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STOKEWOOD 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:

* Premises Update
* Staff Update
* Covid and Flu clinics
* GP Triage/eConsult
* Telephone System
* Cancer Screening Appointments
* 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.

Portakabin

We are delighted to announce that following a very long wait, due to funding, planning and installation delays, we now have a portakabin on site at Stokewood Surgery. The portakabin arrived in March, along with a new GP, but due to issues obtaining the IT kit we needed has only just come into operation. Patients booked in to see a clinician in these rooms will be asked to wait in our main waiting room. The rooms are named P1 and P2 and are accessed off our main corridor and located behind the main surgery building. It is well signposted and information on access will be displayed on the calling board and a short video on the route to take will be available on our facebook page soon.

We have received a lot of support from Eastleigh Borough Council with this project and the ICB who have supported us in applying for the development funds made available by EBC to get these in. Unfortunately we didn’t have enough funding for 2 portakabins (4 rooms) as unavoidable delays meant the costs had risen significantly since we first put in a request for additional rooms back in March 2022.

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**Staff Update**

It has been a long time since our last newsletter so there have been a number of staffing changes in that time. We are delighted that Dr Natalie Sharp joined up in January holding 4 clinics a week but as of August, upped to 7 clinics per week. In March Dr Tosin Akinbobuyi joined us working 5 clinics per week. We have been very well supported by Dr Richard Straughan covering Dr Lazell’s maternity leave. She has now returned, as of September, working 3 clinics per week and Dr Straughan will be returning in December to cover Dr Lyons maternity leave. As a training practice we have qualified doctors who are training to become GPs and we are delighted to welcome back Dr Chris Hooper, after a brief period working away, and in January Dr Hannah Balhaj will be returning after maternity leave. We also welcomed Dr Shauib Rabbani to the team earlier this year.

There is clearly something in the water here at Stokewood Surgery as we are also delighted to announce the safe arrival of a baby boy to Michelle, our healthcare assistant and a baby girl was safely delivered to our practice nurse Cat Mair. Danielle Lewis joined our healthcare assistant team in May this year.

In addition to our new clinical staff we also welcomed Emma (in reception), Jeanette and Shanice in admin and Margaret who joined our PA/Med Sec team in March.

 **Flu & Covid Clinics**

The Government/NHS England has stated that we cannot start the NHS vaccination program until 3rd October this year, this is to ensure good coverage and maximum protection during the winter months. 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 will be receiving a visit from our community nurse team in October. Please do not call the Community Nurse Team or the Practice until at least mid-October about vaccinations for housebound patients to give us time to work through the list, we have over 80 house bound patients to visit and 240 patients in nursing and care homes to do during October. Thank you for your patience.

In order to avoid long queues and prolonged waits, we kindly ask patients to arrive no earlier than 15 minutes before their appointment time. We will be asking patients who arrive too early to wait outside the queue so that those attending at the correct time are not delayed. There are enough vaccines for everyone booked and enough people vaccinating to make this run on time if we don’t have 200+ patients arriving in the time slot allocated to 50 patients. Please park away from the surgery and if possible avoid driving to your vaccination appointment so that car park spaces are available for those with mobility issues and for acutely unwell patients attending the duty team.

Routine services will be suspended on flu vaccination days. Our first clinic is on 3rd October.

**Vaccinations**

The practice is now offering eligible patients the RSV vaccination. This offers protection again the respiratory syncytial virus. To find our more about this virus, which gives symptoms similar to those of a cold, click on this link [Your guide to the RSV vaccine for older adults - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv-vaccination-for-older-adults/your-guide-to-the-rsv-vaccine-for-older-adults).

You do not need to contact the surgery unless you have received an offer to book an appointment. We will be in touch with groups of patients as soon as they become eligible and we have the vaccine available.

We also offer 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.

Appointments for childhood immunisations are now available on some Saturdays during the extended hours service running out of Stokewood Surgery.

Travel Immunisations are only available on Saturdays during our extended hours service at Stokewood Surgery.

**GP Triage / eConsult**

In January we launched a new system of total GP triage. This means that every request, whether submitted by eConsult or from a telephone call (which requires the caller to go through the form instead) is submitted to our triaging GP. These are looked at ‘live’ eg on the day they arrive and often within an hour of arriving. The GP will assess the request for clinical priority and the best person to see the patient with this condition. Where patients have access to the internet or smartphone, please use this system to contact us for an appointment, calling in is not a short cut and we need to keep the lines free for patients excluded from the online system for any reason, including our elderly and vulnerable patients. However, relatives and friends can complete an eConsult on behalf of a patient and list your mobile and/or email address as the contact.

The feedback has been very good with patients commenting on how quickly they have received a response and many saying they have been booked in with an appointment within hours. The routine wait times were beginning to reduce when we suffered high sickness levels amongst our staff meant cancellations of routine clinics and unfortunately this continues to be the case currently. We are working very hard to put back routine clinics and get patients in.

Online requests cannot be taken outside surgery hours as there are safety issues around patients not seeking help from the out of hours services, the funding for which is deducted from every practice who does not offer an out of hours services, when the practice is shut. Stokewood does offer extended hours services in the evenings and Saturdays but these can only be booked via Stokewood Surgery during our normal opening hours. The extended hours service is supplied by Mid-Hampshire Healthcare.

 **Telephone Service**

We are delighted to announce that we will be moving to a new telephone service provider from October 9th. The system put in last summer was unpopular with both patients and staff, with calls being cut off and the loss of the queue number position amongst the main issues causing frustration.

The surgery has been fully rewired and we have been assured we should not have these issues with the new system. The queue number system will be back. Once there are 10 calls in the queue, patients will be offered an automated call back. Once the number of callers (including those now queuing virtually due to a call back offer) reaches 20, the system will show the lines as engaged. As soon as the call numbers drop the lines will be available once. Our new live online triage system has meant patients get a very swift response by using eConsult via the website or NHS app (the app version is much shorter) with most patients needing a same day appointment being contacted with a couple of hours at most. No holding on the phone required! If all patients who have the internet or a smartphone used this system, the telephone queues would be considerably shorter and more available to our patients who cannot use this technology. The reception team have to take every caller who wants a GP appointment through this system so calling us instead of filling in a form is not a short cut.

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 those 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 the day it arrives.
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, after 6 minutes or when number 10 in the queue you will be offered a call back. 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. Avoid calling us for routine services or queries before 11 am.

**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.