

# Old Coulsdon Medical Practice **Tel: 0844 815 1924**

## Newsletter June 2010

Welcome to this edition of the quarterly newsletter. Our aim through the newsletter is to keep our patients up-to-date on what is happening at the practice including any new initiatives or changes to the services we provide. We hope that you find the contents of the newsletter informative and would welcome any comments suggestions or contributions that you may have. Please feel free to contact Richard Frier, the practice manager

### **Drs Randle and Harcourt**

All patients can now choose to have Dr Randle or Dr Harcourt as their usual GP. Dr Randle is available on a Monday Tuesday Thursday and Friday. Dr Harcourt is available on a Wednesday and Friday morning only. If you would like one of these GPs to become your usual GP please enquire at the reception desk.

### **Surgery Closed**

The surgery will close at 1:00 pm on the following days to enable the GPs to undertake their continuing professional development .  
**Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> June**  
**Wed 15<sup>th</sup> September**  
**Wed 10<sup>th</sup> November**

### **Disabled Access**

If you are disabled or elderly and have difficulty entering the surgery we would like to point out that there is an entry system located to the left of the front door which you can ring. A receptionist will answer the buzzer and speak to you. If you advise the receptionist you would like assistance they will come and help you. Please remember if you need assistance entering or leaving the building or using the lift please ask we are here to help you!

### **We are changing the Open Surgery**

From **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> May** you are now able to book an appointment in advance (not on the day) between 8:30am – 11:00am

We will release a number of urgent slots on the morning for those patients who feel the nature of their illness is urgent and that they need to be seen that morning. You will not always have the choice of GP if we are busy.

This means you will no longer have to come to the open surgery unless you feel that due to the nature of your illness you must be seen that morning. Open surgery should not be used for reviews or routine matters.

If you feel that you need to be seen on the day the system has not changed and you have two options. If you are booking-in in person you must do so by 10:00am or you can ring between 8:30am–9:30am and you will be given an approximate time to be seen by a GP. We cannot guarantee you will be able to see your usual GP

Please take this into consideration when contacting the surgery we are trying to alleviate some of the pressure on the open surgery and avoid long waits. This will be on a trial basis until we are able to review the new system.

Thank you for your co-operation during this transitional period

### **Breast screening – Are you up to date?**

The surgery has recently been contacted by the South West London Breast Screening Programme (SWLBSP). There is concern that not all women eligible for screening are attending.

Breast screening on the NHS began in 1988. It aims to invite all women aged 50 - 70 years for breast screening once every three years. Nationally the programme screens 2 million women each year and diagnoses about 16,500 breast cancers annually. We would like to encourage all of our patients to attend.

Women over 70 are encouraged to make their own appointment by contacting the breast screening service. Some patients are anxious about mammograms. A mammogram may be uncomfortable but only lasts a few moments. Women with pacemakers or breast implants should still attend for screening.

The breast screening is not managed by the practice and if you have any questions please direct them to SWLBSP on **020 8725 2723** or **via the website** [www.swlbreastscreening.co.uk](http://www.swlbreastscreening.co.uk)

### **Text Messaging - SMS**

In the last edition of the new letter we advised that we were going to text those patients who have a booked appointment at the practice a reminder of their appointment time. Due to technical problems the launch of this service has been delayed until the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. One of the problems we have discovered is that we only hold mobile numbers for about 20% of the patients currently registered with the practice. Could patients please help us by contacting the surgery and providing your current mobile number and making sure you advise us should the number change. We plan to send a text to patients over the age of 18 who have a booked appointment at least 48 hours prior to the appointment time. The text will show the date and time of the appointment and will indicate that it is from the Old Coulsdon Medical Practice. If you don't want to receive these text reminders please complete the form at reception. If you are under 18 and would like to receive a text reminder please contact reception in order for us to update our records.

### **Out of Hours**

**Croydoc : 0845 603 8517 NHS Direct : 0845 4647 Walk in Centre : 020 8714 2888 Minor Injuries Unit : 020 8251 7225**

## The Travel Clinic

**With the holiday season fast approaching we thought that we would remind you about the travel clinic we operate at the practice and would advise you to book early if you feel you require vaccinations**

The travel clinic is for those patients going on holidays for which travel vaccinations are necessary. The clinic runs on a Tuesday evening between 3.30 - 6.30pm. If you are going on an extended multi-stop overseas, you will need to contact the practice at least six- eight weeks prior to travel and complete a form and book an appointment. If you are going on a short holiday you need to contact the practice at least four- six weeks prior to travel and book an appointment in the clinic to allow time for your course of vaccinations.

It is recommended that you contact the practice at your earliest convenience as the clinic appointments are allocated on first-come first-served basis. When you ring please advise the reception on the places you are visiting and the date of travel. If we have appointments available, a 20-minute appointment will be made for you in this clinic. At the clinic the nurse will advise you what is recommended and give you your vaccinations. Please be aware not all vaccinations are available under the NHS and there may be a charge. We are currently reviewing what is covered by the NHS and what is not (for example Yellow fever and Malaria are not available under the NHS). This clinic will be on a first-come first-served basis and although we try our best to accommodate patients this is not always possible. If appointments are not available you may be referred to a private clinic, so please contact us early.

## Nothing to do with Hay or Fevers!

Hay fever is also known as seasonal allergic rhinitis and is very common. It seems to be on the increase. Hay fever usually occurs during early spring and late summer, depending on which pollens you are allergic to. The pollens most likely to cause problems in early spring are from trees. Grasses pollinate during mid summer and in late summer different type of weeds can sometimes become a problem.

**Symptoms are:** Frequent sneezing, runny or blocked nose, itchy or watery eyes, and an itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears.

**What can I do about it?** The best way is by avoiding the trigger substance of pollen but this can be very difficult to do. A variety of hay fever treatments are available including tablets, nasal sprays and eye drops. Many of these are available to purchase over-the-counter at your local pharmacy for less than the cost of a prescription. They will be able to advise you on which treatments are the best for you. Starting these treatments early and taking every single day will be more beneficial especially the steroid nasal sprays which are very effective.

## Cryotherapy Clinic

The Cryo clinic runs every three weeks. Many patients often have to attend more than once which means clinics get filled up months in advance. Please be aware of this

### General Information

**Appointments can be made on 0844 815 1924**

PM appointments can be booked up to 10 weeks in advance

AM appointments that can only be booked a week in advance.

8:00am – 6:30pm by phone Or  
8:00am– 6:45pm in person Monday to Friday

### Open Surgery

8:00am – 10:00am(in person) Monday - Friday

You must book in, in person at the reception desk by 10:00am or you can ring between 8:30-9:30am to be allocated a slot on the day .

**Test results** - We request that patients ring for test results after 10:00am Monday – Friday

### Prescriptions

Requests for repeats can be made in person, on-line or faxed to 0844 815 1925.

**Please allow 2 full working days for us to process your request.**

**Please note we do not accept requests for prescriptions over the telephone.**

## Staff News

**Nurse Hannah** has decided not to return to the practice once her maternity leave finishes and we would like to wish her well in her future.

**Nurse Donna** who is currently covering for nurse Hannah has accepted the post of practice nurse and will replace nurse Hannah from the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010.

**Dr Sonia Kumar** will complete her training year at the practice on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2010. It has been a pleasure to have Dr Kumar with us for her training and we would like to wish her well in her career as a GP.

**Dr Jessica Liyanage** will return to the practice in the first week of August to continue her training in General Practice. She has spent the last 6 months based at Mayday Healthcare.

## Out of Hours

**Croydoc : Tel 0845 603 8517**

**NHS Direct : Tel 0845 4647**

**Walk in Centre : 020 8714 2888**

**Minor Injuries Unit : 020 8251 7225  
(New Addington )**