



Spring 2021 - **Newsletter**

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STOP PRESS

Vaccination rates for Practice patients as of Friday 16 April...	
80+	99% / 91% (1 st /2 nd dose)
70-79	98% / 42%
60-69	97% / 10%
50-59	95% / 11%

A WARM WELCOME FROM YOUR **PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP**

We are hoping to run a regular newsletter to keep you up to date with changes and innovations at the surgery and perhaps answer some of the questions you may have.

Who are we?

We are a group of registered patients who meet and are actively involved in the practice.

We work together with practice staff to share ideas, offer a patient perspective, and help improve services provided by the practice.

We provide feedback from patients on such things as;

Appointment systems, prescriptions, clinics, health information, building issues etc..

We help to provide patient views via surveys and questionnaires.

We explore the changing need of patients and arrange and support health education activities within the local community.

If you would like to contact us about any issues, or indeed join us, please email us on

ppgstokeroad@gmail.com

Maggie Morris Chair PPG STOKE ROAD

Q & A

with thanks to Dr Whybrew...

This is a list of some of the most common questions currently asked of the PPG.

Is it possible to have a different vaccine as a second dose?

At the fire station, there is no choice on which vaccine you have for your first dose, (you get what they are giving on that session). Your second dose will generally be the same vaccine as the first – this is automatically arranged for second doses at the fire station. The mass vaccination centres (e.g. Malvern) and pharmacy sites, which are booked through a completely separate system, only have Astra Zeneca vaccine available to them. There are some cases where the second dose needs to be different from the first (e.g. where someone has become bedbound since having a first dose of Pfizer and needs the second dose to be given in their own home. Because Pfizer cannot be transported to their home, they would have to have Astra Zeneca for their second dose). We are anticipating that as time goes by, there will be more “mixing and matching” of doses, especially as Pfizer vaccine becomes in shorter supply. Research studies are being done into this already, and there may be situations where some people may be offered a different vaccine for their second dose if the same vaccine is not available at the time their second dose becomes due.

If I have had my first dose at an NHS HUB can I have my second at the fire station?

Unfortunately not. Each of the sites has been allocated doses so that they have a second dose available for each first dose given. If we gave second doses at the fire station to people who had had first doses elsewhere, we would not have enough second doses for the people who had first doses at the fire station.

I have just discovered I am pregnant, should I have the vaccine? Will it harm my baby?

Trials are ongoing on vaccinating pregnant women. As far as we know, the vaccine is safe in pregnancy, and the only pregnant women currently being offered the vaccine are those who are at risk from covid for other reasons. At the moment, this is a decision best made on an individual basis, but the answer is usually that the benefits of the vaccine outweigh any risks. There are several other vaccines that we offer in pregnancy because of the benefits to pregnant women, and we have no reason to think that covid vaccine would be any less safe in pregnancy than flu vaccine, which has been routine in pregnancy for some years now.

Do you have road map out of the pandemic for the surgery?

For the moment, we will continue to triage all requests for a face-to-face GP appointment. This triage may be done by phone, or by econsult, or by other message formats. It is making things very much easier to make sure that appointments are used wisely, that investigations can be done so people are seen with results of blood tests, for example, rather than both before and after. Many people find the ability to have video consultations much more convenient than taking time off work to come to the surgery. But we will still be offering face to face appointments, as we always have been throughout the pandemic, to those who need them, and this of course includes those who cannot manage the tech for whatever reason. We are likely to retain the option to wait in the waiting room or the car park for the foreseeable future – many of our patients feel safer that way. We are also keen to minimise the numbers of people turning up to the surgery to talk to reception about things and will continue to encourage them to do this by phone, or via the website in the first instance. This will give reception a better chance to be available for those who do need to come down in person.

Will the surgery ever go back to what we are used to?

I think that there are many ways in which the world has changed, and we have to change with it. I don't think covid is ever going to go away completely, although I think its impact will be much less in a year or two's time, and it will become something we live with, like flu, where we have vaccinations and accept a small amount of risk.

Some of the changes that we had to introduce very quickly, such as the text messaging service, and being able to send in photos, have been extremely popular and will stay. Some of the other changes will probably also stay. We had been getting to the point anyway where we were struggling to manage the requests for appointments, some of which could have been dealt with in other ways, and so some of the triage changes may well stay long term. (Total triage may even become contractual for GPs).

But the thing that will never change is that we will always see people face to face who need to be seen face to face, and we will always prefer talking to people where we can – we are human too!

Will virtual calls continue?

Yes, this has proved a popular option and is a condition of the contract for all GP surgeries to provide.

Can I ask for a face-to-face consultation?

Yes, you can ask for a face-to-face consultation, but you need to be prepared to have a chat with us on the phone first, or to give enough information for us to be able to work out who it is best for you to see, and how urgently you need to be seen. But we have been offering face to face consultations for people who need them throughout the pandemic.

Can I ask to speak to a specific GP?

You can certainly ask to speak to a specific GP, but you do need to be aware that none of us work at the surgery on all 5 days of the week, so your chosen GP may not be available. You may have to wait longer to speak to the GP of your choice. If you have a particular reason for wanting a particular GP, it may be helpful to state what that reason is (e.g. this doctor has been dealing with this problem already). We do sometimes get people requesting a certain GP because of their reputation for expertise in a certain area, where the problem is something that any GP can manage, and this can cause problems for that GP having time available for following up their own patients.

Is it safe to bring my baby to the surgery for their vaccinations?

Yes, we have several procedures in place to make sure that everyone is safe, and feels safe, when coming to the surgery.

Is it possible to ask for a second opinion from another GP at the surgery?

Yes, this has always been the case. It is always worth discussing this with the GP you are seeing at the time though, because there is a risk that if too many people get involved then continuity may be lost.

We hope you find this Q&A section useful. If you have general questions you would like to ask please let a member of the PPG know. One way you can do this is by sending an email to ppgstokeroad@gmail.com

The Patients View

Living with limited mobility

Like a lot of people I have spent the last year pretty constantly in the corner of my lounge, trying out various time killing activities to keep myself from going totally bonkers_ it's probably too late for sanity!

I suspect there are numerous poor souls in the same state. I have the use of one arm and hand only and only very limited mobility in my legs so salsa dancing is out! If I do floor exercises I face a four and a half hour wait for an ambulance to get me off the floor! So that's out too.

Life is limited but it's had its funny moments. When there was a severe gale the fascia board on the garage fell off and blocked my electric door. Inside the garage were both my electric scooters. You know how it is, you ring for help. 3 calls unanswered, the 4th saying I didn't need a carpenter. Oh yes I did and one with a ladder, all mine being inside the garage. The 5th said he wasn't a carpenter but his dad was but he had fallen off a roof after a drop too much alcohol (where was this provider of alcohol? I was in need of a drop by then) Eventually and extremely gratefully another strong gust of wind brought down the rest of the board and blew it away down the drive. Freedom._ of a sort.

Television has been a godsend but there are only so many times you can watch all these repeats. In the early days I watched BBC NEWS 24 but as time went on and the death toll rose and the figures were announced in such a matter of a fact way, I got more upset, each number being the life of somebody. Pretty sobering. So television lost its appeal, to say nothing of my Golden retriever wandering past with my TV remote control in her mouth, never to be seen again, the remote not the Retriever!

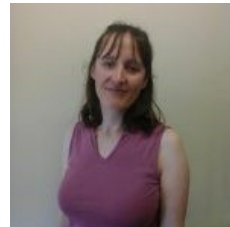
I keep telling myself I must count my blessings, I am still alive; I have food in my cupboards. People phone to see if I am ok. The chemist brings my drugs, the gardener gets my post from the outside box and constantly by myside is Phil, my Golden

retriever, even if she is the reason for the outside letterbox- shredded paper is not easy to read!

If you have mislaid your knitting needles or found you have two identical copies of the TV magazine and nothing for this week, just remember you are not alone and with a bit of luck you will be able to remember which day of the week it is eventually!

Eloise

Get to know the Practice team members:



Dr Whybrew
- a biography

I have been a partner at Stoke Road Surgery since 2010, when I took over from Dr Slimmings when he retired. I work 4

clinical sessions a week and one management session.

I am the executive partner for the practice, and am involved with the day to day management of the practice, the liaison with the other practices in the network, and the planning for the covid vaccine clinics, amongst other things.

Like all of the doctors, I see everyone for everything, but my area of special expertise is in dermatology. I spend the days when I am not at Stoke Road, teaching dermatology to other doctors, nurses, and health professionals, through the university of Cardiff, the Primary Care Dermatology Society, and various other means. My particular passion is teaching healthcare staff how to use the dermatoscope to diagnose benign skin lesions (and be able to reassure patients), and to diagnose skin cancers early. This includes teaching all the doctors and nurses at the surgery, so they can all give a good opinion (or at least take a decent photo and discuss with me). I feel very strongly that dermoscopy is a skill that anyone who wants to can master, and we now have as

much expertise amongst some of the nursing team as amongst the doctors when it comes to dermoscopy. Don't be surprised if you are asked to see one of the other GPs, or our healthcare assistant Rachel Camm for photos if I am not available!

I love working with the Stoke Road team - and we are all working closer than ever. I have also really enjoyed the vaccine clinics where we get to meet and work with people from the other practices in the network, and share ideas.

I have 2 teenage children, and in the little spare time I have, I enjoy crafts, and I crochet jewellery, make greetings cards, and sew - these days you will often see me in my brightly coloured homemade scrubs. (The sunflower fabric was first a bedspread and then a pair of curtains before the transformation!)



Sarah Rogers - a Biography

I have been the Practice Nurse Manager at Stoke Road Surgery for nearly 3 years. I am passionate about Practice Nursing and ensuring that not only patients get excellent care, but the team I work in are supported and nurtured to become the best versions of themselves.

I have been a Practice Nurse since 2001. Starting out in Longlevens, Gloucester. I crafted out my skills first in the treatment room, then in respiratory, followed by sexual health, and finally in cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Always keen to continue learning, when I came to Stoke Road Surgery I did further courses in Minor Illness, Prescribing and Leadership.

Covid has been a particularly challenging time for all of us in the surgery. For me it was key to find a way of communicating with our population in Cleeve, especially in the early uncertain days of the pandemic. Our Facebook 'live' really took off

and became the mainstay of the first lockdown and embraced the way forward for information to be given to 'the masses' very quickly, especially when that information was changing on a daily basis. As time has passed the need for daily 'live' information has passed but we have continued to use Facebook as a noticeboard for all our up to date information as soon as we get it. My next project will also embrace this technology as I look into using Facebook live again for 'live- bites' which will look at our lifestyle and how we can improve them post lockdown!

I have also been very involved in the covid vaccine roll out. I absolutely love collaborating with all the other surgeries at the fire station for this. Not only because we are working with our colleagues from other surgeries, but because we are working alongside so many fantastic volunteers from our communities. It has been such a fantastic experience to feel that we are really doing something positive to haul ourselves out of this pandemic.

In my spare time and when Covid doesn't rule our lives I am a keen theatre attender! I have a particular love of musical theatre, both watching and playing a part in. I am a member of Cotswold Savoyards and CODS and this time last year was in the process of producing SHREK which is now on hold until next May! I also love live music and attend lots of live music gigs, many of you may see me at the Tithe barn serving teas for the events there! You may also realise by the flower in my hair that I love all things vintage and can be seen in the village in the summer with a vintage dress or two!!!

Stoke Road Surgery is a wonderful place to work. We are a cohesive team of individuals who strive to provide the best care we can to all our population, whilst caring for each other at the same time.

Has this long period of lockdown left you feeling lonely or depressed? We have put together some websites and telephone numbers which you might find useful...

Headspace www.headspace.com

Every Mind Matters www.nhs.uk/oneyou

Young Minds www.youngminds.org.uk

for young people text YM to 85258

or for parents call 0808 802 5544

Silverline www.thesilverline.org.uk

(helpline for older people) call 0800 4 70 80 90

Gloucestershire Carers Hub www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk

call 0300 111 9000

MIND www.mind.org.uk for help with mental health

Domestic abuse (Refuge) call 0808 2000 247

Families First (support for local families)

familiesfirstcheltenham@gloucestershire.gov.uk

call 01452 328160

AGE UK (advice Line) call 0800 678 1602

SAMARITANS 116 123

If you would like more information about the PPG please email

ppgstokeroad@gmail.com