

# THE BLACKDOWN PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

## JUNE 2008

### Saturday Mornings Are All Change!

#### **From July 5 2008 there are changes to the Saturday morning surgery at Hemyock**

The government has decided that all Doctors surgeries should offer routine appointments outside office hours. This means a change to the Saturday morning surgery at Hemyock.

From Saturday 5 of July, the Saturday morning surgery will be **BOOKED APPOINTMENTS ONLY.**

There will be a mixture of routine appointments that can be booked in advance and some appointments that can be booked on the day.



From the 5 July 2008:

- Patients will be seen between 8:00am and 11:00am.
- The dispensary will be open between 8:00am and 11:00am.
- **We will no longer be able to see patients who “walk-in and wait”.**
- Please make sure that you phone the surgery to make an appointment if you wish to be seen on a Saturday morning.
- The routine appointments starting at 8:00am are for patients who are unable to see their usual doctor during the week. Wherever possible, when booking these appointments, you should choose a Saturday when your usual doctor is on duty.
- There will only be a very limited number of appointment slots that can be booked on the day.
- When all the appointments are filled you will need to contact the out of hours doctor, the same as you would if the surgery was closed.

#### **How it used to be...**

When the national GP contract changed in 2003, most surgeries across the country decided to close on a Saturday morning but the Blackdown Practice continued to open.

This was because the Doctors felt it was important that a local medical service was available for patients who needed it on a Saturday morning, and also to give patients the opportunity to collect their prescriptions if they couldn't do so during the week.

# THE BLACKDOWN PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

## **JUNE 2008**

### **Saturday mornings have now changed...**

There has been another change to the GP contract. Although the practice will still open on a Saturday, even extending the length of time it is open, we are now required by the government to offer appointments which can only be booked in advance.

Therefore the practice has no choice but to change the Saturday morning surgery at Hemyock and we can no longer offer our patients a 'walk-in and wait' surgery anymore.

### **What happens when all the appointment slots have been booked?**

It is important to realise that there are now only a certain number of appointments available, with a lot fewer appointments available to book on the day.



If you want to be seen by a doctor on the day you must phone the surgery on 01823 680206 before travelling to the practice. The receptionist will be able to tell you if there are any appointments left that morning at Hemyock. If the surgery is full the receptionist will be able to give you the telephone numbers for the out of hours healthcare services. If the telephone goes to the automatic message saying that the surgery is closed, this means that the appointment slots are already full.

When the appointment slots for the Saturday morning surgery have been filled, you will need to contact other healthcare services in exactly the same way as if the surgery were closed.

- If you need to see a doctor then you should telephone the Devon Doctors' On Call out of hours service on 0845 6710 270.
- For health information and advice you can also phone NHS Direct on 0845 4647.
- As always, if it is a medical emergency, 999 should be called.

### **Lost Property**

We have a Game Boy Colour that was left behind in the waiting room at Hemyock some time ago.

If you think it belongs to a member of your family, please telephone the surgery and arrange collection. Otherwise it will be donated to a charity at the end of August.

### **Improving practice questionnaire**

Thank you to everyone who filled in a questionnaire. The results of the survey for each surgery are available in the waiting rooms.

Thank you for all your kind comments about the service we provide. We are trying to sort out some of the problems that you have identified when using the surgery.

**If you have any comments you would like to make about the services we offer, good or bad, please do not hesitate to contact Karen Button, Practice Manager.**