



Personalised care...

... is the order of the day at Springbank Health. We are in the process of tailoring care plans for those most at need, as well as providing free health checks for everyone aged 40-75. Our principle aim is to deliver a service whereby patients feel they are listened to, understood and respected.



At Springbank Health, we provide NHS care for residents of all the villages between York and Knaresborough. We are committed to providing the best healthcare advice through a caring and efficient service.

Efficiency has been a buzz word within the NHS recently and general practice nationally has been adapting to funding cuts. Against this backdrop, we are still striving to improve our service and we continue to respond to patient feedback. For example, we have expanded appointments further - particularly appointments for blood tests. We have also continued refurbishing our buildings. We have introduced card payment facilities. We have managed to reduce the waiting time for doctor appointments to less than 8 minutes on average, although we apologise if you are kept waiting longer than this. We have adapted our prescription ordering system to allow

pre-ordering. You can make appointments and order prescriptions through the updated website, and will soon be able to see a summary of your medical record online. We have improved carparks and grounds at both surgeries. We have also upgraded our telephone system to increase the number of telephone lines and make it easier to get through to us. All of these changes came as a result of direct patient feedback, which we find so valuable.

As more of our patients register to book online we will be putting more available appointments online, so please ask for your password at the surgery and save time by booking online. You can also download a new App so you can do it on the move on your phone or tablet - just search for 'SystemOnline'.

Refurbishment Work

We have been providing increasing numbers of appointments with our healthcare assistants and we are now adding an additional consulting room at Green Hammerton to further increase our capacity.

We are aiming to make better use of space at our Green Hammerton surgery and we are adding a new, small consulting room, specifically designed for the needs of phlebotomy and health checks. Please bear with us while the building work is underway: it is due to be completed by mid-November. This is the latest in a series of improvements to the Green Hammerton Surgery. This site has also seen some improvements externally with a new coat of paint and repair work to the car park.

We have WiFi available for use by patients who are waiting at Green Hammerton Surgery. Our waiting times have become a lot shorter on average. However, if you would like to use WiFi whilst you wait, please let reception know and they will be happy to give you a password.

We have also been refurbishing our Tockwith surgery, from the less obvious

electrical, internet and telephone updates, to the more apparent gardening outside and increased parking. We have an ongoing arrangement with the neighbouring old Methodist church to have parking spaces for patients' use. Please respect our neighbours by only parking in the marked bays.

Early next year, we will be updating the flooring throughout Tockwith Surgery, as well as renewing other internal aspects at both sites. Our focus remains on direct patient care but the quality of our facilities is intrinsically linked to this, hence our investment in this area.

Refurbishment has been a gradual process as there have been no government grants for this work and we have had to look at raising funds ourselves. It is very important to us to provide a clean, well-equipped environment for patients and staff. We were commended by the Care Quality Commission in their inspection last year and we are keen to improve further. We will endeavour to ensure that any work to improve facilities has minimal disruption to our service.

Friends And Family Test

From December 2014, we will be giving patients the opportunity to give us quick feedback after every consultation, using the Friends And Family Test.

The Friends And Family Test is a simple questionnaire asking if you would recommend us to your friends and family. Additionally, you will have the option to write any comments. We are making this

process as quick and simple as possible, meaning patients will be able to do it in just 2 or 3 seconds on a touch screen on their way out. Anyone who has more in depth feedback would be welcome to take longer over it.

We will publish the results of this on our website and on the NHS choices website, where patients can also leave feedback.

More On Care Plans

One of our main goals at the moment is to draw up personalised care plans for patients who are at highest risk of needing urgent care. This is a national project, targeting 2% of the population. However, we were keen to make this a particularly worthwhile process, being as inclusive as possible. Therefore we actually now have care plans for nearly 5% of our patients.

An aim of care plans is to encourage a more patient-centred approach to healthcare, with patients taking ownership and telling us what their priorities and goals are. We can then focus on the same priorities. A recurring theme of the care plans so far is a common viewpoint that people would prefer to be looked after at home, avoiding hospital whenever possible. Making plans in advance can go a long way in reducing the stress caused by an illness. By predicting such situations, we have been able to give certain patients medicines to keep at home in case of a flare up of a chronic medical condition.

If you are over 75 years old, you will have also had a letter about having a named GP. All patients are, however, free to choose to see any GP or nurse in the practice as they do currently.

The named GP's responsibilities will include working with other health and social care professionals with the consent of the patient. For most patients at Springbank, this kind of care already happens. It is, however, now being formalised at a national level.

'tis the season to be vaccinated



In September and October we have been busy running flu jab clinics. However, if you have missed out on coming to a clinic, you can still book in with a nurse for a flu jab.

We would encourage you to have a free flu vaccine if you:

- Are 65 years of age or over.
- Are pregnant.
- Have a medical condition such as certain chest problems, diabetes, a heart condition.
- Live in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility.
- Are in receipt of a carer's

allowance, or you are a full time carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill.

- Have a weakened immune system or have treatment that suppresses the immune system, like chemotherapy.
- Live with someone who has a weakened immune system.

This year we are also offering flu vaccines to all children aged 2, 3 and 4 years as well. We have been proactively contacting parents about this and we are running dedicated clinics. The children's vaccine

is slightly different in that it is given by a nasal spray.

As well as flu vaccines, we are offering shingles vaccines to our patients who are aged 70, 78 and 79. This is part of a national programme which only includes these ages for this year. We are also specifically calling anyone who is eligible for this to invite them for an appointment in January 2015.

Rachel, our new healthcare assistant

Rachel Edmond joined us in August as our new healthcare assistant. Rachel comes from a care background. She joins our existing healthcare assistant, Louise Gibbs, to expand our capacity for appointments. Together, they will be carrying out the important roles of taking blood, checking blood pressures including 24 hour blood pressures, doing health checks and ECGs. Louise continues to expand her own skill set and is now doing dressings.

Louise and Rachel are carrying out free health checks for people between the ages of 40-75 who don't frequently attend the surgery for any monitoring of an existing problem. We are contacting patients to invite them to make an appointment for these health checks. When you receive your letter, we would strongly urge you to make use of this opportunity as it can help identify your risk of heart disease, diabetes and stroke. We are getting quite good at helping reduce the risk of these problems, but only when we see you!

If you haven't received a letter and feel you should have done, please let us know. We are working alphabetically to invite people and everyone eligible should have been invited by March 2015.



Happy Retirement...

...to Mrs Jenn Waller, one of our receptionists. She has been part of the Springbank team for over 4 years and has a wealth of experience and dedication. She was frequently the first into work in the morning, making sure everything was set up for her colleagues. We had a few hugs and tears as we said good bye at the end of October.

In Jenn's place, we welcome our newest addition to the team, Mrs Debra Lambert. She will be working in reception at Green Hammerton and Tockwith.

We are also saying a fond farewell to one of our valued district nurses, Wendy Farnell, who has been reassigned to different surgeries. Although district nurses are not employed by the practice, we work very closely with them and are fortunate to have such skilled and compassionate colleagues.

Our Medical Staff:

Dr A O'Donoghue

Dr R Tatham

Dr C Hallam

Dr J Hunter

Dr H Pope

Nurses:

Christine Edmond

Shona Harrington

Kyla Honing

Healthcare Assistants:

Louise Gibbs

Rachel Edmond

Who should you see for your appointment?

Our nurses have special qualifications in:

Contraception
Minor injuries
Minor illnesses
Diabetes
Asthma/COPD
Vaccinations/travel health
Medication reviews
Cervical smears
Complex dressings and wound care

Our healthcare assistants do:

Blood tests
ECGs
Blood pressure checks including 24 hour checks
Hearing tests
Health checks
Simple dressings

Many problems can be dealt with by phone so please call us if you are unsure.

Our new team leader

Our current team leader, Mrs Gilly Loukes, is choosing to step back into a senior dispensary role from December 2014 as she plans her retirement later in 2015. She has recently celebrated the birth of twin grandchildren and is looking forward to being involved in their childcare. We are really pleased that Gilly has chosen to stay on in the dispensary as she is such a valued and popular member of staff.

Our new team leader will be Mrs Christine Edmond. Christine is a highly experienced practice nurse who already has leadership responsibility within the practice. Her appointment follows our commitment to put direct patient care at the heart of what we do.

Christine will still be working as a practice nurse whilst taking on this additional role. Therefore she is excellently placed to see what our priorities are. Christine says, "Knowing many of the families within the practice, hopefully you will feel able to approach me with any issues or comments, positive or otherwise."

Christine's main roles are to be the line manager for surgery staff and also to receive and act on feedback from patients as we plan our priorities in further improving services. Through having an experienced clinician like Christine in our lead role we are confident we will be able to continue to put patients first.





News from our patient group

Medicines for Africa

We are teaming up with Intercare, a charity which sends medical aid to Africa. Current estimates suggest that £300-£400 million worth of prescribed medicines go to waste in the UK each year. The problem of wasted medicines was highlighted again to us recently by Reverend Roy Shaw, vicar of Marston Moor Parish, who contacted the Patient Participation Group to take action, having seen first hand the difference medical aid can make in African communities.



We are asking that patients bring back to us any unwanted prescription medication so we can use it for this charitable cause, instead of wasting it. Specifically, we are keen on receiving back any medication that has at least 15 months shelf life left - the use-by dates are printed on the medication boxes. Intercare are keen on receiving most medications but would not send any morphine or tramadol pain killers. Many African countries are suffering terribly from

the Ebola epidemic at the moment, as well as continuing to battle against malaria and other local diseases. Medical aid is therefore more welcome than ever in Africa currently. We believe that with your help Springbank Health can play a part.



First aid courses



In September, we held our first basic life support training evening at Tockwith Primary School, in association with the Royal Life Saving Society. The evening focused on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for babies and young children, covering both theory and practical aspects. It was well attended and we plan on holding more, similar courses. We are hoping to expand the scope of the courses to cover emergency care for people of all ages. Further details of these will be advertised within the surgeries and on the website, as and when they are organised.

On a similar note, the patient participation group is also currently involved in trying to improve access to emergency medical care for villages in our area. Being a long distance from the nearest ambulance station, we sometimes see quite long waits for potentially life-saving care. For this reason, we are keen to spread the word about the benefits of basic life support. We are engaging in a project to get a defibrillator for Tockwith village and have local residents trained in its use. We hope to have further positive news about this in the next newsletter.

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Calling volunteer drivers

Many members of our community find it difficult to arrange transport to important appointments at local hospitals, doctors, dentists and opticians. Public transport links are not always strong enough in this rural area. The Patient Group is joining with Boroughbridge and District Community Care to call for volunteer drivers to help out. Any assistance is welcome, however much availability you may have. There would be a payment of 45p a mile to help cover expenses. Please contact David on 01423 324504 (Mon-Fri 9am-1pm) to find out more.

