



## TOUCHSCREEN CHECK-IN

Have you ever stood at the end of a long queue at reception, when all you needed to do was check yourself in for your appointment and take a seat in the waiting room?

If you haven't already tried it, you should take advantage of our self check-in touchscreen, located on the wall beside the door situation just to the right of reception. The screen displays easy to follow instructions, asking you to confirm your identity and then the details of your appointment. Once confirmed, the system automatically triggers our appointment software to show that you have arrived and that you are ready to be called.

So save yourself the hassle of long queues: try the touchscreen to check in for your next appointment.

## CARERS

In many ways, unpaid carers are the unsung heroes of healthcare, saving the health service billions every year as they provide help and support to partners, children, relatives, friends or neighbours, who could not manage without their regular and substantial help due to disability, physical or mental illness or addiction.

If you feel that you are or might be an unpaid carer, let your doctor or nurse know at your next consultation. You will be entitled to receive the flu jab at the practice every year, and if you not already reviewed on an annual basis for a pre-existing condition you're welcome to make an appointment with a practice nurse for an annual health check. You can also request to be referred to social work for a carers' assessment.

There are many organisations out there specifically to support carers - ask your doctor or nurse for a list of useful contact, or check the carers page on the practice website.



## STAFFING NEWS

This summer we see the return of two of our previous trainees for their final year of GP specialist training. Dr Jessica Cooper, who was with us August 2009 to February 2010, and Dr Anthony Simon, who was here February to August 2011 (previous profiles in issue 8 and 13 respectively). Both will be joining us again from Tue 7th August.

Since we last saw them they have been busy training in various hospital departments, and Dr Cooper has also spent the last 12 months practicing medicine in Zambia. While there she has been doing a mixture of general medicine as well as paediatrics, treating everything from the familiar hypertension, to crocodile bites and TB.

As we regain a couple of GP trainees, that also means we say goodbye to our current trainee, Dr Juliet Fairfax, who finishes up at Bruntsfield on Fri 3rd August. She's going on to do some locum work around Edinburgh, starting with a four month stint at the Grange Medical Practice.

Since the last newsletter we've seen a further change in the District Nursing Team based here at Bruntsfield. The team leader, Lynne Paton, has moved on to lead the team based at Hermitage Medical Practice, and in her place we have District Nurse Jillian Paulin, who has come to us from Craigmillar.

There is also a new face in the Health Visiting team in the form of Sarah-Jane Percy, a newly qualified Health Visitor who is temporarily stepping into the post left by the recently retired Ann Fraser. She will be based here at the practice for at least a couple of months.

### Forthcoming dates for your calendar:

Mon 17th September

Wed 29th August | Wed 26th September

Public Holiday - Practice closed all day

Staff Training - Practice closed 12.30 - 13.30



## HAY FEVER SELF-HELP TIPS

Hay fever is a common allergic condition that affects up to one-in-five people at some point in their life. While there is no cure, there can be some relief from symptoms with over the counter medication. You can talk to your local pharmacist about the right medication for you, or if you feel your symptoms are worsening you can make an appointment with your usual GP to discuss prescription medication.

There are some steps you can take to minimise your exposure to pollen and potentially lessen your symptoms:

- Avoid cutting grass, playing or walking in grassy areas, and camping.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting in your eyes when you are outdoors.
- Change your clothes and take a shower after being outdoors to remove the pollen on your body.
- Try to stay indoors when the pollen count is high (over 50).
- Keep windows and doors shut in the house. If it gets too warm, draw the curtains to keep out the sun and keep the temperature down.
- Don't keep fresh flowers in the house.
- Vacuum regularly, ideally using a machine with a HEPA (high-efficiency particle arresting) filter.
- Damp dust regularly. Dusting with a wet cloth, rather than a dry one, will collect the dust and stop any pollen from being spread around.
- Keep pets out of the house during the hay fever season. If your pet does come indoors, wash them regularly to remove any pollen from their fur.
- Don't smoke or let other people smoke in your house. Smoking and breathing in other people's smoke will irritate the lining of your nose, eyes, throat and airways, and can make your symptoms worse.
- Keep car windows closed. You can buy a pollen filter for the air vents in your car. This will need to be changed every time the car is serviced.
- Rub a small amount of Vaseline inside your lower nostrils. This can help prevent pollen from entering your nasal passages.
- If possible, avoid drying clothes outside. This will help prevent bringing pollen into your house.

Search [nhsinform.com](http://nhsinform.com) for more information.

## MEASURING BP AT HOME

Following publication of new national guidelines, the Practice clinicians have starting to ask some patients to take blood pressure readings at home. This is in response to research which shows patients often have higher BP readings when taken in a 'medical' environment. It's also thought to be a positive change towards empowering patients to become more involved in their own care. Home readings allow us to assess how a patient's BP varies over a 7 day period, whilst relaxing at home. Our doctors can then decide whether treatment with medication would be advisable.

If your doctor recommends home monitoring, your name will be added to a waiting list and a practice nurse will contact you when one of our monitors becomes available. Some patients may choose to buy their own monitor. If so, they should be 'British Hypertension Society' approved, and should read arm (not wrist) measurements. Further information can be found at [www.bhsoc.org](http://www.bhsoc.org) or from our clinical staff.

## REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS

If you're planning to travel this summer, and you're on one or more repeat medications, please remember to order sufficient quantity to last you the length of your vacation.

Any request received by the practice BEFORE 2pm on a week day should be available for collection (either by you, or by the pharmacy specified on your request) AFTER 3pm the following working day. While we will always try our best to accommodate any patient with an emergency request, keep in mind that our reception staff deal with over 100 repeat requests on a daily basis - usually much more on a Monday - that all need to be processed by them, and then reviewed and signed by a GP, within our processing deadline.

Keeping track of it all is a complex task, especially if any requests are illegible. You can make it easier by ensuring all the details of your request are clear - preferably by using the request form on the tear-off slip from your previous prescription. You can also order your repeats from our practice website, or in writing via post or fax.

*Please remember to inform us if you can't keep your appointment (by phone or online)*

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