



# THE MOUNTWOOD SURGERY

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Mountwood Surgery is an Approved Training Practice

## NEWS 2011

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### WHAT DO YOU THINK OF US? HEADLINE RESULTS FROM THE NATIONAL PATIENT SURVEY

In January we received the results of the IPSOS MORI patient survey for the 12 month period ending September 2010. We're happy that our results are better than the Hillingdon and National Averages in almost every case, but they still set us some challenges for improvement. The Department of Health sent 1023 survey questionnaires to our patients, 431 responded. You can see the full results of the survey at [www.gp-patient.co.uk](http://www.gp-patient.co.uk).

#### Ease of getting into Mountwood Surgery

99% of respondents found it easy to get into the surgery. We are surprised that 4 of 426 respondents found it "not very easy". We'd like to hear from them to discuss how we can improve matters.

#### Privacy at reception

Because of the way we operate reception, it is possible for patient conversations with receptionists to be overheard by others. 67% of patients reported that they didn't mind this, but 14% did. We do have a private interview room adjacent to reception available to all. Please ask if you wish to use it.

#### Helpfulness of receptionists

95% of patients found our receptionists to be helpful. Whilst this is marginally ahead of both the Hillingdon and National averages, it leaves 21 respondents who weren't satisfied. We know from patient feedback that the two issues which give rise to most dissatisfaction at the reception desk is the receptionists' inability to give near term appointments with a preferred GP when there are none available, and an inability to raise prescriptions at short notice. We're trying to address the first issue, but we do ask for two working days to process requests for medication. This is so that safety checks can be carried out.

#### Ease of getting through on the telephone

73% of our patients find it easy to get through to us on the phone. This is better than the Hillingdon and National averages of 69%. So again, we're ahead of the game but have plenty of room for improvement. The first couple of hours in the morning are always going to be busy times for telephone contact, especially now that we've changed the way we offer same day consultations, see *Page 3*. Patients calling on non-urgent matters will find it easier to make contact after 11 o'clock.

#### Making appointments on-line

The survey reveals that our internet GP appointment booking system is quite well used since 15% of Mountwood survey respondents reported that they normally book their GP appointments on-line. We're well ahead of the norm in offering this service, both in Hillingdon and nationally only 2% of appointments are made on-line. On-line booking offers definite advantages: it is available 24 hours per day,

and means you don't have to make a telephone call during the working day and wait to speak to a receptionist. 41% of survey respondents said they'd prefer to make appointments on-line so it looks likely that usage of this system is set to rise. If you'd like to use it you'll need to register at reception for a pin number and to create a password for security purposes. Please note that this system offers GP appointments only, and not nurse appointments.

#### Telephone access to doctors and nurses

23% of our patients don't find it easy to speak to a doctor on the telephone and 13% don't find it easy to speak to a nurse. Most patients report that they have never tried. Although a GP or nurse practitioner will always call back those patients seeking urgent care, we do not normally offer impromptu telephone consultations with doctors and nurses for chronic conditions or sundry enquiries.

#### Booking ahead to see a doctor

79% of survey respondents said they were able to book ahead for an appointment to see a doctor. Whilst we're happy to be well above the Hillingdon and England scores of 71%, we're disappointed that 16% of respondents said they couldn't book ahead. Gillian Tobin, our Operations Manager monitors appointment bookings on a daily basis, and in extreme cases brings in GP locum cover to provide more appointments, so in fact there has never been a time when it was not possible to make an appointment to see a GP at Mountwood. We therefore assume that the reason why 40 people reported that they couldn't make an appointment was either that the appointment offered wasn't at a convenient time, or it was not with a doctor of choice. All patients can help to increase the number of appointments available for booking by taking the trouble to cancel appointments when they are no longer needed. On average we lose about 3 appointments every day when patients don't attend. These appointments could have been made available to other patients, see elsewhere in this newsletter.

#### Seeing a doctor fairly quickly

At 75%, we're just ahead of the Hillingdon average (74%) in ability for our patients to see a doctor fairly quickly, we're behind the National average of 79%. We know we have periods when booked appointments in 2 or 3 days are in short supply, especially with a GP of your choice. We're hoping that our new approach to same day service and telephone triage (*Page 3*) will help us to make more short term booked appointments available. We hope patients will understand however, that each GP can offer only a finite number of appointments per day and does need to take holidays. 22% of those patients who reported that they couldn't see a doctor fairly quickly gave the reason as "the appointment time didn't suit me" or "the appointment offered was with a doctor I didn't want to see". These responses seem to indicate that the request to see a doctor fairly quickly didn't arise from an urgent need.

### Seeing a preferred doctor

Only 63% of our patients reported that they could see their preferred doctor when they wanted to. We understand that many patients do have a preferred doctor, and in the interests of continuity of care, once a problem is diagnosed it's often best to see the same doctor at each visit. Patients will appreciate however, that there is a limit to the number of appointments each doctor can offer, and when they're booked, they're booked. On the positive side, if it's necessary to see a different doctor, patients should be reassured that thanks to computerised patient records in the surgery, the doctor will have access to the patient's complete consulting and prescribing histories, hospital referrals, test results, reports from consultants and repeat scripts.

### Getting test results on the phone

Of those who try, most find getting test results on the phone easy. A quarter of those who try however, report that it's difficult. In most cases, it's not necessary for patients to call the surgery to get test results. All test results coming back to the surgery are reviewed by the referring clinician (or deputy in case of absence), and if follow up action is needed, the patient is contacted.

### Waiting time

One of the most frequent complaints we get from patients is that their appointments never start on time, and that they have to sit far too long in the waiting room. The truth of this is reflected in the survey results. 54% of our patients report having to wait between 5 and 15 minutes. Our only consolation is that this result is almost identical to the Hillingdon average of 52% and only 3 percentage points away from the national average at 51%. We know from our computer records that most of our consulting sessions start on time and that our doctors and nurses do not stop for tea and coffee breaks. This means that the reason for late running must be that previous consultations have taken longer than the allotted 10 minutes. Our GPs and nurses don't generally hurry their patients along during the consultation, they allow them to proceed at their own pace. This is reflected in the fact that 97% of survey respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the amount of time they are given by the doctor. This is marginally better than the averages across both Hillingdon and England. The consequence however is that consultations often over-run. Having dealt with one problem in a consultation, we hope that our patients will understand if they are asked to book another appointment when they introduce a second problem after the expiry of 10 minutes. If we could limit every consultation to 10 minutes, we would run to schedule. We ask for your help in this.

### Opening Times – bad news, good news and mistaken impressions

84% of our patients are satisfied with our opening times.

10% of our patients think we're open before 8am – we're not.

27% of our patients think the surgery is closed at lunchtime – in fact it's open for visiting patients but we don't take telephone calls between 12.30 and 1.30pm.

4 of our survey respondents think we're open on a Sunday – we're not, and hardly anyone expects us to be.

38% of our patients think we're not open after 6.30pm – we are. Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening, partners take it in turn to offer six appointments between 6 and 7pm. These are for the convenience of patients who find it easier to attend surgery after work. All of these appointments are bookable.

25% of our patients think we're not open on a Saturday – we are! – so that's good news for those who said they'd like us to be open then. Every other Saturday morning two GP partners hold regular surgeries with bookable appointments.

These sessions are not for emergency walk in patients, they are for those patients who find it difficult to come to the surgery during the working week. Note however that we don't take telephone calls on a Saturday.

### Confidence and trust in doctors

We're surprised that we scored only 97% in this. We don't understand why the remaining three percent are still registered with us. But at 97% we're still ahead of the national average of 94% and the Hillingdon score of 92%.

### Cleanliness

93% of patients think the building is very clean, this compares with a 61% average over Hillingdon. The building is cleaned every day, if you come across an area you think requires attention please let us know.

### Recommending the surgery to someone who moved here

A total of 94% of our patients said they might or would definitely recommend this practice to someone who had moved into the area. Thank you for this confidence in us. We have some evidence that this is happening because our list size has increased by more than 300 over the past 6 months.

## THE MOUNTWOOD SURGERY WEBSITE

[www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk](http://www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk)

Our website is updated regularly and is intended to give you full information about the services we offer. We have included downloadable forms and information about blood tests, travel advice, child immunisations and lots of information about additional services including our Mountwood Health Station.

You can use the links to order medication, books or to cancel appointments and send messages to the practice. We aim to update the site with any changes or new information as quickly as possible. This includes changes to our morning emergency clinics, dates of flu clinics and other current issues.

Visit [www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk](http://www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk) today and add it to your favourites for easy access.

Our thanks to David Dix our volunteer webmaster who develops and updates this site.

## CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION (CCTV)

Patients should be aware that we have 22 CCTV cameras installed in public areas inside and outside Mountwood Surgery. They are for crime prevention and staff, patient and premises security. Images from the cameras are recorded and held securely for 30 days. .

Other than in accordance with statutory rights, the viewing of images will be at the discretion of the Practice Manager who is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. Images may be provided to law enforcement agencies, prosecution agencies and relevant legal representatives.

## STAFF CHANGES

Hasmig Shahbazian, Records Clerk, retired during 2010 after almost 20 years service. Dr Tamie Downes moved to pastures new. Welcome to Sonnel Bhadresra and Dr Helen Neuenschwander who joined us. Glenys Penny retired at the end of January and Max Black will retire at the end of March 2011. Gillian Tobin will succeed Max as Practice Manager.

## MOUNTWOOD HEALTH INFORMATION STATION

We're very keen for our patients to learn more about their own health problems and develop self-management skills. For the last two years a team of volunteer advisors has operated a drop in "Health Information Station" for the benefit of all Mountwood patients. It is situated next to the surgery reception and is open most weekdays between 9.30 and 11.30am - no appointment necessary.

The advisors help patients to find information on health related issues from books, leaflets, DVD/CDs and the Internet (assistance available). They welcome the chance to research your questions about local fitness classes, patient support groups, medical aids, social services, etc, and have time to chat with you over a cup of tea or coffee. We are delighted to say that this service has been very highly rated by our patients.

Items from our library of health books, relaxation CDs and exercise DVDs are available for free loan. Subjects include stress and anxiety management, behavioural problems in children, chronic pain management, cancer, heart disease, dementia, and many others. There is a full list of loan items on our website, under 'health information'

If you have a health related question, or wish to borrow a book or CD/DVD, our volunteers would love to see you and help you find the information you need. Alternatively you can post your query in the box at reception, or e-mail us at [healthstation@mountwoodsurgery.co.uk](mailto:healthstation@mountwoodsurgery.co.uk) with a daytime

telephone number. One of our volunteers will contact you.

*We would also be pleased to hear from you if you are interested in becoming a volunteer at the Health Information Station. Please leave your details at reception.*

## IMPROVEMENTS TO OUR URGENT SERVICE

Last August we improved our morning urgent clinic. Now, if you feel you have an urgent problem which cannot wait for a routine appointment you should phone the surgery between 8.30 and 10.30am and leave your details with the receptionist, giving an indication of the problem.

Our experienced nurse practitioner or a GP will return your call during the morning and either advise you on how to deal with the problem, or ask you to come to the surgery for a same day appointment with a doctor or nurse. The action taken will depend on clinical need.

This new service enables us to resolve many problems over the telephone without patients having to come to the surgery. If necessary, we can send scripts direct to a local pharmacy. Also it has allowed us to offer more booked GP appointments. Feedback from patients has been very positive.

**Please do not attend the surgery without an appointment. Phone us first.**

## WHO TO SEE AND WHAT FOR ...

### YOUR GUIDE TO THE VARIOUS SPECIAL SKILLS AT MOUNTWOOD

We are proud to have a dynamic team of health professionals, all having a variety of specialist skills and strengths. The table below will help you find the best person for some of the commonest problems we deal with.

#### Key

1\* Our highly experienced Nurse Practitioner will assess/manage any problem deemed an emergency initially via the telephone and if necessary through an urgent appointment

2\* After handing in a completed Travel Health Questionnaire 2 to 3 weeks before the appointment

3\* At the request of the doctor only

4\* For arm injections only

WHO TO SEE BY APPOINTMENT					
Issue/Problem	NURSE PRACTITIONER Caroline Rice	PRACTICE NURSE Sue Furmenger	PRACTICE NURSE Sue Levy	PRACTICE NURSE Amanda Gomm	HEALTH CARE ASSIST. Michaela Meades
Assessment of urgent problem <sup>1*</sup>	✓				
Travel jabs <sup>2*</sup>		✓	✓	✓	
Blood Pressure		✓	✓	✓	✓
Diabetes	✓			✓	
Asthma	✓		✓		
COPD	✓		✓		
Quit smoking			✓		✓
Contraception		✓	✓	✓	
Smear Testing		✓	✓	✓	
Child vaccination		✓	✓	✓	
Wound care		✓	✓	✓	✓
Stitches removal		✓	✓	✓	✓
B12 injections		✓	✓	✓	✓ <sup>4*</sup>
ECG <sup>3*</sup>		✓	✓	✓	✓
Zoladex injection		✓	✓	✓	
Treatment of warts/verrucae	✓	✓	✓	✓	

## GETTING YOUR MEDICATION REQUESTS BACK TO YOU SAFELY.

At Mountwood we pride ourselves on safe prescribing. All requests for repeat prescriptions undergo rigorous checks, this is why we request 2 working days to process them. A few requests may take longer due to their complexity. We highlight here some actions which may help to minimise delays.

All requests for warfarin should be accompanied by the monitoring record.

If you take methotrexate or azathioprine you should be having blood tests every 6 weeks. Lithium levels need to be checked every 3 months and blood tests for amiodarone every 6 months.

If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, asthma or COPD, you should be attending regular reviews at the surgery in the appropriate clinic. See *Who to see* (page 3). If you take heart medicine, the oral contraceptive pill or HRT, you should be reviewed at least annually at the surgery.

Delays often occur when a hospital first requests or changes a medication. We need clear and legible written instructions from the prescribing physician, including the indication for prescribing. This is the case whether the hospital consultation is NHS or private. We will not issue hospital prescriptions without written instructions.

Some specialist medications are outside a GP's field of knowledge. These include IVF drugs and some chemotherapeutic and immunosuppressive medications. We do not prescribe these.

There is increasing concern over the cost of drugs prescribed, not only within Mountwood Surgery but throughout the NHS. One of the quality measures for GPs is now cost effective prescribing. This means that we may change more expensive drugs to cheaper ones as long as they are equally efficacious and safe. The most frequent drugs affected are statins, antihistamines and those used for indigestion and reflux. We do not specify brand names, we prescribe generically.

## APPOINTMENTS

We sometimes have a shortage of appointments for several reasons. Firstly we have a growing list size. Before we moved to Mountwood in 2007 we had about 9,400 registered patients. In October 2010 our list exceeded 10,000 for the first time. Secondly, the role of the GP is changing. Increasingly we are taking on the more complex care of patients who would previously have been treated in hospital. We are moving away from being a "GP Practice" to being a multi disciplinary primary health service, with all clinical staff working together for the benefit of patients. And thirdly, we sometimes have a shortage of appointments during school holidays because most of our clinical staff have school age children and need to have time off then.

Patients who make excessive demands on GPs add to the problem. Many cases presented are minor and could easily have been handled by a nurse, pharmacist or the patient him/herself. Please note also that Mountwood GPs don't offer second opinions on diagnoses made and treatments recommended by other GPs in the practice.

Every Mountwood GP has full confidence in his and her colleagues. For a patient to ask for a second opinion is taking up time which should be spent with another patient who hasn't yet been seen.

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It's worth repeating that patients are registered with the Mountwood practice rather than with an individual doctor, so patients can see any doctor or nurse in this team. All clinicians have access to computer held patient records, letters from hospitals, test results, diagnoses, and treatments, so previous medical history is always known to the clinician. We offer a wide range of appointments which are flexible in their times and the way they can be booked. We run surgeries held by GPs, a nurse practitioner, practice nurses and a health care assistant. When making an appointment over the telephone it can be helpful if you tell the receptionist the reason for the appointment. In some situations the receptionist may be able to offer an earlier appointment with a more appropriate clinician. See *Who to see* (page 3).

We expect our patients to use the appointment booking system responsibly. No patient should ever have more than 2 appointments booked at any one time. Patients should not book a series of appointments and then cancel the less convenient ones. Nor should they book appointments just in case someone in the family falls ill. Please don't book too far in advance unless it is necessary. We know that some patients forget long term appointments and do not attend. Too often patients do not turn up for booked appointments. This is a waste of our time and prevents others from getting a much needed appointment. Over an 11 week period commencing on 1st August last year there were 162 occasions where patients had booked appointments and didn't turn up. That's an average of THREE APPOINTMENTS WASTED EVERY DAY. If you book an appointment and realise you cannot attend, we expect you to inform us at the earliest opportunity so we can offer the appointment to someone else. The majority of patients will be pleased to know that we intend to track those who habitually don't turn up and if necessary remove them from our patient list.

We still have a branch surgery at Northwood Health Centre although we don't run many surgeries from there. Please be sure to know which location you're booking an appointment for.

## DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT DETAILS?

It's important that we have your up-to-date address and contact details, including your e-mail address and mobile phone number, as we may wish to use either of these methods to contact you in the future. You can check with reception that we have your current details.

For change of address please complete one of our forms, or write to us with full information. Please include other members of the household who are moving with you.

If you are in doubt as to whether your new address is in our catchment area, you can check the boundaries at [www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk](http://www.mountwoodsurgery.co.uk)