

The Cross Keys Practice

July 2020 newsletter

See our 'How to' leaflets'. Pick up a leaflet available in reception.

- How to amend your personal details
- How to book an appointment
- How to order a repeat prescription
- How to be seen as a temporary patient or as an 'immediate & necessary patient'
- How to get your test results
- How to make a compliment, comment or complaint
- How to register a death with the Registrar
- How to request Private / Non NHS paperwork

Staff Training Dates 2020

The practice will be closed from 1.00pm on the following dates for staff training.

Wednesday 15th July

Tuesday 22nd September

Wednesday 21st October

Thursday 19th November

If you need assistance during these afternoons, please call 111.

Staff changes

Three months later than planned, we say goodbye to one of our Practice Nurses, Karin Van de Waal. Karin has worked with us for an amazing 17 and a half years and we thank her for agreeing to stay on for an extra 3 months during the COVID pandemic. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

In May we welcomed Dr Kate Thilthorpe to the Practice working as a Salaried GP. She will be working 2 days a week at our Chinnor surgery.

You may be interested to hear that Dr Stephanie Cumberworth, Dr Hayley Parkes and Leanne Phillips, from our reception team, all gave birth to baby boys in May. They are all doing well and we send our congratulations to them all!

Thank you

We would like to thank all our patients for their patience and understanding whilst we have moved to working in a completely different way in the last few months. Your support has been invaluable.

We also want to say a big thank you to those of you who have sewn scrub bags for us and made us face visors. They have been well used. We have also been treated to pizza, cakes and other goodies from local businesses and individuals to keep us going through this difficult period. We are very thankful for your kindness.

How things have changed due to Covid-19

Since March we have changed the way in which we work. These are some of the things that have changed:

- You are no longer able to make a face to face appointment with a GP or Nurse Practitioner without having a telephone consultation first. When you telephone for a GP or Nurse Practitioner appointment, your details are taken by reception after which you are called back by a clinician at some time during the day. The clinician will talk to you on the telephone or via video link. If necessary the clinician will ask you to come in for a face to face consultation

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Open Mon—Thurs

0800—1800

Fri 0800—1700

- GP and Nurse Practitioner telephone appointments can be booked online. Please see our website for details of how to sign up for online appointments.
- The nursing team have started to use Lincoln House, located on New Road in Princes Risborough, for some of their appointments. Please ensure you know where your appointment is before coming to the surgery

What to do if you are invited into the surgery

- only arrive at your allocated time.
- press the intercom button to gain access at Princes Risborough or knock on the door at Chinnor. At Princes Risborough we are currently only using the back door.
- Use the hand sanitiser before entering the building
- Wear a face covering from Monday 15th June 2020
- Sit on the designated seats
- Do not bring anyone with you to your appointment unless they are a carer or are a parent of under 16s

Cervical Smears

During the lockdown period we delayed women coming in for their cervical smear tests. We are now offering cervical smear clinics again so if you have received an invitation letter please telephone to make an appointment.

Antibody Testing

We have had quite a few enquires in recent weeks about the availability of antibody testing.

At the time of writing this newsletter, this is not something we are able to carry out for patients.

We are unsure as to whether this is something General Practice will offer in the future.

Flu Clinics

We are already starting to think about our flu clinics and the ways in which we can make these work to ensure social distancing is in place to keep both our patients and staff safe. We will keep you up to date with our plans.

Our flu vaccinations are due to be delivered in September and we would encourage you to book early as we will only have a limited stock. We believe the uptake may be higher this year.

Please check our website regularly to check when appointments become available.



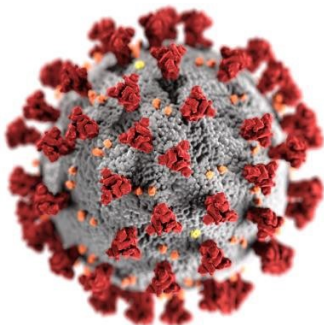
COVID-19: How to avoid spreading the infection

DO

- stay at least 2 meters (3 steps) away from anyone you do not live with when outside your home
- Wash your hands with soap and water often—do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- If you can, wear something that covers your nose and mouth when it's hard to stay away from people, such as in shops or on public transport

DON'T

- do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean



PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

When I wrote our last piece, life was still 'normal', now we are asked to think about a new normal. Life has always had risks; we had come to learn to live with risks and managed them according to our own personal circumstances. Be it simple things, like deciding where to go on holiday or more challenging buying a new home or starting another job. Now we have another risk consideration which has quite overwhelmed us for the past few months. The COVID 19 virus has challenged us all but, like so many other risks, we can manage the risk of catching COVID 19. There are some things we cannot manage like our age, ethnicity or baldness! However, there are many things we can do. We can limit contact with others by following the social distancing guidelines, wash our hands, keep fit and lose that extra weight we have always meant to. Sadly, even if you do all these things there is still a chance you could succumb to COVID 19. Some people think it will not affect them, so please read the account on the next page of one of our Patient Participation Group (PPG) who followed the guidelines and succumbed. I realised reading this, it is something I wish to avoid and will do my best to reduce the risk of catching COVID 19 by following the guidelines.

We are always looking for new members to join the Patient Participation Group (PPG). We only meet every 3 months and currently meetings are held on Zoom. Please contact me on crosskeysppg@gmail.com if you wish to join us.

Denys Williams

Chair CrossKeys PPG

PATIENT PERSPECTIVE

Written by Shelley Jennings from the PPG

We will all remember the evening of Monday, 23rd March when Boris Johnson announced UK lockdown in response to the coronavirus crisis. We had read the newspapers and watched television reports from China and Italy, but the true seriousness of the threat Covid 19 posed to us all suddenly became very real and immediate. Like everyone else, I took my social responsibilities seriously; I followed Government advice to regularly wash my hands, cleaned and disinfected everything I touched (but trying really hard not to touch my face) stayed at home and hoped I was doing all the right things.

Wednesday, 2nd April late afternoon I was feeling perfectly normal, chatting on the phone with friends about what we hoped to achieve during lockdown. I had just returned from a short trip to collect a prescription and as I was walking back to my car I coughed causing the woman in front of me to turn, stare at me and then run to her car. I was relaying this story to my friend on the phone and we were commenting on how paranoid people had become – after all it was just one small cough! And yet ironically, later that evening I started to feel unwell with flu-like symptoms and an annoying cough. The severity of my symptoms quickly escalated and soon my entire body ached; I lurched from feeling feverishly hot to shivering, my throat became so sore that I found swallowing difficult and I was coughing. The question was “Did I have it?”

I didn't want to ‘bother’ the GP surgery or block the NHS 111 number so I stayed in bed and took paracetamol which was the only thing that seemed to help alleviate some of the symptoms. Over the next few days my condition worsened; I felt exhausted and a terrible tightness in my chest made breathing such a struggle at times that I couldn't climb a flight of stairs without having to stop for a while. As a fit and active 62 year old I found this alarming. I knew my temperature was high and when we finally dug out the thermometer last used when the children were young, I was worried to see 103F flash across the screen.

By Day 4 I had stopped listening to the news bulletins. The graphic reports from hospital Covid wards, details of emergency hospital admissions and the daily number of deaths were increasing my anxiety levels which didn't help my shortness of breath. Following advice and to put my mind at ease, I packed a small bag of essentials which sat ready by the front door – just in case the worst should happen and I became the next hospital admission statistic.

The next week was grim. I'm not sure I have ever felt so ill and I was anxious about telling my children as I knew how worried they would be not being able to help, but their regular phone calls and amusing messages really lifted my spirits. Then my husband, who had done a fabulous job looking after me, began feeling unwell too. He developed many of the symptoms I had (but - thank goodness - at a much milder level!) and so he was able to function day-to-day, keeping things going at home.

The amazing community spirit that we have seen all around the country is very much alive in Speen, where I live, and all thanks to the many friends and neighbours who regularly checked up on us and made sure we had everything we needed.

I'm pleased to say that my husband's recovery was reasonably quick and I didn't need to go to hospital, but my recovery was slow and progressive over the next few weeks. The coughing and breathlessness continued and even the smallest exertion brought on an overwhelming fatigue - I spent a lot of time sleeping.

One symptom I haven't yet mentioned but which was really peculiar to live with was the complete loss of any sense of taste or smell. Around Day 3 I realised these senses had vanished – you never really appreciate how precious something is until it has gone. I would bury my nose in all sorts of perfumes and foods to try and pick up even the smallest scent but there was absolutely no sense at all. Eating and drinking became nothing more than a process to keep my body nourished; it was like eating textures of cardboard – either crunchy, chewy or sloppy but absolutely no flavour. The loss of both senses lasted for over five weeks and I felt such joy when I could discern the faint smell of freshly cut grass!

Two months on and I finally feel back to my normal self, but I still haven't been able to answer my earlier question. Did I have Covid-19? I certainly had all the symptoms but was never tested so I can't be sure, however I hope I can soon have an antibody test to confirm one way or another. How did I get infected? I can make some guesses but will never really know. Perhaps I was just unlucky.

What I do know is those frightening days feel long behind me and the fatigue and breathlessness which plagued me for the weeks following my recovery have finally abated. My taste buds are back, my sense of smell has returned but, as a small and trivial memento, I can no longer bear the smell or taste of wine!