★★	p4

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## Welcome to our Autumn newsletter

Thanks for taking time to read this newsletter. The flu season is almost upon us again and we have plenty of vaccine and lots of appointments available so, if you're eligible, please make an appointment. We are particularly keen to improve protection for our 'at risk' under 65 year olds, so please see the article on page 4 for information on why it's important that patients in these groups are vaccinated every year.

### News update

It has been another very busy six months. Disappointingly, our plans to improve the building continue to be held up by both NHS and County confusion over funding. We hope to have a decision in the near future and will continue to work behind the scenes to get the approval required. In the meantime we're very grateful to everyone, staff included, for their patience while we wait for work to start.

We have recently welcomed some new members of staff. Amy Jones is now in our admin team and Debbie Warwick has joined as a research nurse. Dr Anne Davies will be back at the Practice in November, after the birth of her son.

The telephone appointments call-back (triage) system is working very well and has hugely reduced the number of unnecessary emergency appointments. The change continues to free up valuable slots for advance bookings – there's more on pages 2 and 3.

### Inspections and surveys

In our last newsletter, we said that we had just had our CQC inspection. The report, published in April, gave the Practice a very welcome rating of 'Good' overall and, in a couple of areas, we were delighted to be rated as 'Outstanding'. Please see page 2 for more information on this significant formal inspection of us and our work.

And, just in July, we were glowing with pleasure at our scores in the latest National GPs survey\*. You gave our nurses approval ratings well ahead of the national averages and our doctors were up to or ahead of those figures for the effectiveness of your consultations.

But we didn't do well enough with delays in the waiting room, for which we're very sorry and have had a good look at why we seem to be dragging our feet there. You'll see an article on page 3 about booking longer appointments for complex issues and we think this is one of the major causes for waiting room delays. If we schedule in 15 patients for the standard 10 minute slot and then find that the first three actually needed nearly 20 minutes each for their consultations, then the whole morning's list has gone awry. We are happy for patients with major concerns to book double appointments so everything can be covered thoroughly. And that way, our plans for the morning will run like clockwork!

Our own patient survey will be going live in September so please look out for a copy in reception or on our website and fill it in. Your responses are vital to enable us to improve.

\* Full results at

<https://gp-patient.co.uk/practices/K84051>

*Dr Anna Douglas  
Dr Gavin Bartholomew  
Dr Simon Cartwright*

## Health Centre achieves 5 out of 5 'Good' ratings on official inspection

In our Spring issue we mentioned that we had just been inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We got their full report in April and here's a summary of the findings.

The government's four independent inspectors (think Ofsted+ for GPs) awarded the White Horse Medical Practice scores of 'Good' on all five of their key service measures: Safety, Effectiveness, Caring, Responsiveness and Leadership. Even better was a rating of 'Outstanding' – a top 4% score – for three significant areas; encouraging and supporting patients to lead healthier lives, proactively supporting breast feeding mothers and excellence in health research.

The CQC report is available here [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk) and we are keen for patients to read the findings as they give such an excellent insight into the breadth and depth of work that goes into providing for the town's health needs. Dr Anna Douglas, senior partner at the Practice, said, "We are immensely proud to have been awarded such a good CQC report. It rewards all of our team for their outstanding skill and dedication and their care towards all of our patients. It is particularly pleasing to see so many positive comments from our patients in the report."

Modern healthcare has become a highly complex business and the inspectors were especially impressed with the effective multi-disciplinary work they reported on and the positive ratings they gave to all six of the key patient categories.

Around 8 out of 10 GP practices achieve a 'Good' rating like ours, which means "the service is performing well and meeting our expectations". Dr Douglas added that she was delighted to read in the report "We found there was good staff morale in the practice, with high levels of team spirit and motivation. People think that staff go the extra mile and the care they receive exceeds expectations." She added, "Now all we need to do, with the help of our patients, is make our town's health service even better."

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### Fast-track eye care

It's great to be able to report on an excellent new direct eye-care service set up and funded by the NHS in Oxfordshire. You can now book yourself an appointment, by phone, with a local participating optician for a whole range of minor eye conditions (though not cataracts, diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma). In the same way that you wouldn't dream of going to the doctor with toothache because it's the dentist who is the tooth specialist, this new service means you can go straight to the specially-trained eye expert with their ophthalmological equipment, rather than having to wait to see the doctor to refer you to the eye hospital, as at present.

This patient-focused service means the optician will call you back within 4 hours of you ringing them, to arrange to see you within 2 days, advise you see your doctor first or refer you immediately to hospital if it's an emergency. And if your local optician can't fit you in they'll find a

local alternative for you. You'll even get a follow-up appointment or phone call to ensure all is now well with your eyes.

You can download a leaflet here <http://www.oxfordshireloc.org.uk/public/minor/> or ask for one at the Surgery, or a participating optician. Please note that this service does not cover eye tests, it is solely for medical conditions. Local participating opticians include; Haine & Smith in Faringdon, Boots, Scrivens, Campbells, Robert Stanley and Specsavers in Wantage and many optician practices in Abingdon, Carterton, Witney and across Oxford.

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### Book your next appointment online. It's easy as 1-2-3!

Over 1,000 of our patients are already reaping the benefits of booking their appointments online or requesting a repeat prescription. With more of our services and information moving to the web, now's a good time to give our system a try – and if it's not for you, then you can switch back to your present routine without any issues.

Our online service is provided by Patient Access, where over 300,000 people like you are managing their health more effectively by using their online resources. But first you have to register. You can do that in Reception or online but, either way, we will have to see an item of personal ID at some point to complete your registration.

Here are the three clicks (using a dummy account) that will get you to our appointments screen.

#### Click 1.

This icon is on our [whmp.co.uk](http://whmp.co.uk) website home page. Click it to get into Patient Access.



#### Click 2.

When you register we'll give you a User ID and Password. Simply enter them here and Sign in.

A screenshot of a web form titled "Sign in" with a "? Help" link. It contains fields for "User ID" (with a "Get my user ID" link) and "Password". Below the fields are links for "I forgot my user ID or password." and a checkbox for "Remember my user ID" with a help icon. A red "Sign in" button is at the bottom.

#### Click 3.

You'll then see a management screen where you can click to book an appointment, order a repeat prescription, update your account and, shortly to be fully available, view your medical records with us. For now, just click the *Book an appointment* link

31 Appointments		Book an appointment
Date	Time	Action

And here you will see all the appointments available for all the doctors. Simply click the most convenient one and follow the on-screen instructions.

## Thursday 15th September 2016

**BLUE, Emma (Dr)**  
(General Medical Practitioner)  
**DAY GP SESSION**  
EMIS Demonstration GP  
Organisation

09:00	09:10	09:20
09:30	09:40	09:50
10:00	10:10	10:20
10:30	10:40	10:50

### Emergency!

We all know that A&E Depts are often over-stretched, so where do you go when there's an emergency? Not to our Surgery here in Faringdon, please. We unfortunately have no facilities for handling medical emergencies.

**1. NHS111** This is the 24/7, year-round free landline and mobiles service for health advice. You'll get through to a team of fully trained call advisers, supported by experienced doctors. If they think you need an ambulance they'll call one for you.

Ring 111 if you need medical help fast but don't know if it's an emergency. Or call them if it's the evening or weekend when we're closed. Or if you need health information or reassurance about what to do next.

### 2. Minor Injuries Units

These walk-in units in Abingdon, Swindon and Witney are there to treat non life-threatening minor injuries such as: sprains and strains, broken bones, traumatic wound infections, minor burns and scalds, minor head injuries, insect and animal bites, minor eye injuries and injuries to the back, shoulder and chest. You should go to an A&E Dept for anything else (see below).

Abingdon Community Hospital, Marcham Road, Abingdon OX14 1AG. Open 7 days from 1000 to 2230.  
Tel: 01865 903476

Swindon Health Centre, Carfax Street, Swindon SN1 1ED Open 7 days. M-F 0700 to 2000. S-S 0800-2000  
Tel: 01793 646466

Swindon Urgent Care Centre Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Road, Swindon SN3 6BB  
Open 24/7 Tel: 01793 604020

Witney Community Hospital, Welch Way, Witney OX28 6JJ Open 7 days from 1000 to 2230 Tel: 01865 903841

**3. Accident & Emergency** For life threatening conditions, call 999. Emergency services are very busy. You should only go if you are very badly hurt or if you become very seriously ill (life-threatening). This would include: life threatening choking, chest pain, blacking out, severe blood loss or severe breathing difficulty.

Banbury: Horton General Hospital, Oxford Rd, Banbury OX16 9AL

Oxford: John Radcliffe Hospital, Headley Way, Oxford OX3 9DU

Reading: Royal Berkshire Hospital, Craven Rd, Reading RG1 5AN

Swindon: Great Western Hospital, Marlborough Rd, Swindon SN3 6BB

### How to get more time with your doctor

Visiting the surgery can be stressful enough as it is without you feeling, as you leave, that you never really got to the bottom of your problem or you didn't quite understand the treatment prescribed. We hope this short article will help. There's much more good info on the NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx)

The most obvious way to get more time with your doctor is to book a double appointment. Clearly the doctors don't have time for a 20 minute consultation for everyday or follow-up visits but, if you're concerned that there's something seriously wrong with you, or that you have multiple issues, we'd much rather you booked a double appointment so the doctor can investigate thoroughly and give you the best advice.

The other way to make a 10 minute slot worth 15 minutes is to prepare for the appointment so you know exactly what you want to say and have a clear idea of what you want to know. Our doctors often say that they nearly always find they can give the best help to those patients who have helped themselves by preparing for their visit. Here are a few tips from them:

1. Write down your two or three most important questions and practice saying them.
2. Write down details of your symptoms, including when they started and what makes them better or worse. Keep it simple but tell the full story. Your words are crucial to the doctor's diagnosis.
3. Don't be afraid to ask if you don't understand. For example, 'Can you say that again? I still don't understand.'
4. Write down any important instructions.
5. Check you've covered everything on your list. And understood it.
6. Make sure you know what should happen next – and when. Write it down.
7. Please ask a friend or family member to come with you, if you like. They can also make notes for you.

And finally, if the doctor will need to see your toes or tummy please dress appropriately. Taking 5 minutes to undress wastes so much precious time.

## Flu jabs for the long-term poorly and over 65s

Everyone knows that flu jabs are for pensioners. Right. But they're even more important for people, of all ages, with long-term debilitating conditions. So if you, or someone you know, has asthma, a heart or liver disease, diabetes or any weakened immune system conditions you must, must come along to one of our quick-jab flu clinics. Phone 01367 242 388 now to book:

Saturdays: October 1st and 8th. November 5th.  
Monday: October 10th  
Tuesday: October 11th  
Wednesday: October 12th

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## Local Community Info website

Age UK in Oxfordshire run an invaluable website covering a wide range of community-focussed activities in our area. A quick search found 45 different activities related to the Faringdon area; from carers support, through lunch groups to libraries and choirs. There are 15 categories of information to help refine your search. The Directory is at [www.communitynetworkdirectory.org.uk](http://www.communitynetworkdirectory.org.uk) or you can phone 0345 450 1276

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## Faringdon's Memory Support Group

The new Faringdon Memory Support Group has been running very successfully through the summer in its new home at the Pump House and there's plenty of space available for new members. The friendly group is supervised by an Age UK Advisor and crafts, music and reminiscence therapy are among the regular activities. The problems of living with dementia are also covered.

This free group meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month. Refreshments are provided and parking permits can be arranged. Please phone Gillian Fishleigh on 07557 430 879 for more information and to book a place.

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## Hearing Clinic ramps up to fortnightly

This time last year we announced a new monthly Hearing Clinic at our Surgery. This has proved so successful that it now takes place fortnightly. Anyone with concerns about their hearing should first ask their doctor to be referred to the Clinic. You will then get a 'Choose and Book' appointment letter, including Faringdon as one of the venues.

Once you have been tested the specialist can, if necessary, advise on the fitting of an appropriate hearing aid. Or, if circumstances demand, she can refer you on to a Consultant.

Even with two clinics a month, this service is really popular, so please allow plenty of time to get a booking.

What very good news that an extra facility for Faringdon patients, taking place at the Surgery, should prove so popular, so quickly. Well done the Clinician, as well as the Practice!

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## When the NHS works well ...

*A patient sent us this interesting account of their recent multiple emergency treatments.*

"There is a lot of criticism of the NHS these days, so it is good to report two instance of exemplary recent treatment. Earlier this year I hit my head when falling from my loft ladder. I was unconscious for about 40 minutes and came to as the ambulance medics carried me downstairs. I was assessed in the ambulance and taken to the JR Hospital where I was admitted to A&E without delay.

I had a chest X-ray in A&E and was later taken for a CT scan of my brain. Thankfully, no lasting injuries were revealed. Before I went home, staff made an appointment for me at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre the following day for stitches to my lower lip, which I had badly gashed in the fall. My lip was expertly stitched and there is no visible scarring.

But, about 10 days later, I became aware that something was wrong with my right leg, where I'd previously had a deep vein thrombosis. At 08:30 am, I rang Faringdon Medical Centre, described my symptoms and was told that a triage nurse would call back within an hour – actually, it was 10 minutes and within the hour I was seen by the duty doctor. He made an appointment for me at the Churchill Hospital the very same afternoon. After an ultrasound scan and several other checks, DVT was confirmed and I was prescribed Apixaban, a new drug now used instead of Warfarin. So, thanks to quick and expert NHS help, I am fit and active again – and promise to be more careful on ladders!"

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## Ear wax removal

Our nurses have asked us to remind patients booked in for ear wax treatment that they must pre-treat their ear/s with olive oil for two weeks before their appointment. This will soften the wax so it can be removed safely. Medical grade olive oil is available from chemists in a convenient dropper pack.

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*The Patient Participation Group and White Horse Medical Practice take great care to ensure that information in this newsletter is accurate, however we advise patients to check any external contacts or sources themselves to confirm the details.*

## White Horse Medical Practice

Faringdon Medical Centre, Volunteer Way, Faringdon SN7 7YU 01367 242 388 [www.whmp.co.uk](http://www.whmp.co.uk)

**PPG** The Faringdon Patient Participation Group works with the Practice to improve local health services and patients' knowledge of them. If you would like more info on anything in this newsletter or to join the Group, please contact us, either through [www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk](http://www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk) or by asking at the Medical Centre.