

October 2018



## Townsend House Medical Centre Newsletter

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# Our New 'Duty Team'

We are very pleased to welcome a new member of staff, Jason Jones to the surgery and are excited to offer a new and innovative way of managing on the day demand within the practice.

We are implementing a new 'Duty Team' system, which will see the on the day Duty Doctor, the Reception Manager, Jason and our Minor Illness Nurse Selina, who will work closely together to ensure all on the day enquiries and concerns are dealt with in a timely manner, based on the clinical need, by the correct member of staff.

To enable us to do this, the reception staff will guide you through a few questions to ensure we have the right information to make the correct decision about your care. We please ask that you work with our team as far as you are able to provide this information. This will avoid delays in organising the right response for you on the day. We are hopeful that this will mean the answer from the surgery will be more efficient and help us to help you sooner.

As always we welcome feedback on our new venture and hope that we can work together to provide the right care for our patients now and in the future.

Please see page 6 for frequently asked questions.

## Are you eligible for the Flu vaccination?

We are currently taking bookings for the Flu Vaccine. The vaccines are being produced slightly later than normal this year and we will start vaccinating patients from October onwards.

Please ask at reception for the next available appointment.



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## SMS text messages and Emails

If you have a mobile phone and would like to receive appointment reminders and other health information relating to your care please speak to one of our receptionists.



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## Staff News

### Jason Jones

Jason will be joining the team here at Townsend House as Clinical Specialist Practitioner. He has extensive experience having Worked for the NHS for a number of years, he will also play a big part in our new duty team providing urgent on the day care, including home visits.

### Mrs Amy Dare

Amy has returned from Maternity leave and we are pleased to have her back working with the team.

### Connor Cox

Connor has completed his year apprenticeship at Townsend House and we wish him all the best of luck for the future.

### Mrs Becky Cottam

Becky has joined the practice as a new member of our admin team. Welcome to the team Becky.

## Friends and Family Test

Have you taken our friends and family test? Whilst waiting for your appointment why not take our test? Its quick and simple to complete and 100% confidential. Please ask a receptionist for a card and post it in the box when its complete or why not go onto our website and complete it on there. We welcome and promote all feedback from our patients.



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## Surgery Website

Please visit our website:

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

We now have a new community health tab on our website where there is information on local community groups.

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## Park Run

Seaton Park Run is a FREE 5k run that takes place every Saturday morning at 9am on Seaton Esplanade. It's a great opportunity to socialise, make friends and feel part of your local community as well as being active and improving your health and well being. Walk, jog or run the 5k— the most important thing is that you have fun! As part of the 'park run practice' initiative launched by park run UK (in collaboration with the RCGP) Townsend House Medical Centre are proud to announce that we are now a registered 'Park run Practice' and will be supporting our local park run! For more information of how to register to run, look online or ask in surgery;



<http://www.parkrun.org.uk/seaton/>

## Alternative Services

- Minor Injury Units/Minor Illness units (MIU): these can deal with a range of common conditions, including suspected fractures, local MIU services are located in Axminster, Sidmouth, Honiton and Exmouth to name a few. Please consult their websites for timings.
- Walk-in-centres in Exeter provide a similar service to MIU's. No appointment is necessary
- Family planning/sexual health clinics are located in Exmouth and Exeter, and provide confidential advice on contraception and sexual health, and you do not need to be referred by a GP
- Emergency Departments (A&E) are located at Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital and Musgrove Park in Taunton. These are suitable for more severe problems, or when the MIU's are closed at night or weekends. If you are not sure if you should attend there, 111 can give advice
- Community pharmacies, such as Tesco, Lloyds, Colyton and Beer, can all provide advice and some of them are able to treat common infections such as urine infections and conjunctivitis. They can also provide advice on issues such as Chlamydia screening.
- Opticians are a good source of advice on eye problems, and can refer you to the hospital eye clinic if necessary, e.g. for cataracts
- If you have a dental problem, the best place to seek advice is a dentist. They are specialists in this area and can provide treatment for the current problem, and advice on preventing recurrences. GP's, A&E and MIU's do not provide dental services. If you are not registered with a dentist contact 111 who will advise you where to go to seek emergency dental treatment

NHS 111 is a free helpline, which will provide advice 24 hours a day, and will also advise on which facilities are open in your area.

## eConsult

### Consult our doctors online

Our eConsult service lets you:

- Request advice and treatment from our practice online
- Get self-help advice for hundreds of common conditions

GET STARTED

**If you have a non-urgent query, consider using eConsult to obtain advice. This is a free online service available through our website that will collect important information regarding your condition and we will provide a response within 24 hours**

**In order to access this service you will need to visit our website**

**[www.townsendhousesurgery.co.uk](http://www.townsendhousesurgery.co.uk)**

## The New Duty Team — Frequently Asked Questions

### Why are you making this change?

The demand for GP services is increasingly at a rapid rate due to the ageing population and the drive to keep people out of hospital. This is at a time when it is becoming harder and harder to recruit doctors into general practice. As a result we are having to look at new ways to deal with our patients issues, rather than just having every contact with a doctor. This will allow doctors the time to deal with more complex problems face-to-face, giving patients the time they need.

### Is this just a way of having less doctors?

No, we have actually increased the number of clinical staff working as well as adding new options to help you address your problem

### I don't trust the receptionist with my confidential information

All of our staff have been trained to a high level in all aspects of medical reception work, with particular emphasis on confidentiality. If you would not like to discuss your issues with our administration staff, you have the option of speaking instead to the reception manager. Unfortunately if you won't discuss the nature of your problem our staff will not be able to arrange the right service for you, so we ask that you help us to help you.

### I think I need a prescription, so I need to see a doctor

We are fortunate to have highly trained clinical staff, including pharmacists, paramedics and minor illness nurses who are trained to assess and treat a wide range of conditions, including arranging X rays, medication and physiotherapy. They work closely with the doctors to provide a combined service

I want to speak to a doctor, why can't you just book a phone call with them like you used to?

Over the last few years the volume of demand on GP services has mushroomed, and doctors in the practice are spending 1-2 hours a day, every day on the phone. This is reducing the amount of time they have available to see patients face-to-face and carry out home visits. We know our patients value face-to-face appointments, so we have had to limit the number of phone calls each doctor can provide a day, to ensure we have time to do this properly.

Why do I have to explain why I want to speak to a doctor?

We have reviewed all of our phone calls requested from doctors. 40% of these could have been dealt with by another member of our team, such as receptionists, secretaries or nurses, and on 21% of occasions when the doctor called the patient they didn't answer the phone. A system that allows our staff to follow a protocol collecting all of the necessary information and then direct the call to the most appropriate member of staff will get patients the advice they need promptly, and in many cases the administration staff will be able to call the patient back with the advice they need.

I don't want to answer questions on the phone, I will just come up to reception at the surgery and ask for an appointment

The same system will apply whether you request a phone call, a face-to-face appointment, via online services, or over the phone. If you would like to discuss your requirements with the reception staff they can do this in a confidential area.

I work full time, I don't have time to go through a questionnaire on the phone and wait for an answer.

We have recently instituted a system called eConsult that allows patients to use the internet to obtain advice on medical queries, with a response within 2 working days. In addition you can email the practice through our website with medication queries

I can't come to the surgery in working hours

We all have times when we struggle to get to the doctors due to work or family commitments. As part of East Devon Health, the federation of East Devon GP practices, our patients can attend booked or on the day appointments on evenings and weekends at other practices in the area, open on a rota. Full details will be available when the system starts in Autumn 2018. The clinicians in these surgeries will have full access to your medical records and should be able to deal with your problems. There is also the option of attending Honiton MIU, and 111 for urgent problems.

I don't like the new system.

We all feel unsettled by change, but hope you will support us going forward in our aim to deliver the best possible care to our patients. We would be delighted to receive any feedback, good or bad, to help us fine tune the system, and thank you for your help in this.

**There will inevitably be a few teething problems, but please be patient with our administration staff, they have a very challenging job and are doing their best for our patients.**

**If you would like to discuss any issues face to face please contact the practice manager, Mrs Elly Potter**

**Address:**

49 Harepath Road  
Seaton  
Devon  
EX12 2RY

**Telephone Number:**

01297 20616

**Opening Hours:**

Monday to Friday 8am  
to 6pm  
Closed weekends

**Website:**

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

**Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/Townsendhousesurgery](http://www.facebook.com/Townsendhousesurgery)

**Twitter:**

[https://twitter.com/townsend\\_house](https://twitter.com/townsend_house)

**Out of Hours Contact Numbers:**

For medical assistance outside of normal surgery opening hours of 8am to 6pm please contact the appropriate service as listed below.

- ◆ For emergencies such as chest pain or accidents please contact **999**
- ◆ For medical advice or an out of hours Doctor please contact **NHS 111**