

FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY NEWS

The Fordingbridge Surgery Newsletter - Autumn 2023

Working in partnership with all our patients, providing high quality care in a professional, safe and friendly manner



GREETINGS TO ALL OUR PATIENTS FROM FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

from Practice Manager, Michelle Raymond

For the staff at Fordingbridge Surgery, the start of autumn is always marked by our busy 'flu vaccination season. For this year, today is the first of our two large Saturday clinics and we are expecting over 1200 patients to be seen and vaccinated with both 'flu and covid vaccinations. We are blessed to have such a wonderful team of skilled and motivated staff, both front line and behind the scenes, who work incredibly hard making these clinics run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

We continue to be extremely busy at the surgery, seeing patients for both face to face and telephone appointments. We have seen an increase in the number of patients successfully using 'Anima' our online consultation service. Please see the article in the newsletter which highlights the many benefits of this electronic system, and frees up our busy telephone lines for those patients who are unable to access online services.

If you have not done so already, we invite you to take a look at our new surgery website www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk which has lots of useful information and is easier to view and navigate. We have noticed that patients who do not attend (DNA) booked appointments has sadly increased in recent months, which results in wasted appointments and contributes to longer wait times for other patients. Please help us to help you and let us know if you wish to cancel your appointment, preferably by accessing the surgery website.

We hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter, Michelle Raymond

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CORONATION CELEBRATION

We all enjoyed a day of celebration for the coronation of King Charles III, starting with a spread of delicious bakes at coffee time, and ending the day with Pimms and a Barbecue, in the staff garden. Our dress down theme for the day was patriotic red, white and blue

CAREERS FAIR

Members of the Administration Team and the Nurse Team joined the Practice Manager and representatives from universities, Armed Services, Fire Service, and hospitals for a day at Burgate School's careers fair.

We had a great time talking to the enthusiastic students about roles and careers in general practice and the wider NHS. We encouraged them to meet our 'training arm' which is used to train phlebotomists to take blood samples. The students came up with some very inventive names for the arm! We hope we have inspired the students to consider careers in health care.



STAFF WALKS

We have enjoyed a variety of weekly local walks during the spring and summer to improve our physical and mental well being.

For information on local walks that you can join, please visit the Community First website <https://www.cfirst.org.uk/wellbeing/health-walks/>

You can join also the Parkruns at Moors Valley - walk, jog, run or even volunteer with some of our surgery staff <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/moorsvalley/>

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

The surgery team have joined in this year with the Macmillan Cancer Support coffee morning. We brought in cakes to share and took the opportunity to dress down in the Macmillan green and purple colours. See our photo on the cover of the newsletter!

So far we have raised over £50. To donate, please use the QR code





FRIENDS OF FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

We are hugely grateful to our fabulous team of volunteers who enthusiastically help us by directing patients during the 'flu/covid clinics and raise funds for our Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery Charity.

If you would like to join our team of volunteers, to help us with future clinics and fundraising events, then please contact our Friends group via fofs.ppg@nhs.net

The Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery raise funds for much needed equipment and services which are not provided by the NHS, such as 24 hour blood pressure monitor, doppler machine, bereavement counselling service, ECG machine. To donate to FOFS please use the QR code, or contact the Treasurer via fofs.ppg@nhs.net

To donate £5, please use the QR code



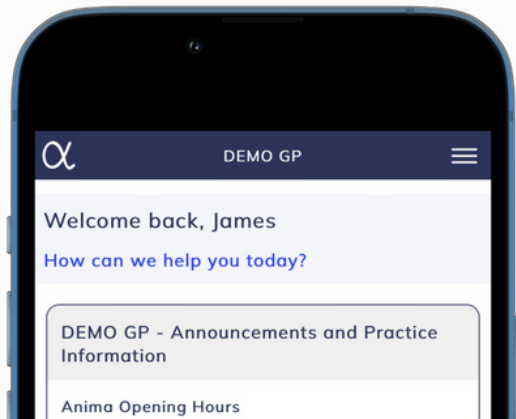
ONLINE SERVICE: NEW WEBSITE

We have recently updated our website and we hope you will visit fordingbridgegps.co.uk for up to date information on our services.

New patients can join the practice, existing patients can request medication and sick notes, cancel appointments and view the variety of self referrals that are available, which include eye problems, audiology, physiotherapy, insomnia support, weight loss and lots more - keep checking as the options are growing!



ONLINE CONSULTATION SERVICE: ANIMA



As part of our NHS contract, we are required to offer an online consultation service.

Anima has some great benefits for patients:

- Beat the phone queue
- You can request a consultation or message the surgery from 6am
- All Animas are reviewed by a senior doctor by the end of the next working day
- Rapid and safe response to your query
- May be managed without the need for an appointment
- Signposted to the most appropriate service
- Make sure you see the right professional at the right time

Follow the link from our website home page [/www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk/](http://www.fordingbridgegps.co.uk/)

ONLINE SERVICE: HEALTHIER TOGETHER

Download the Healthier Together app or visit the website <https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/>

- For 0-18
- Young people
- Pregnant women
- Clear information on common illnesses
- Parents are clearly signposted to appropriate healthcare services when required



MEDICAL NEWS



DR DOWNES' SABBATICAL

My time volunteering at Hillside Clinic, Belize

In January 2023 I volunteered for an American charity providing health care to the rural Mayan communities in southern Belize. This is an extremely poor part of the world with very few doctors and nurses and virtually no medicines. The charity is based in a rural clinic in the foothills of the Belizian jungle. I was mainly involved in supervising community and family medicine type care in the clinic and trips up into the jungle to set up clinics for the day in remote villages.

From the minute I arrived and set foot at Hillside I felt welcomed, valued, and supported. I was apprehensive being a UK doctor and knowing that this was a journey far more commonly taken by clinicians from the USA. I was warmly met by Mr Frank at the gate of the clinic after a thirty-six-hour journey from the UK. The last leg of this had been a short flight from Belize City to Punta Gorda in the TropicAir ten-seater plane and not being a regularly passenger in small planes this had caused me some anxiety but when I saw that half the passengers were sleeping or doing the crossword during the flight I relaxed and enjoyed the view!

Waking the next morning to the squawking of Aracari Toucans and watching the sun rise over the clinic roofs was truly amazing. I was fortunate to be staying in the Treehouse, accommodation for volunteers provided by the clinic and situated on its campus, not luxury but very comfortable, well equipped with all essentials and with a delightful balcony complete with essential Belize-style hammock.

I was concerned that I might be faced with Malaria, machete wounds and tropical snake bites in the clinics, not things we come across too often in the south of England, but Kristine the volunteer director had assured me to expect mainly the sorts of things that we see in General Practice at home, and this certainly turned out to be the case. The main difference however was that most of the patients were extremely fit by nature of working on the land and a subsistence lifestyle. The other big difference practicing medicine in the clinic of course was far fewer investigations available and a considerably more restricted range of available medicines. The corollary to this was the complete joy in practising clinical medicine based on a thorough history and examination and applying common sense, a million miles from the medicine by CT scan practiced so widely in the western world. I felt extremely well supported by Boni, Advanced Practitioner and a member of the permanent team. Her advice was always invaluable, and we shared a lot of cases together.

Many of the patients I saw had similar chronic conditions to those that we see at home such as diabetes and hypertension. We also saw common infections (chest and skin), common bites (mainly spiders but also snakes and scorpions!) and some rarer presentations such as fractures (probable fractures as there were no x-rays) and syphilis!

Continued over

DR DOWNES' SABBATICAL CONTINUED

The highlight for me was participating in the mobile clinics. These could be long days starting at 6.45am and sometimes not getting back to 5.30pm but very rewarding. The day would start with loading up the Land Cruiser with all the medicines and equipment we felt we might need, then driving far up into the hills along bumpy rutted tracks to a village where we would set up a clinic in the village hall. Hot hard work within one clinic seeing forty-seven patients but a wonderful experience working in such a remote location, having to be flexible and think on your feet.

On one occasion we had a late lunch at our driver Antonio's sisters house, and I sat on her balcony looking out towards huge unspoilt hills of jungle, eating spicy chicken with rice and beans.

The students on elective at Hillside were simply delightful. They were mainly students studying to be physician's assistants from the USA, but also pharmaceutical students, a physiotherapy student and two community health students from Canada. I could see they were having the most amazing time both from the clinical experience they gained in this setting and from the wonderful weekends they planned that were action packed with trips to the cayes, Mayan ruins or villages in the jungle. They were extremely kind inviting and including me in many of their activities and their energy and joie de vivre was infectious and a pleasure to be around.



I felt very safe at Hillside with someone on site all the time. Market days were a highlight when Marlin would drive whoever wanted down to Punta Gorda to buy fresh vegetables, fish from the market on Wednesdays and sometimes we would stop to buy fresh burritos on the street just outside the hospital. During my last week the clinic arranged a cultural trip to a traditional house at San Pedro in Columbia where we learnt how the Mayans practice the ancient art of making chocolate and later that day was Karaoke evening, terrifying and completely out of my comfort zone but everyone was made to feel welcome and Boni with her children, Viktor the clinic pharmacist and even myself had a go.

I was very sad to leave and start the long journey home. It had been an immense privilege to have had the opportunity to meet and provide care for the ancient Mayan people and to practice medicine in conditions so very different to home. It has certainly re-opened my eyes at how very lucky we are in the UK having a healthcare system that is mainly free at the point of care and delivers treatments that most Mayans could not begin to dream of.

Dr Phil Downes

23.2.2023



STAFF TRAINING UPDATE

SUSIE - LEADERSHIP COURSE



I recently had the opportunity to undergo NHS Health Education England's General Practice Nurse Leadership programme. This is an 8-day programme run over 11 months concluding in a poster presentation. The aim of the course is to encourage those with clinical knowledge and skills to develop and achieve their potential within leadership roles in order to develop and achieve the full potential of their team to give optimum patient care. We covered topics such as emotional intelligence, professionalism and leadership, leadership styles, personality analysis, behaviour framework and personal effectiveness.

There were eleven participants on the course from all over Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, all of whom I am still in contact with regularly for support and ideas to bounce around.

Throughout my time on the course, I have been supported and encouraged by all members of the surgery team especially the nurse team and I feel very lucky to work in such a hard working and positive environment. I am grateful to the Partners and Practice manager who supported my attendance of this course as well as participating in the photos used for my presentation. I loved this course. It was interesting and inspiring, and I believe that I have grown in confidence of my own ability as a team leader which in turn leads to better team working and commitment to excellent patient care. The other nurses in the department tell me they have noticed a difference too, (for the better I hope).

Susie - Lead Practice Nurse

ISLA - NURSING ASSOCIATE

A while ago now and with the full support of the surgery team, Isla applied and was accepted by Solent University to study for a Nursing Associate role under an apprenticeship with Fordingbridge Surgery. This is a two year course starting in September 2023 and finalising in September 2025.

Isla's title will change to "Trainee Nursing Associate", and during her training, Susie will be her mentor and Dr Holly Williams will be her supervisor.

At the end of her training, Isla will gain registration with the NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council), Isla's wish is to continue working here with us and she will be able to carry out the same duties as our Practice Nurses.

We are all absolutely thrilled for Isla, this is an exciting stage in her career, and we wish her all the very best of luck with her studies.

RESUSCITATION TRAINING

All the staff at Fordingbridge Surgery recently underwent their annual resuscitation refresher training.

The non clinical staff cover all aspects of cardio pulmonary resuscitation, the use of AEDs (Automated External Defibrillator), treatment for choking, and placing a patient into the recovery position.

For clinical staff, this annual training also includes advanced resuscitation techniques and treatment of adult and child anaphylaxis.



COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

If you contact the practice for an appointment for a minor health concern, you may be referred to a community pharmacy of your choice for assessment and treatment (a service known as the community pharmacy consultation service). The NHS Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS) is an NHS England initiative providing more convenient treatment closer to patients' homes. Lots of conditions are more appropriate for a consultation with a Community Pharmacist, rather than a GP. If appropriate, our team will refer you for a same day appointment with our Community Pharmacist colleagues at a local community pharmacy for a personal consultation.

You may be contacted by telephone by the pharmacist, or you can go and see them in person - please let them know that the surgery has referred you. The pharmacist will then assess and advise on appropriate treatment, or if necessary may refer you back to the surgery if they feel the condition is more serious.

This will help free up GPs to deal with more complex health needs and ensure that everyone gets treated at the right time, by the right healthcare professional.

More information about minor illnesses can be found here: www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/medicines/why-cant-i-get-prescription-over-counter-medicine/



Our practice is working closely with local pharmacists to support you with certain health conditions

It may be more appropriate to have your NHS consultation with a trained pharmacist instead of the GP practice. You can choose from any available pharmacy providing the service and we will arrange this for you.

[Ask us for more information](#)

HOW TO FIGHT FLU



Flu will often get better on its own, but it can make some people seriously ill. It's important to get the flu vaccine if you're advised to.

Flu symptoms come on very quickly and can include:

- a sudden high temperature
- an aching body
- feeling tired or exhausted
- a dry cough
- a sore throat
- a headache
- difficulty sleeping
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or tummy pain
- feeling sick and being sick

The symptoms are similar for children, but they can also get pain in their ear and appear less active.

How to treat flu yourself

If you have flu, there are some things you can do to help get better more quickly.

- rest and sleep
- keep warm
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to lower your temperature and treat aches and pains
- drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration (your pee should be light yellow or clear)

A pharmacist can help with flu

A pharmacist can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies. Please do not take paracetamol and flu remedies that contain paracetamol at the same time as it's easy to take more than the recommended dose.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu>



Birthday Celebration

Julie, who has been a cleaner at the surgery for many years recently celebrated her 80th birthday. Pictured here are Julie, with Practice Manager Michelle Raymond and Laura, our youngest member of the team.



Avon Valley Shed

- Men's Shed meetings -

9:30 - 12:00

Every Wednesday

Every Friday

Fordingbridge

Damerham

Methodist Church Hall

Sports Pavilion

Men's Sheds are community spaces for men to connect, converse and create. Similar to garden sheds – a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds and their activities are often solitary in nature, while Men's Sheds are the opposite. They're about social connections and friendship building, sharing skills and knowledge, and of course, a lot of laughter.

Email: enquiries@avonvalleyshed.org.uk

Website: avonvalleyshed.org.uk

FaceBook: Avon Valley Shed

THE FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY – DR P DOWNES & PARTNERS



ITS T.A.R.G.E.T DAY!

The surgery will be closed on
**Wednesday 11 October 2023 from
12:30pm – 6:30pm**

Our GPs and Nurses are attending essential training provided by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board (ICB)

If you need urgent medical attention during this time, you can use
Out of Hours Service by dialling 111

If you have an emergency, please dial
999

The surgery will re-open on
Thursday 12 October 2023 at 8am

FORDINGBRIDGE SURGERY

CHRISTMAS HOURS 2023/2024

Saturday 23 rd December	CLOSED
Sunday 24 th December	CLOSED
Monday 25 th December (CHRISTMAS DAY)	CLOSED
Tuesday 26 th December (BOXING DAY)	CLOSED
Wednesday 27 th December	Normal Hours
Thursday 28 th December	Normal Hours
Friday 29 th December	Normal Hours
Saturday 30 th December	CLOSED
Sunday 31 st December	CLOSED
Monday 1 st January (NEW YEAR'S DAY)	CLOSED
Tuesday 2 nd January 2024 and onwards	Normal Hours

When the surgery is closed and you need urgent medical advice, please call

111 - Out of Hours Service

or

999 – for a life threatening problem

When dropping off or collecting prescriptions please check the collection dates carefully

PLEASE GIVE THE DISPENSARY AT LEAST FIVE WORKING DAYS WHEN RE-ORDERING MEDICATION
PLEASE DO NOT RUN OUT JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS or THE NEW YEAR

