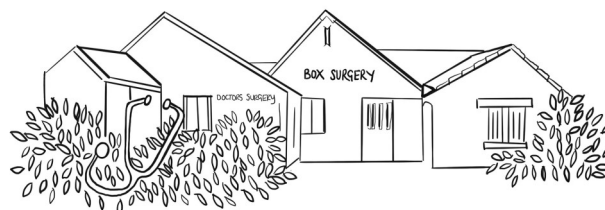


# Box Surgery Newsletter

SUMMER 2023



## Message from the GP Partners

### Inside this issue:

Partners Message	1
UCC	2
Keeping in Contact	2
Travel Health	2
PPG	3
Use the Right Service	3
Patient Administrative Requests	3
Hay fever	4
CPCS	4
Med 3	5
Car Park	5
AccuRx	5
Staff Changes	6
Telephone Consultations	6

A lot of patients comment that the surgery appears quiet when they walk into the waiting room. However, our staff are working harder than ever. We would like to explain how our appointment system has evolved over the last three years in the face of the pandemic and to meet the ever-increasing demand from our patients.

When Covid 19 first hit in March 2020, we swiftly changed our way of working to address your safety and needs as our patients. We instigated a 'telephone first' model to ensure that your problem could be dealt with as efficiently as possible, by the right person, at the right time and in the most appropriate place. Since then, we have strived to adapt our system to provide the best possible service to our patients.

Some problems can be dealt with swiftly over the telephone, some are best managed via face-to-face consultation with a GP; and others are best served with a visit to our highly trained local healthcare colleagues including physiotherapists, pharmacists, minor injury units, urgent eyecare service

and sometimes to our local hospital.

With the unprecedented high demand for appointments, despite our administrative and clinical teams working relentlessly to support our patients, we know some of you have experienced long waits on the telephone. We are excited to announce that from the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2023 we will be changing to a new appointment system where patients can submit a medical or admin request using a quick and easy online form, including some details for the reason of your appointment request. We think this is much easier for most people than waiting on hold to speak to a receptionist, as well as providing our clinical team with the right information to get you the help you need in a timely manner.

Please try to give as much specific and concise information as possible. You are also able to do this on someone else's behalf, for instance children or someone you are caring for. If you do not have access to the internet or are unable to use a computer or smartphone, you can simply call reception on 01225 742361 and a member of our team will fill this out on

your behalf with a few quick questions.

All medical requests will be assessed by a doctor or clinical practitioner, usually on the day but at maximum within 48 hours. You may receive a text, phone call or be invited for an appointment at the surgery. Please keep your phone with you and be aware that phone calls from the surgery will display as 'No Caller ID'. If you need urgent assistance please call our reception on 01225 742361 or 111 if we are closed. Please call 999 for life-threatening emergencies.

This service is being provided by AccuRx; you can find more information at [www accurx.com/patient-triage](http://www accurx.com/patient-triage) and they have a patient support team should you encounter difficulties. Several local surgeries are already using this service with very positive patient feedback, but of course we would love to hear from you to keep improving our service. We thank you very much for your understanding. We are here to support you and ask for your consideration in supporting us.

*Dr Andrew Girdher*

*Dr Terry Cottrill*

*Dr David Jones*

## UCC (Urgent Care Centre)

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The five practices that make up Chippenham, Corsham and Box (CCB) Primary Care Network (PCN) are delighted to inform you of the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) which is based at New Road Surgery in Chippenham. The UCC commenced on 5th June and will operate 08:00-18:30 on each Monday and Friday. It will provide urgent on-the-day appointments utilizing clinical staff from the practices and colleagues within the PCN. Please contact us as normal for

urgent on-the-day problems where we will consider this service alongside other available options for your care.



## Keeping in Contact

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We are trying to ensure that our website keeps all the up-to-date information that is useful for our patients. We would love to hear your feedback! If there is anything you feel would be useful to patients, or anything that needs amending, please let us know. You can do this via email to [boxsurgery@nhs.net](mailto:boxsurgery@nhs.net).

Our Facebook page is “Box Surgery—CCB PCN”, please like our page and keep up-to-date on Box Surgery news and NHS information.

As a practice, we are beginning to communicate more frequently via email and text messages for speed and efficiency. Please ensure that you inform us if your email address or mobile number changes. If you are unsure if we have your mobile number or email recorded on your record, please confirm with reception or alternatively, email us with your mobile number and email address.



## Travel Health / Vaccinations

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If you are planning or due to go away and think you may require travel vaccinations, we do hold Travel Clinics at the surgery.

Prior to you booking an appointment at the surgery, please ensure you visit the Travel Health Pro website <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/> for information about the country/countries you are visiting and the vaccines you may require. This will help the nurses in the appointments.

A form will require completion prior to your Travel Clinic appointment. This form is available on our website on our Travel Health page. Please ask at reception for more information.

Some travel vaccines are ordered on a private prescription which cost more than the normal prescription charge. This is because not all travel vaccinations are included in the services provided by the NHS.



## Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The aim of the PPG is to develop partnerships with our patients, discover what our patients think about the services which we provide work together on the development of services. The group provides a platform in which we can test/adapt future ideas and plans with our services and the surgery. Having our PPG helps improve our patient's quality of care and experience.

We feel that our Patients and the PPG members play a big role within the surgery and patient involvement is key.

We are always interested in recruiting new members for our PPG and if you would like more information on how to join please email us at [boxsurgery@nhs.net](mailto:boxsurgery@nhs.net).

## Use the Right Service



					
<b>Self Care</b> Care for yourself at home	<b>Pharmacy</b> Local expert advice	<b>NHS 111</b> Non-emergency help	<b>GP Advice</b> Out of hours: Call 111	<b>UTCs</b> Urgent Treatment Centres	<b>A&amp;E or 999</b> For emergencies only
Minor cuts & grazes Minor bruises Minor sprains Coughs and colds	Minor illnesses Headaches Stomach upsets Bites & stings	Feeling unwell? Unsure? Anxious? Need help?	Persistent symptoms Chronic pain Long term conditions New prescriptions	Breaks & sprains X-rays Cuts & grazes Fever & rashes	Choking Chest pain Blacking out Serious blood loss

## Patient Administrative Requests

As an NHS GP Practice, there are private fees for any private work that is carried out. These include short letters (to whom it may concern), firearms license forms, private sick notes, fitness to travel/fly, holiday cancellation forms etc. There is an up-to-date price list available on our website.

This work is not part of our contractual requirements. You may be aware that general practice is under unprecedented pressure, and therefore we may not be able to carry out your request, since this would detract from our ability to provide core contracted services to our patients.

Please note, administrative requests that we are able to deal with cannot be dealt with on an urgent basis. Please allow 3 weeks for your request to be fulfilled. The surgery will contact you when your request is complete.

## Hay Fever Medication—from Zoë Peace, Our Practice Pharmacist

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With the sun shining again, it's time to think about hay fever and how you will manage your symptoms this year. Did you know you can now get your most of your hay fever medicines from your local pharmacy and some supermarkets, or one-stop-shop?

The NHS has recently changed its prescribing guidance for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines. To allow the NHS to focus time and resources where they are most needed, we will now ask you to purchase the majority of your hay fever treatments from your pharmacy or one-stop-shop. Your local pharmacy team can also offer you advice on the best treatment for hay fever and how to avoid triggers as well as offering you the most cost-effective version of your treatments.

### When Should You See your GP in relation to Hay Fever?

- If you need to take your allergy medication every day of the year
- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- If you experience any breathlessness, chest tightness or wheezing
- If your pharmacist tells you to book a GP appointment

Which Products are Available to Buy Over-The-Counter?

**Antihistamine Tablets / Liquid:** acrivastine, chlorphenamine, cetirizine, fexofenadine, loratadine

**Nasal Sprays:** beclomethasone, budesonide, fluticasone propionate, mometasone, triamcinolone

**Eye Drops:** antazoline with xylometazoline, sodium cromoglicate



## Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS)

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The Community Pharmacist Consultation Service (CPCS) has been running as an Advanced Service in community pharmacies since October 2019.

The service connects patients who have minor illness or need an urgent supply of medication with a community pharmacy. Only specific conditions are suitable for a referral within symptom groups. For more information, please telephone reception.

## Med 3 / Fit Note Changes

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We are now changing the way we process Med3/fit note requests. We now ask that you complete the form (which can be found on our website or you can collect from reception) and return to the surgery via email (boxsurgery@nhs.net) or paper form. Please allow as much time as possible for this request to be fulfilled. If your request is urgent, we would like to reassure you that doctors can backdate your sickness absence. Please contact the surgery for more information.

## Box Surgery Car Park

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Sadly, on a few recent occasions some of our staff members cars have been damaged whilst parked in the surgery car park, without any ownership of the person who caused the damage.

Whilst we appreciate that the car park can be extremely busy at times and that the spaces provided are not very spacious, please can we ask that you take consideration to other vehicles upon parking and exiting the car park.

Please can we also ask that if you have accidentally caused damage to another car that you inform our reception team and leave your contact details with them.

Please can we also remind you that the car park is for surgery visitors/patients only. Please avoid using the car park for school pick-up, going to the shop etc as the car park spaces are already very limited.

## AccuRx



AccuRx is a program being utilised within the PCN (Primary Care Network) to improve communication with patients. The program currently allows us to communicate with patients via text message or email, and on occasions you will be able to respond via a link in the message.

We currently use this program for the following;

- Informing patients of results
- Asking patients to send us photos of medical issues
- Questionnaires and forms
- Informing patients of surgery and PCN news
- Obtaining up-to-date patient information and medical information e.g. blood pressure
- Sending fit notes

## Staff Changes

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Last month we welcomed Corinne back to the surgery after being on maternity leave. Corinne will have a phlebotomy clinic on a Monday morning and will be working in reception on a Friday morning.

Louise Mifflin joined Box Surgery as a Nurse Practitioner in April this year. Louise works within our on-the-day duty team supporting the Duty Doctor.

Polly sadly left the surgery in June after 10 years at Box Surgery. Polly has been on maternity leave for the last 8 months. We wish her all the best in her new job!

## Telephone Consultations—please help us

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Where you have a phone consultation booked, it would help us incredibly if you can ensure you have your phone to hand. Our number will show as No Caller ID and the clinician will try to call you twice. If you don't take the call and ring us back after the clinical session has ended, we then have to rebook your appointment, which means two appointments are used instead of one. We do hope this explains the situation as we really need to use our appointments efficiently for the benefit of all of our patients, at a time where demand is at an all time high.