

Surgery News

Thank you for being patient with us while we were struggling through the change of our computer system at the beginning of November. The good news is that we have survived it. It led to a couple of difficult weeks whilst everyone – particularly the doctors and nurses – had to get used to a completely different way of recording consultations or finding data from patient records. Even jobs as simple as sending internal e-mails and messages took on a whole new dimension. We had allowed extra time for each appointment for those two weeks, but they were still a bit of a struggle at times so if anyone felt we weren't performing up to our usual standards, please accept our apologies. Normal service should have been resumed by the time you read this.

Incidentally, the main reason that we managed to survive the changeover relatively unscathed was that my assistant, Richard Miller did a brilliant job of orchestrating the whole episode. He worked long and hard to ensure that everyone was properly trained before the event, and for the first week or two after it happened must have shed pounds each day as he charged around rescuing the rest of us out from sticky situations our inexperience had led us into. Our receptionist Steve Osborne also deserves a special mention as he too made a terrific contribution, working at Richard's side throughout. Well done and a big "thank you" to both of them.

Christmas is now approaching, though I confess that I haven't had time to get in the mood yet. Sadly, no long weekend for us this year. We will be closed just for Christmas Day, Boxing Day and of course January 1st. Where has 2012 gone? I suppose all the amazing things that happened this year are what has made it seem to race by. In preparation for the inevitable Christmas rush please try to get your repeat prescription requests to us in plenty of time, remembering to put on them the date and place when you want to pick things up.

As many of you will already have found out, our supply of flu jabs arrived at last on 31st October. As far as I know, the company with which we placed our original order has still not managed to release any stock, so we are grateful to MASTA, the supplier which stepped into the breach, for saving our flu jab season, despite the late start. Anyway, we now have plentiful stocks, so if you are due a free jab and haven't yet booked for it, please give us a call and make an appointment. If you are already coming in to see a doctor or nurse about something else, please ask to be jabbed at the same time, which might save you an extra trip in to the surgery.

We are now getting ready for the next change in medical personnel which happens early in January, when Dr Cavenagh will be retiring as a partner and reinventing himself as a part-time salaried GP. Dr Nambi will be taking over his partnership role. At about the same time there will be another very welcome addition to our team as Dr Sirisha Rokkam joins us, also as a part-time salaried GP, working Thursday and Friday, the days that Dr Cavenagh will be dropping.

Dr Rokkam will provide much needed extra appointments with a female GP. These have been in short supply since Dr Letton and Dr Hilton left back in the summer which has been a definite inconvenience for our many patients who prefer to see a lady doctor. I'll tell you more about Dr Rokkam when she starts, but for the moment, suffice it to say that she is already an experienced GP and we are certain that she will quickly become an invaluable asset to the surgery.

Just briefly, another seasonal reminder. As the nights draw in and the weather gets colder, please don't forget elderly relatives, friends and neighbours. This winter it seems that fuel bills are going to soar and that many of the people find it difficult to get out during bad weather but who need warmth most are looking for ways of keeping down their costs. They might well be glad of a friendly visit now and then, or even an occasional invitation to share a meal or just a bit of company in someone else's warm sitting room.

Finally for this month of course, all of us here at the surgery wish you a happy, healthy Christmas and a wonderful 2013. No jubilees, Olympics or even grand slam winners to look forward to perhaps, but just a good summer and twelve peaceful months will do me fine. I hope we all get them.

Hugh Cronin
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