

News from Holbrook and Shotley Surgery

Focus on Our Reception:

Our receptionists provide an invaluable service to patients, doctors and staff alike. They are caring and helpful and are certainly not the 'dragons' that they are traditionally portrayed as! If ever they come across as being a little abrupt, it is because unfortunately they don't have time to chat and probably have many other items to deal with along with your call, so are being efficient with their time.

During a normal working day they will deal with any number of different tasks from booking an appointment to organising an emergency ambulance for a patient who has collapsed with chest pains. Sometimes we are short of appointments due to holiday or sickness and the GPs issue guidance on how to prioritise. Additionally various types of information will come in during the day via a number of different sources: the fax machine, postal delivery, requests from GPs as well as patients calling at the hatch and phone calls from patients, local hospitals, care homes, the Coroner's Office etc. All of this information has to be prioritised and communicated to GPs, our data team, our community partners ... so you can see it's not easy for our receptionists who have to make decisions and think on their feet. Please give them as much information as possible in order to help them to help you.

IT failure

Unfortunately our computers failed on Monday 20th July and were not fixed until 10:30am on the following day when BT arrived with our new router. We put our emergency plan into place and continued to provide a safe service at both sites but this led to delays in patients being seen and impacted on our dispensing time. Please accept our apologies if you were adversely affected by this and our thanks to all those patients who were understanding and respectful towards our staff, it was much appreciated. Regrettably we had a few instances where patients were verbally abusive towards our staff – this will not be tolerated and those patients will be sent a written warning, which may lead to them being removed from our list and having to register elsewhere.

Training days

Our next training afternoons will be on 17th September and 14th October when we will be shut from 1pm. Please ring 111 for advice if your query cannot wait until the following day.

Flu vaccination dates: our flu days this year are on 30th September and 13th October at Holbrook and 8th and 22nd October at Shotley. If you are over 65, please note the dates in your diary and keep the date free. For those under 65 who have a respiratory or heart condition, an invitation letter will be sent once the criteria for this year has been established.

Julia Smith
Practice Manager