

THE BLACKDOWN PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2007

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Welcome back to Dr Amanda Leach who has returned to work after six months maternity leave and goodbye to Dr Nikki Smales who looked after Dr Leach's patients so well while she was away.

Goodbye to Dawn West, receptionist at Hemyock, who will be leaving the practice at the end of April. We have three new members of staff joining the team during April, Jennifer Moore, Linda Neill and Marie Case, who will all be working at Hemyock, either in dispensary or on reception.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

We continue to experience problems with patients who do not attend for their appointments. This is especially distressing when the surgeries are very busy and some patients are struggling to get an appointment as quickly as they would like.

We would be very grateful if you could telephone the practice in plenty of time if you know either that you cannot attend or you no longer need to attend so that your appointment slot can be offered to another patient.

DUNKESWELL SURGERY

Commencing on Wednesday 28th April there will be some refurbishment work carried out at Dunkeswell surgery and we would like to apologise in advance for any inconvenience this causes. Although the surgery will remain open the number of appointments will be reduced in an effort to minimise the number of patients onsite during this period. Although most of the work is being carried out in the office to try and improve working conditions for the staff, the waiting room and treatment room are going to have new flooring and we hope to purchase new chairs and a fish tank for the waiting room in the very near future.



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CRITICAL FRIENDS GROUP

The critical friends group met at the end of March and discussed the outcomes from this year's patient satisfaction survey. In general the results were very good (see the table overleaf) and were higher than the national average in virtually all areas. One area of concern was the apparent lack of satisfaction with the opening hours at Dunkeswell, particularly in comparison with the satisfaction achieved at Churchinford, when Dunkeswell is only closed for one afternoon more than Churchinford each week. It was agreed that patients need to be reminded that they are registered with The Blackdown Practice which is based at Hemyock, and that both Churchinford and Dunkeswell are actually branch surgeries. The practice can therefore be contacted via Hemyock even when the branch surgeries are closed.

Results from the patient satisfaction survey 2007:

	This Year	Last Year	National Average
Hemyock	70%	70%	62%
Churchinford	74%	72%	62%
Dunkeswell	66%	63%	62%

Further details, including examples of the comments made about the practice, will be available in the surgery waiting rooms as soon as possible.

NEW APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

The practice will be implementing a new appointment system during the next few weeks with an official "go live" date of Wednesday 25th April. We would therefore ask for your patience with staff whilst they are learning to use the new system as, although ultimately it will be quicker for them to find free appointment slots, in the short term they will probably be a little bit slower.

HOME VISITS

We would be very grateful if anyone requesting a home visit could do so before 11.00 in the morning. This allows the visits to be allocated between the doctors so that the majority can be done after morning surgery and before the afternoon surgery starts.

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....and so GOODBYE

After four and a half very happy years I am leaving on 20th April to move to sunnier climes. I will miss everyone that I have worked with but am sure that I am leaving the practice in very capable hands. My successor Karen Button has, most recently, been the pharmaceutical adviser for Mid Devon PCT. In this role she has worked closely with The Blackdown Practice, and the partners and I and some of the staff therefore know her well. I am sure that she will settle into her new role quickly and that she will be made to feel very welcome by patients and staff alike.

To those of you who I have met I bid a very fond farewell.

Wendy Eggleton, Practice Manager

If you have any comments you would like to make about the services we offer, whether good or bad, please do not hesitate to contact the practice manager.