

# FRIENDS OF STOW SURGERY

Registered Charity No. 1086648

FOSS Newsletter No.71 Summer 2021

## INTRODUCTION

Our last newsletter was issued in the Autumn of 2019. Our next edition, for the Spring of 2020, was finalised when the pandemic struck and we were only able to put it on the website.. We are hoping that with this edition we can resume both publication and distribution.

Dr Sherringham has written a Covid-19 update and The Return to Normal paragraph. Those articles were correct at the date of going to press but the facts may well change in view of changing circumstances and changing government guidelines. Those items are followed by other surgery news.

Having regard to the importance of each item in this edition we have left longer spaces than usual to aid your reading and to keep some items complete on one page.

This edition concludes with FOSS news including changes of printing and delivery to the newsletter that we need to implement to take advantage of the digital age facilities.

## SURGERY NEWS

### **Covid -19 Update – by Dr. Paul Sherringham**

The COVID 19 pandemic has challenged the NHS in an unprecedented fashion; the impact on General Practice has been profound. As we emerge from the eye of the storm it is necessary for us to reflect on the changes we have seen and what, amongst those changes, should remain embedded in what we do and what ongoing changes we need to make, to meet a demand that has very clearly tipped the capacity to deliver it. It is essential that we are clear thinking and dynamic in the changes that we make to ensure care is driven in a correctly prioritised fashion. However hard we work, we remain a finite resource.

At the start of the pandemic, the Government mandated all practices work in certain ways - for example telephone first - as numbers have changed through the year we have increased and decreased our precautions accordingly. We have seen patients face to face throughout and the numbers of consultations is higher than ever.

We have been looking forward to getting back to a more normal service. The real value of what we do is the relationship you have with your GP. Of course, for many patients telephone consultations are still preferred and can provide the same level of medical care for certain things. We also understand that, in some cases face to face appointments are necessary and that some patients prefer to come into the surgery.

So, as we did before the pandemic, we will offer both - face to face appointments and telephone response. We know that this strikes a really good balance between good patient care and patient preference.

In the next few weeks we will be opening up more appointments with the ability to book routine face to face appointments. We have to plan this really carefully as, by offering these appointments, there will be less ability to respond to patients within the 24 / 48 hour turnaround we are currently working to. We need some time to do this to ensure deliverability and clinical safety and this is why there will be a delay in us making these appointments available.

Of course Covid is still around, and particularly with the risk of the new Indian variant rising, having lots of unwell people close together in the waiting room isn't safe either. We are working with our estates team and infection control advisors which should have enabled us to open the waiting room from 21st June. If we were able to put measures in place to complete this work ahead of this date then we will have done so. However, our main concerns are keeping patients and staff safe.

For everyone to be safe, and to avoid outbreaks in the practice which will reduce our capacity due to staff needing to isolate, it is REALLY important that all those coming into the practice follow the Covid rules. This means not coming in if you have a temperature, cough, loss of taste or smell. It also means taking a PCR test if advised, and not relying on the lateral flow tests - these are for screening when you have NO symptoms.

Please also note that whilst having the vaccination gives you very good protection, there is a risk you can still get Covid (but if you do, you should be less unwell) and you can still give it to other people. If everyone understands this, and isolates when they have symptoms or a positive test in the household, it should mean cases stay low, even as lockdown eases further.

Please be reassured; we want to provide a personal service not an impersonal service. The ethos of care remains the same – patient centred, family medicine- it is a rich vein that remains in the bedrock of the practice but it has to be dovetailed into this intensely challenging scenario.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

[The next item follows on the next page]

## **Return to Normal by Dr. Paul Sherringham**

We are no longer checking patient's temperature as they enter the building and have stopped sending text questionnaires to patients attending for face to face appointments asking about Covid symptoms. We trust that people know the drill and that anyone with symptoms will not attend the surgery without disclosing the information over the telephone first.

The marquee in the surgery car park, kindly funded by FOSS, will remain in situ for a few more months. It has been useful to be able to examine patients in their cars with some degree of privacy when Covid-19 has been suspected without having to bring the patient into the surgery building and then undertake a deep clean of the surgery facilities.

The GPs and nursing team will have returned to consult with patients face to face in their own consulting rooms from 7<sup>th</sup> June. It has been useful to confine patients to a few rooms, in the clinical corridor for ease of deep cleaning each day. We are now able to relax slightly with these infection control processes and the staff are pleased to be in their own surroundings again. You may notice that the doctor's rooms look rather bare and that is due to infection control. If we have cause to deep clean rooms we don't want to have to dispose of personal possessions etc.

We hope to have been able to open up the waiting room for patients from 21<sup>st</sup> June. There will be a limit to the number of people we can have in the waiting room at any one time and a 2-metre social distancing requirement will remain. This may mean that queues form outside the front door and we hope that patients will be able to wait patiently.

The check-in machines will not be operational initially and check-in will therefore be via the Reception Desk.

A one-way system will remain around the building and following their appointment patients will exit via the staff exit. This will ensure that distance can be kept as much as possible between people moving around the building

Patients wishing to collect medicines from the dispensary have been able to collect from the dispensary desk from 21<sup>st</sup> June.

Patients have become used to using the post box for leaving letters / prescription requests and the sample box to drop of samples / collect receptacles. We'd like this to continue to allow the Clinical Administrators more space and time to speak to patients at the Reception desk.

The blood pressure monitor will be removed from the foyer and replaced by a SurgeryPod (kindly funded by FOSS) in the small counselling room behind Reception (see page 6)

## OTHER SURGERY NEWS

### **Appointment Offering and Booking**

Routine Appointments – an appointment which is not urgent and where patients may want to consult with their usual doctor

Routine appointments (both face to face and telephone appointments) are available with all GPs at various times across the week. Please see the Doctor Availability table on the last page for further information. These appointments are available to book online or by telephoning the surgery.

We are not currently extending our appointment book for more than 4-6 weeks currently in case there is a further outbreak of Covid-19 and appointments would then have to be cancelled. The appointment book is updated regularly so please keep trying if you want a routine appointment with a specific doctor.

Urgent appointments – for matters which require resolution within 24/48 hours

Patients who have an urgent problem or concern will be triaged by a doctor in the first instance. Most problems, as we have seen during the pandemic, can be dealt with over the telephone. If patients have an urgent problem it may not be possible for them to speak to their usual doctor or the doctor of their choice. We now operate a duty team. However, we recognise that continuity is important and if the GP sees a patient on the telephone list whose condition / situation they are familiar with, then, where possible, they will aim to undertake the consultation.

Sometimes it is necessary for the doctor to examine a patient with an urgent problem or would prefer to see them in a face-to-face appointment. Patients may also prefer to be seen face to face. In these circumstances the triaging doctor will make a face-to-face appointment with the patient at the time of their call.

At the current time the Clinical Administrators answering the telephones do not have access to book face to face appointments for patients with urgent issues.

### The Future

As the pandemic eases further the balance of the requirement for urgent / routine appointments may begin to change. We are currently auditing this demand and will make changes to the appointment booking system to reflect this. We may also feel more confident to extend the appointment book further and closer to the 6-months ahead we offered pre-Covid. Please bear with us during this period of change whilst we try to cope with the increased demand and the return to normal.

## **GP Staff Update**

We have been pleased to welcome the return of Dr Hannah Bee (nee Armstrong) to the surgery following her maternity leave.

Dr Sophie Beaumont who was covering Dr Bee's leave has agreed to stay on and has become a permanent member of the team.

Dr Mark Ghobrial, who many patients have become fond of this year, will be leaving us at the end of August. This placement was his final rotation in his GP training and he will be joining a large practice in Gloucester as a Partner.

Dr Caroline Knight will be replacing Dr Ghobrial. She will be joining the surgery at the beginning of August and will similarly be spending her final year of GP training with us.

Dr Sherringham has reduced the time he spends at the surgery from 7<sup>th</sup> June. He no longer works on Wednesdays.

## **Sharing Data from Your NHS Records**

There have been posts on social media with false information about opting out of sharing your data with the NHS.

Here's what you need to know:-

- There is no 30 September deadline for opting out of sharing your data. You can opt out at any time.
- NHS Digital will never sell your data.
- There are strict rules about how NHS can use your data. It's only shared securely and safely.
- Shared data helps the NHS. It has been used to find the first treatment for coronavirus and for vaccine research.

Further information is available on the link below.

<https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/manage-your-choice>

If you do not have access to the internet please contact the surgery for more information.

## **Updates from Musculoskeletal (MSK) Specialist Services**

Whilst emergency assessments and operations have continued throughout the pandemic, routine MSK services have been significantly impacted due to the redeployment of specialist MSK staff to other critical roles. This has resulted in waiting times for routine appointments being significantly increased. The specialist services are working hard to reduce the backlog. Where possible, after clinical prioritisation, long waiting patients at the Gloucestershire Hospitals are being transferred to local private sector providers to help support the recovery and ensure that all available NHS capacity is fully utilised. Additional evening and weekend operating sessions are also planned.

In order to help we need everyone to understand realistic waiting times. Waits for orthopaedic operations are considerably longer than prior to Covid with the majority of patients now having to wait more than a year for surgery.

Whilst waiting, patients may need help on how to manage their condition, including remaining physically active and considering healthy lifestyle management, where appropriate. Please ask if you feel that you could benefit from support in this area.

We are also able to provide patients with guidance about reconditioning their bodies in order to mitigate against muscle and medical deterioration.

MSK conditions and associated pain can often be self-managed and patients are able to self-refer to core physiotherapy services via the following link.

[https://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/physiotherapy/;](https://www.gloshospitals.nhs.uk/our-services/services-we-offer/physiotherapy/)  
<https://www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/adult-physiotherapy/physio-advice/>

At Stow Surgery Dr Tom Jenkins (a GP with a special interest in musculoskeletal medicine) holds a weekly clinic at the surgery (and home visits as necessary). He is able to offer steroid injections to treat painful joints and advice about a range of MSK conditions.

We are also in the early stages, with the support of FOSS, in seconding a physiotherapist to work at the surgery on a part time basis.

### **SurgeryPod**

SurgeryPod is a set-up of various pieces of medical equipment which can be used by patients for the measurement of vital signs and to complete health questionnaires. It may be useful for patients who do not have a blood pressure monitor at home or where the GP has requested that some other measurements be taken such as height or weight. This equipment will not replace the annual appointments offered by the nursing team for chronic disease monitoring but may replace some of the ad-hoc requests. The SurgeryPod will be available for use during the times the surgery building is open and it is not anticipated that an appointment will be needed.

The video on the You Tube links below explains more about how it works.

[How to use the Surgery Pod - YouTube](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3JPpTQx\\_tA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3JPpTQx_tA)

## **Online Services**

Using SystemOnline patients are able to:-

- Order repeat medication
- Make / cancel an appointment
- Change contact details
- See test results and other medical information

To register for this service please complete the form on the surgery website.

<https://www.stowsurgery.co.uk/navigator/register-for-online-services/>

Using these services frees up time for the administrative staff at the surgery to concentrate on other things including answering telephones more efficiently and responding more quickly to those who are unable to use online services.

## **Demonstrating Your Covid Vaccination Status**

Demonstrating your COVID-19 vaccination status allows you to show others that you've had a full course of the COVID-19 vaccine when travelling abroad. COVID-19 vaccination status is available to people who live in England and are registered with a GP. You can get your vaccination status in digital or paper format.

You can access your Covid-19 vaccination status through the free NHS App (see below). The NHS App is not the same as the NHS Covid-19 app which is used by Track & Trace.

If you do not have access to a smartphone, computer or tablet and know that the country you are travelling to requires COVID-19 vaccination status, you can call 119 and ask for a letter to be posted to you.

Further information is available by calling 119 or by using the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/demonstrating-your-covid-19-vaccination-status-when-travelling-abroad>

## **NHS App**

In addition to providing your Covid-19 vaccination status you can order repeat medication, view and book appointments and see other medical information via this app. We understand that booking GP appointments via the app is not as user friendly as using the practice's SystmOnline

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/nhs-app>

## **Surgery Website – [www.stowsurgery.co.uk](http://www.stowsurgery.co.uk)**

There are various self-help options accessible via the surgery website. Listed below are some of those which patients find most useful.

- Ask the doctor a question online – you submit an online form and we aim to respond to your non-urgent question within 2 working days.

<https://www.stowsurgery.co.uk/navigator/ask-a-doctor-a-question/>

### Administration Office

- Request a sick / fit note
- Request / track a referral – did you know that there are many services which you can self refer to without the need to speak to a doctor?
- Change of name / address
- Ask an administrative question - you submit an online form and we aim to respond to your question within 2 working days.



# FOSS NEWS

## Your present committee

### Officers

Chairman Robert McKechnie 01451 870919  
 Secretary Patrick Mattock 01451 831469  
 Treasurer Paula Evison 01451 830304

### Committee Members

Tim Churchward 01451 831617  
 Mary Honess 01451 830052

## Donations

Since the last Newsletter of Autumn 2019 we have continued to receive donations from all our regular donors as well as the following people: Vittorio Rosato, Mrs Letcher, Margaret Hyde, Mr L. Teague, together donations from The Trustees of the Cadbury Trust, and Lower Slaughter Village Hall coffee morning,

We also received donations in memory of Eileen Bryant, Charles Latham and Anne Beckett together with generous legacies left to us by David Williams, Adrian Hopkins and Bruce Amery.

## The next newsletter

This will be a digital edition published on the Surgery’s website and facebook page.

It is intended to phase out gradually a printed edition although for the time being printed copies will be available in the surgery and the library. For the immediate future, if you are unable to access the surgery’s website or facebook page, and would wish to receive a printed copy, would you please complete the cut off slip below and either send it or deliver it to the surgery.

We hope to be able to produce the next edition of the Newsletter during the first week of December

Cut here

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TO STOW SURGERY Mangersbury Road, Stow on the Wold, GL54 1AX  
 Request for the delivery of a printed copy of the next edition of the newsletter

I confirm that I am a patient of the practice.

I request a delivery of a printed copy of the next newsletter

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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**IF THE LOCKDOWN EASING, FIXED FOR JULY 19<sup>th</sup>, IS DELAYED**

**THE AGM WILL NOT TAKE PLACE AS PLANNED ON THE 11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST.**

**A LATER DATE WILL BE ARRANGED.**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

NOTICE OF THE TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE

**FRIENDS OF STOW SURGERY**

On Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> August at 7.00pm

At Stow Surgery, Mangersbury Road, Stow-on-the-Wold

For the presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts,

To elect the officers and committee for the year 2021 – 2022  
(Note: nominations must be in writing and in the possession of  
the secretary 14 clear days before the meeting)

To amend clauses in the constitution 2,5,6 and 19 (to bring the constitution  
into line with present practice) and clause 16 to provide that the AGM may  
be held not earlier than 3 months after the end of the financial year.

**ALL PATIENTS OF THE SURGERY ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND**

**ONE OR MORE OF THE SURGERY DOCTORS WILL BE ATTENDING.  
COME AND HEAR THE LATEST PRACTICE NEWS.**

## **Doctor Availability from 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

Please see below a schedule showing when the doctors are usually available to see / speak to patients. Services are currently being adapted due to the ease of the Covid-19 pandemic and as such this offering is subject to change.

Please bear in mind that the schedule can change and that during holiday times it may be very different!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Duty Doctor Team AM	Dr Sherringham , Dr Lawrence and Dr Ghobrial	Dr Lawrence and Dr Chiles	Dr Chiles and Dr Bee	Dr Sherringham and Dr Lawrence	Dr Sherringham, Dr Beaumont and Dr Bee
Routine appointments			Dr Beaumont	Dr Ghobrial  Dr Chiles (at Newlands)	Dr Ghobrial (at Edwardstow Court)
Duty Doctor Team PM	Dr Sherringham, Dr Lawrence and Dr Ghobrial	Dr Beaumont, Dr Ghobrial and Dr Chiles (for part)	Dr Beaumont and Dr Chiles	Dr Sherringham and Dr Ghobrial	Dr Beaumont, Dr Bee and Dr Ghobrial
PM		Dr Sherringham  Dr Lawrence  Dr Chiles (part of the afternoon)	Dr Bee	Dr Chiles (menopause clinic alternate weeks)  Dr Lawrence (women's health alternate weeks)	Dr Sherringham

### **Surgery Opening Times**

The surgery building is open from 8am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

#### Dispensary

Dispenser available: 9am – 4pm

(prescriptions can be collected at any time during the building opening hours)

#### Telephoning the Surgery

Appointment requests, general enquiries and results of blood tests etc - 8am - 6.30pm

Prescription requests (choose option 2, followed by option 1) – 8am - 6.30pm

#### Telephone numbers:

All daytime enquiries – 01451 830625

Dispensary – 01451 833482

Out of Hours - 111

Website: [www.stowsurgery.co.uk](http://www.stowsurgery.co.uk)



Stow Surgery