



Danebridge Times

The newsletter from Danebridge Medical Practice

Winter 2021

Welcome to Danebridge Times

Our Newsletter is produced annually and brings you information on the latest developments within Danebridge Medical Practice.

This issue features:

- Christmas and New Year Opening Times 2021
- New Team Members at Danebridge
- Doctor's on the move
- Online Access
- Appointments
- Repeat Prescriptions
- What are GPs actually doing?

You can keep up to date with news and events throughout the year through our website, Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

If you have any questions regarding Danebridge Times, or have any articles or suggestions for the next issue, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Welcome from our GP Partners

Life continues to bring us moments of positivity and joy, as we learn to live with the pandemic which has truly touched us all.

At the beginning of the year Danebridge, along with all of the surgeries in Northwich and across the UK, commenced the roll out of the largest vaccination programme which has been seen in peacetime. We now, along with the wider NHS are contributing to the Covid Booster Campaign, with an aim of keeping us all safe over the weeks and months to come. We know that some of you will have lost family and friends to this cruel virus - our sympathy and condolences are with you and your loved ones.

Despite what you may read in the press and on social media, as a Practice, we have been here each day and this will continue. We have included within this Newsletter, a blog from our colleague, Dr Jonathan Griffiths. Each and every day something new happens, so our approach has to change, driven by a directive to keep people safe. We have adapted and are operating differently, our appointment system has evolved and generally feedback has been positive, it is more flexible and we work hard to try to meet the needs our community - we now offer: emergency, urgent on the day and routine consultations. We may ask you to provide information through digital channels including secure text messages, video or e-consultation. As a team we have really worked together in unprecedented times, I would like to formally thank each and every colleague.

Early in 2021, we were re-inspected by our regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which resulted in us being graded overall as Good.

Dr Dave Perry our dear colleague and friend moved on from the Partnership to work as the Senior Academy Doctor for Manchester United Football Club, but we won't hold that against him! As autumn approached we were delighted that Dr Rebecca Mitchelson and Dr Laura Mercer joined the Partnership Team, both Rebecca and Laura have been GPs with the Practice for a significant period of time.

Whilst we acknowledge that there is a great deal of passion locally for Danebridge's branch surgery at Sandiway, the expectations placed on primary care are changing constantly and this requires a suitable infrastructure to provide a modern and safe service. Therefore, following extensive consultation, the Partners proposal to close this branch location was approved by our commissioners, Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in late autumn. This will result in Sandiway Surgery closing on Friday 31 December 2021.

In early January 2022 I will hang up my stethoscope and will leave Danebridge, where I have been privileged to be a Partner for more than thirty years. I wish to thank everyone for their kind wishes, cards and gifts. I, along with all of the Partnership, am delighted that Dr Mike Mullin will become the new Executive Partner; we have been working together over the last year to ensure a seamless transition.

So finally, and for my very last time, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of our patients, our Patient Participation Group (PPG) and external partners who have helped to make Danebridge Medical Practice one which continues to provide a quality service for our community. This is despite the NHS continuing to be under enormous pressure trying to cope with the increasing demands placed upon it, in yet another year the like of which we have never ever seen before.

From each and every one of us at Danebridge, we wish you and your loved ones an enjoyable, healthy and safe Festive Season and 2022.

Dr Fiona McGregor-Smith
and Partners
Danebridge Medical Practice



Christmas and New Year Opening Times

	Danebridge	Kingsmead	Sandiway
Monday 20 December	8.00am-7.00pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Tuesday 21 December	8.00am-7.00pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Wednesday 22 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Thursday 23 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Friday 24 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Saturday 25 December	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Sunday 26 December	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 27 December	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 28 December	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday 29 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Thursday 30 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Friday 31 December	8.00am-6.30pm	8.00am-6.30pm	8.30am-1.00pm
Saturday 1 January	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Sunday 2 January	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 3 January	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 4 January	8.00am-7.00pm	8.00am-6.30pm	CLOSED

Please call NHS 111 if you require medical assistance when the Practice is closed

TEAM UPDATE

Salaried GPs

We welcomed Dr Amy Reynolds and Dr Karim Ghabra in August 2021, with Dr Seun Akanbi joining in September 2021.

Doctors on the move

In July 2021, Dr Maria de la Torre and Dr Dave Perry moved on from Danebridge - we're sure that you'll join us in wishing them both well for the future.

Doctors in training

Registrars - Dr Eseosa Omoregie and Dr Alya Al-Obadi joined us in August.

Nursing Team

In early spring Sister Carole Gibson and in August Sister Rachel Dougan, commenced new life adventures... Good luck and thanks for everything!!

Sister Emma Goffin and Sister Bethany Sheen joined the Practice in the early part of the year.

Clinical Team

In early 2022 we are delighted to advise that four new colleagues will be joining our team in the roles of Practice Pharmacy Technician and Northwich PCN Emergency Care Practitioners / Paramedics and Occupational Therapist.

Patient Services & Business Support Teams

In December we will say goodbye to Gilly Davis, Patient Services Manager. Lindsey Stott will be joining the Practice in late January as Patient Services Manager.

Over the last year we welcomed Saira Beedle, Patricia Chisnall, Jane Harrison, Zoe Hill, Janice Maddock and Claire Nolan to the team.

Colleagues changing roles

Over the last year we have seen a number of colleagues changing roles within the Practice:

- Claire Cowhig, Patient Services Co-ordinator joined Northwich PCN as PCN Support.
- Claire Greenwood, Patient Service Co-ordinator was promoted to Senior Patient Services Co-ordinator.
- Natalie Grobbelaar, Practice Nurse has become our Interim Nurse Team Leader.
- Samantha Mainwaring, Patient Services Co-ordinator has become the Practice's Care Co-ordinator.
- Diane Newman, Patient Services Co-ordinator becomes the Practice's dedicated Safeguarding Co-ordinator in early 2022.

APPOINTMENTS January 2021- November 2021:



Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have remained open for your healthcare needs by providing access in a new way.

We wanted to share some of the data with you, to show how we are still here for you when you need us. This is how we have been working during Jan—Nov 2021



ONLINE ACCESS

We recommend that patients download the NHS app from your normal app store, if you do not already have online access, e.g. Patient Access, Ask My GP etc.

Online access enables you to book an appointment, order repeat prescriptions and to also view your records.

REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

We are unable to accept requests over the telephone - this is for your safety and security. We recommend that prescriptions are ordered online through the NHS app, or by emailing DanebridgePrescriptions@nhs.net.

Repeat prescriptions will take THREE working days for the Practice to process, so please ensure your request is received early so that you do not run out of your medication. Many local pharmacies have moved to centralised dispensing, so you will also need to factor this into your plans when you order your medication.

What are GPs actually doing?

A blog from Dr Jonathan Griffiths, a Cheshire GP



One of the issues that has appeared since the Covid-19 Pandemic seems to be that people think that all GPs have gone into hiding. There are many mainstream and social media stories of people being unable to get through on the phones to reception staff or unable to make an appointment with their GP.

What is going on? Let me explain.

From March 2020 until very recently GPs were working to a national 'Standard Operating Procedure'. This SOP asked GPs to speak to all patients via phone or video BEFORE bringing them into surgery to be seen. While GPs continued to see those patients face to face where this was necessary, you would have been unable to directly book a face to face appointment. The SOP is no longer in place, but Infection, Prevention and Control Guidance for Covid-19 does still exist. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-infection-prevention-and-control>).

Chapter 4 of this guidance states that 'Triaging...within all health and other care facilities must be undertaken...', so most GPs have continued with the practice of phone calls first. Additionally, most GPs have found that they can adequately assess, advise and treat many patients using a phone or video consultation without needing to trouble the patient to attend the surgery. This is why you cannot, in most places, directly book a GP surgery appointment like you used to. Please be assured, however, that GPs HAVE been seeing people face to face where needed throughout the pandemic and continue to do so. If you feel you need a face to face consultation then this should be discussed with your GP where you will be able to talk this through with them. It is important to understand that this is not a new, Covid-19 thing. Many GP surgeries were already utilising a phone first triage system as an efficient and effective way of managing increasing demand.

Just because you cannot directly book a face to face appointment does not mean that your doctor is not working or not managing patients.

Numbers of patients being assessed has also increased with more consultations occurring now than before the pandemic. When people are trying to get through to the surgery reception but finding it engaged, or that there is a long queue before the phone is answered, this is not because the reception staff are sat around doing nothing while the phone rings – they are dealing with other patients. Likewise, when you do speak to reception and the next available routine appointment is not for some time, this is because all available appointments are full. There are no less appointments that there used to be – the demand is higher.

Just because you might struggle to get through to reception or book a routine appointment does not mean that your doctor is not working or not managing patients.

Patients being assessed are generally more complicated than before, presenting with multiple problems. The reasons for this are linked to the pandemic. *Some people have delayed presenting to the doctor with symptoms throughout the various lockdowns. In some cases this has been because of concern about the risks of catching the coronavirus when attending a health care setting, or because people have not wanting to overload an already busy NHS or even because people have erroneously thought that GP surgeries were closed.*

Whatever the reason, people are presenting with more advanced illness or disease and with several problems at the same time. This means that GPs are managing greater numbers of patients presenting with greater complexity. This takes more time.

General Practitioners are working harder than ever, not avoiding work.

There have been people criticising GPs and using 'empty waiting rooms' as evidence that we are not working. This is not an appropriate indicator of whether or not a GP is working. As you have already read, many consultations are taking place remotely by phone, video or electronic consultation. In addition, please don't forget that the work of a GP involves far more than consulting with patients. There is a huge amount of administrative work that needs to take place to adequately manage patient care. Every time you have a blood test, those results need to be read and action plans decided upon. Every time you consult with another healthcare provider such as a hospital consultant or if you find yourself in hospital, then correspondence will be set to your GP, which needs to be read. There may be actions for your GP to undertake in those letters. Repeat prescriptions need signing and every day there will be multiple requests for changes to medications for all manner of reasons that will need to be addressed. Remember as well that even pre-pandemic there would have been times when the waiting room was empty. Most practices would operate a morning surgery followed by an afternoon or evening surgery. In between these the GP would undertake home visits and complete the admin described here.

An empty waiting room does not mean that there is no work is taking place.

GPs are not in hiding. Nor are they avoiding work. They have been seeing patients when needed throughout the pandemic, and undertake many patient contacts each day. The number of patients seeking help has increased and the patients being seen are more poorly. The associated administration around patient care has also increased, and all of this takes time.

Please do not think that your GP is sitting with their feet up, or on the golf course. They are not.

There is, however, a problem. People need access to their GP, and many are struggling with this. The pressures on everyone are significant. GPs are NOT to blame for this, but we do need to seek solutions. This is not about GPs working harder, but us all looking to see what we can do to help. The NHS as a whole needs to work together to support patients and GPs in this time of extreme need.

What we really do not need are any more comments or assertions that GPs are not doing their job. You can see from my blogs from last year (link below) that we have been open and working as hard as ever, just not in quite the same way we used to.

Next time you see something in the media or on your go-to social media platform berating GPs for not doing their job, please remember this blog, and perhaps speak up to set the record straight.

Source: [What are GPs actually doing? – Dr Jon Griffiths \(wordpress.com\)](#)

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