

Patient Newsletter

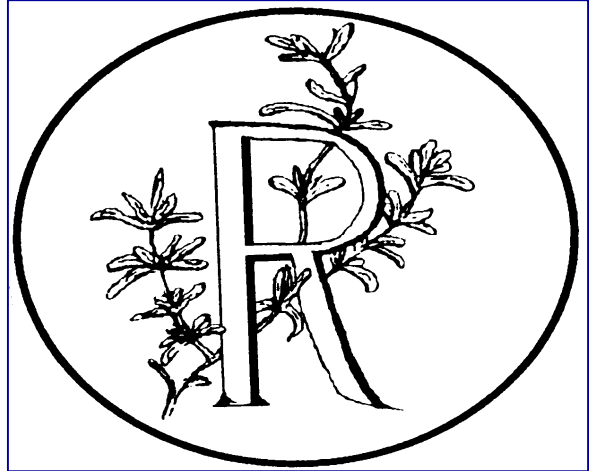
Issue 1
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Rosemary Medical Centre 2 Rosemary Gardens, Parkstone, Poole BH12 3HF Tel: 0844 477 3101

A very warm welcome to the patients of

Rosemary Medical Centre. This is the first issue of our new look patient newsletter which we hope you will enjoy and find informative. Our aim is to keep you up to date with practice developments and our plans for the future, as well as providing you with the information you need to make your visit to the surgery as comfortable and stress-free as possible.

As with most newsletters, the purpose is to inform; this we will do on a periodic basis so please keep a lookout for the latest issue. In addition, we would like to hear your views and suggestions for improvement; this you can do via our red patient suggestion box located in the waiting room by the entrance to the conservatory.



The Practice Team comprises 5 GP Partners lead by our Senior Partner, Dr John Lovejoy, and Dr Steve Warlow, Dr Colin Pugh, Dr Jo Wisely and Dr Sue Garland. They are supported by our Nurse Practitioner (in training) Sarah and Sister Debbie, Sister Sandy, Sister Linda and our Health Care Assistant, Jackie. The Reception team is lead by the Reception Manager, Karen, and 6 other part-time receptionists. Four other admin / support staff, plus our Practice Manager, Mike Mimms, go to make up the full compliment of Rosemary Medical Centre employees.

We are also fortunate enough to have our own team of District Nurses and Health Visitors, plus a visiting Midwife, Physiotherapist and Counsellor. Although these teams specifically support and care for our patients and work out of our building they are in fact paid employees of Bournemouth & Poole Teaching Primary Care Trust.

USEFUL SELF HELP INTERNET SITES

Many common aches and pains can be treated at home without the need to consult a Doctor. Your local Pharmacist will also be happy to provide you with health care advice and self care promotions.

There are also a number of very good websites offering expert advice for self help. If you don't have access to a computer at home the staff at your local library are now fully trained and able to assist you in your search. These local government employees are now also bound by the Patient Confidentiality Code of Conduct.

Websites we would recommend are:

www.nhs.uk will lead you to the recently revamped and relaunched NHS Choices "Your health, your choices" website. Here you will find a whole host of useful and informative information such as finding a Hospital, GP or Dentist in your area. There is also a highly detailed (and explicit) interactive section to help you understand and manage your condition(s). Here you can find out anything from Asthma to Diabetes management to the cause and treatment of the common cold.

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk here you can find out the latest recommendations for common illnesses as well as diabetes, asthma, stop smoking, sexually transmitted diseases, diet, childhood illnesses and much more. You can also call them 24 hours a day on 0845 4647 or if you have digital TV through the FreeView service or Sky Interactive.

www.besttreatment.com this site is owned and produced by the BMJ (British Medical Journal) and boasts an international team of experienced writers and medical experts across a variety of fields. Their aim is to provide patients, Doctors and other Health Care professionals with the highest quality information based on the latest research evidence.

www.teenagehealthfreak.org is based on the world-wide hugely successful series of books and the award winning UK TV series. Its aim is to provide accurate and reliable health information to teenagers in a contemporary, cringe-free, entertaining and informative way.

THE RECEPTION TEAM is lead by the Reception Manager, Karen. If you have any general questions or issues you wish to raise, then Karen will be only to happy to help. However, it would help us immensely if you could call during our less busy periods, like late morning or mid afternoon. Karen is ably assisted by Penny, Caz, Nicky, Julie, Jill & Jann, all of whom are highly trained and experienced Medical Receptionists. They, like all staff working in the NHS, are bound by our Patient Confidentiality Code of Conduct and will treat your call and any information you provide, in the strictest confidence.

MAKING AN APPOINTMENT can usually be made up to 2 months in advance. For regular or routine appointments please try to give as much notice as possible; your flexibility in avoiding busy surgery times of the day would also be most appreciated. If you feel you have a problem that cannot wait, please telephone the surgery as soon as possible after 8 am. It is standard practice for the Receptionists to ask you to describe your problem. We do fully understand that many patients take exception to this, however, it is paramount that you co-operate with them as they are fully trained and will be able to direct you more efficiently to the most appropriate health care professional to help with your problem. For example, some of our Nurses are specifically trained in Asthma related problems. Other conditions may require a double appointment slot and others may require a combined Doctor and Nurse appointment. In addition, we have an experienced team of District Nurses and Health Visitors who may be better equipped to deal with your problem. Triage surgeries are run every weekday, mornings & afternoons. They are not for long-standing problems but for medical conditions that you feel cannot wait (for any life threatening conditions you should call 999 immediately). Once you have given the Receptionist your details you will be given a time when the Duty Doctor will call you back to discuss your problem and decide the best course of action. If necessary, the Doctor will give you a time to come up if they would like to see you.

OUR TELEPHONE SYSTEM was installed in April 2006 as a direct result of patient feedback who advised us that they found it difficult to get through to us. From a normal BT land-line you will be charged less than 5 pence per minute. Because of the 0844 prefix, some call providers automatically list these calls under their "premium rate" section; however, the actual cost of the call should still remain at under 5 pence per minute, which is the same cost as dialling NHS Direct. Unfortunately, calls made from mobile telephones will be significantly higher than this for which we apologise but this is at the discretion of your individual mobile call providers.

The system itself allows for 4 incoming calls to be handled simultaneously and the "push-button" selection allows you to be put through to the appropriate section. If your call cannot be answered, especially during peak call periods, you will be placed in a queue and advised what position you are. This will give you the option of holding-on or calling back later.

There have been many inaccuracies reported in the press about 0844 numbers used to generate income. This is simply not true. We do receive a very small amount of revenue from certain types of calls which helps to reduce the overall cost of our monthly telephone bill; however, we categorically do not make a profit from your calls. The reduction in our monthly call charges helps us to fund other medical services.

However, we do recognise the strength of feeling from some of our patients about 0844 numbers and we promise to review our telephone system again when our present fixed-term contract with NEG Telecoms comes up for renewal in 2011.



SELF TREATMENT OF COMMON ILLNESSES

Did you know . . .most **coughs, colds** and **sore throats** are **viral** infections. This means that antibiotics (that help your body fight off **bacterial** infections) do not make you better any faster. Simple measures can make you feel better while your body fights off the infection, such as; resting, paracetamol or aspirin and fluids.

Gastroenteritis (vomiting and diarrhoea) is usually a viral infection that can last a few days - take plenty of clear fluids (water, flat lemonade or clear soup) to combat the effects of dehydration. Eat carbohydrate based energy foods (e.g., toast) and avoid dairy products. Adults should consult a GP if you have severe cramps, your symptoms last longer than 5 days or starts after foreign travel. In the case of babies or young children, if symptoms persist for more than 24 hours, and you are worried, you should consult a Health Visitor.

Stings and Allergies - Antihistamines can be useful to reduce itching, e.g.Piriton (Chlorphenamine) from the chemist.

Sprains....initial treatment is rest, apply cold compress (ice wrapped in a towel), elevate and take painkillers. A compression bandage or tubigrip may help to keep swelling down.

Attend A&E if you cannot take any weight through your foot at all.

Backache....most is due to ligament or muscle inflammation. It will usually be very sore for 3 - 4 days before easing off. Anti-inflammatory painkillers (eg. Ibuprofen) can help but beware contra-indications. Contact your GP if you need stronger painkillers or if it is not settling.

STAFF CHANGES

At the end of July we shall be saying a sad farewell to **Sue Fox** who, after 22 years of loyal service, has decided to retire from both Rosemary Medical Centre and from the Medical Research Council, where Sue was also an area trainer for the South West region. Sue would like to thank every one of you who has supported her work on the MRC over the years and I am sure you will join us all in wishing Sue a very happy retirement.

We are pleased to announce the arrival of **Maria** who joined the Administration team on 9th June. Maria is a highly experienced medical receptionist and administrator who will be a huge asset to our team.