

Skerryvore Practice Newsletter

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www.skerryvorepractice.co.uk

Issue 21

NHS Minor Ailment Service

What is the Minor Ailment Service?

Everyone can go to their pharmacist for advice or to buy a medicine for a minor illness or ailment. But this is a new NHS service for people, including children, who don't pay prescription charges. It means that if your pharmacist thinks you need it then they can give you a medicine on the NHS without you having to pay for it. It will also save you making an appointment with your GP simply to get a prescription.

What does the service offer?

You will be able to get advice and free treatment from your pharmacist for minor illness and ailments such as:

Acne	Eczema and Allergies	Nasal Congestion
Athlete's Foot	Emergency Contraception	Pain
Back ache	Haemorrhoids (Piles)	Period Pain
Cold sores	Hay Fever	Thrush
Constipation	Headache	Sore Throat
Cough	Head Lice	Threadworms
Diarrhoea	Indigestion	Warts and Verrucae
Ear Ache	Mouth Ulcers	

Who is the service for?

You can use the NHS Minor Ailment Service if:

- You are registered with a GP surgery in Scotland, and
- You don't pay for your prescriptions, and
- You don't live in a nursing or residential care home.

How does it work?

- You register for the service with the pharmacy of your choice.
- You don't have to make an appointment. You can go along at a time that suits you.
- Your consultation will always be with a qualified pharmacist.
- If your pharmacist thinks that you need a medicine or product to treat your symptoms they will give you this without needing to pay.

How to find out more?

For more information about this service, contact:

- Your local pharmacy
- Your GP or one of the secretaries at reception
- The NHS Helpline on 0800 22 44 88 (Calls are free), or
- Your local citizens advice bureau

Welcome...

We would like to welcome Dr Kirsty Cole and Dr Ingrid Norquay who will be joining the practice for 6 months at the beginning of August. Towards the end of August Dr Rachel Heath will join us as a Remote and Rural Fellow and be spending the next year both working with us and out in the outer isles.

A History of Bacteria

By Dr Huw Thomas

Alexander Fleming – born in the south of Scotland – discovered Penicillin in 1928. In an untidy pile of petri-dishes, in the corner of his laboratory, a single sample was contaminated by a fungus called *Penicillium*. He found that the *Penicillium* had eradicated all of the bacteria that had previously also been in the petri-dish. This bacteria was called *Staphylococci* and is responsible for various infections, including cellulitis, impetigo and boils. His discovery revolutionised 20th century medicine and saved millions of lives over the ensuing decades.

Bacteria, however, is not the only cause of many of the infections we see today. Viruses are responsible for a wide-range of minor illnesses, including ear infections, tonsillitis, sinusitis, and the common cold. That they are caused by viruses means that Penicillin – and therefore antibiotics – have no effect.

It is recognised that, on rare occasions, bacteria can cause these conditions. What should not be underestimated is the body's own power of recovery and that all of these minor-illnesses, whatever the cause, will improve over time with no intervention whatsoever.

The message of this article is that, for these minor illnesses, doctors are on the whole powerless to alter their course. The local chemists are however, an excellent resource in these instances. They are highly trained health professionals who are very able in providing medication that might relieve some of the symptoms you could experience.

Alexander Fleming saw the astonishing success of Penicillin in treating wounded soldiers at the end of the Second World War. Young men that would have been expected to die arose from their beds and became well. Today, doctors recognise this legacy – serious infection we do not wait and we act decisively. For minor illness? Well, the body can take care of itself...

H1N1 (Swine Flu) Vaccination

The Influenza A (H1N1) swine flu vaccine is now available as a travel vaccine for those who are travelling to countries within the Southern Hemisphere, during the Southern Hemisphere seasonal influenza season.

This vaccination is free of charge and can be administered by the Practice Nurse or Health Care Assistant.

Please ask your GP, receptionist or visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk for more information.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Skerryvore Practice	888240
Balfour Hospital	888000
NHS 24	08454 24 24 24
Community Nurses	888191
Emergency Dental	888280



TRAVEL VACCINATIONS

If you are lucky enough to be going on a holiday abroad this year and think that you need vaccinations for travel, please contact the reception and give us your holiday details:

- Countries you will be travelling to
- Date of Departure
- Length of Stay
- Accommodation
- Purpose of Visit

as all of these things will affect the types of vaccination that you require. We will check your records and consult the national database for the most recent advice.

We will then give you a phone and let you know if you require any further vaccinations, and arrange an appointment with the nurse to have this done.

Please allow plenty of time before travel as some courses can take several weeks to complete.