



Dunbeath Practice Newsletter

January 2005

Repeat Prescriptions

As mentioned in our last newsletter, we would ask that repeat prescription requests are made after 11am except on a Tuesday morning. This will allow for improved processing of your prescription.

Collection can be made after 2pm, giving at least 24 hours notice. If you are only able to collect your prescription first thing in the morning due to work commitments, then we ask that you give us 48 hours notice.

Out Of Hours/NHS24

Due to personal circumstances, Dr Usher can no longer be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for both your safety and that of Dr Usher. As there is no cross cover available in the short-term, and there is no possibility of a temporary solution, Dr Usher has found it necessary to opt out of out-of-hours on a permanent basis.

In practice, what this means is that as of 1st February, Dr Usher is only responsible for the practice from 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday. During the remaining period, NHS Highland now has responsibility for managing your care for emergencies that are unable to wait until Dr Usher is on duty.

If you need a doctor out-of-hours, or even simply require advice, you can still phone the surgery number. Your call will, however, be put directly through to NHS24, who handle all calls for NHS Highland. Alternatively, you can phone NHS24 direct on 08454 24 24 24.

They will ask you for some basic information, then pass your call to a nurse adviser. If at the initial stage, it is clear you need an emergency ambulance, then this will be arranged for you. Alternatively, you can telephone 999 direct.

The nurse adviser will discuss your symptoms with you, and may offer advice, ask you to attend the out of hours centre in Wick, or if necessary, arrange for a doctor to visit. These doctors are all trained GPs, but may work purely in the out of hours period. If you do not have transport, this may be arranged for you.

If you have any complaints about this service, then please address them either to NHS Highland or to NHS24. You may still mention them to the practice, but we can take no further action unless you authorise us to take it up with these services on your behalf.

We are sorry that it has come to this, but feel it is now the best option for patient safety.

Midwifery Cover

All out of hours calls for antenatal problems or possible labour will be triaged via the Henderson Wing at Caithness General. They will either ask you to attend the hospital, or will send out a midwife to assess you.

This is to save time for you if you should need admitted, and also save you the problem of knowing which midwife is on call. In an emergency, therefore, contact the hospital direct, and ask to be put through to the Henderson Wing.

From April 1st, the midwifery service will be changing due to new legislation as regards the hours required to maintain practice. As a result, Sister Marjorie Allan and Sister Rita Sutherland will no longer be working as midwives, but will continue their district nursing role. As yet, there is no definite information as to future cover, but it is likely that the midwives will come out from Wick.

Web Site

Any suggestions for content can be emailed to andrew@dunbeathsurgery.co.uk

It has been slow to develop in part due to lack of interest!

Practice Development

As many of you may already be aware, Dr Usher is expecting a baby, and will therefore be on maternity leave from February 28th onwards. There will be locum cover during this time, with locums that will be familiar to many of you! There is a different locum each week, although most are coming back more than once. Please feel free to ask reception staff who is covering.

During this time, Marion Pink will continue to run her nurse clinic on a Thursday afternoon, and you are welcome to attend her for routine matters, such as blood pressure checks, etc. Some of you will also be invited for routine annual checks before Dr Usher goes on leave. In addition, Marion Pink is undergoing a refresher in taking blood, and you may be asked if you are willing to participate in her retraining. Whether you choose to agree is entirely up to you!

Remember, outside surgery hours your call to the surgery (731205) will be diverted to NHS24.

Other useful numbers include:-

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| NHS24 | (0845) 4 24 24 24 | |
| Caithness General Hospital | (01955) 605050 | |
| District Nurses (9am – 5pm) | (01593) 731218 | |
| Chiropodist | (01955) 604758 | (for appointments) |
| Health Visitor | (01955) 611479 | |
| Home Help Department | (01955) 602413 | |
| Social Work Department | (01955) 605040 | |
| CPNs | (01955) 605128 | |