

Help Us to Help You

New Opening Hours

We have been delighted with the success of evening appointments offered by Dacorum Extended Hours Service. Therefore, from **Friday 1st March 2019**, we will no longer offer evening appointments on Tuesday and Thursdays at Fernville.

We are also pleased to announce that we will be offering additional sessions on Saturday mornings. If you require an evening or weekend appointment, please ask Reception about Dacorum Extended Hours Service.

Our **new** hours are:
Mon – Fri 8.00am – 6.30pm
Sat – 8.00am to 12.00 noon

Staff News

We wish Dr Power all the best after recently leaving the practice to spend more time with her young family. Dr Britto has returned from maternity leave, but will be leaving us to accept a partnership position elsewhere. Dr Aslam will be returning from maternity leave in March. We welcome Rachel Bell, an Advanced Nurse Practitioner to the nursing team and also clinical pharmacist, Prasant Manandhar - who specialises in the management of respiratory issues. You may receive an invitation to review your long term condition with him.

Opening Hours

Monday	8am-6.30pm
Tuesday	8am-8pm **
Wednesday	8am-6.30pm
Thursday	8am-8pm **
Friday	8am-6.30pm
Saturday	8am-12noon*

*For pre booked appointments only

** From the 1st March 2019 we will close at 6.30pm.

Tel: 01442 213919
Fax: 01442 216444

E: Contact.Fernville@nhs.net

Along with other GP surgeries locally, we are working extremely hard to try and cope with increasing demand for appointments this winter. In addition, the closure of West Herts Medical Centre has also led to an increase in patient list size. To try and meet demand, we are constantly looking at alternative solutions to improve capacity and save resources and often a GP may not be the most appropriate person to see.

● “I can’t get a routine appointment with a GP for 2 or 3 weeks”

‘The Dacorum Extended Access Service’ (covered in detail last issue) has been set up by local practices working together to offer patients routine appointments, including weekends and evenings. We can now book you in to see a GP at several locations within Dacorum.

● “Why do Receptionists ask me what’s wrong - they’re not doctors”

Receptionists have been instructed to do this, to ensure you are booked in with the most appropriate person/service and given the correct length of appointment. All Receptionists have received comprehensive signposting training (by Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group) and will always check with a clinician if unsure. If you do not wish to disclose the reason for your appointment, please just advise us that it is ‘personal’. Contrary to popular belief Receptionists are not trying to be nosy or diagnose you!

● “I need an urgent appointment”

Same day/urgent appointments are available, but these cannot be used for ongoing problems or to request medication. Depending on the reason for your appointment, you may be asked to see the Nurse Practitioner (who can prescribe) or seek advice from a pharmacist. Again, our staff are trained to direct you to the most appropriate service. If you are suffering from chest pains or breathing difficulties - dial 999!

● “Why does it take so long for you to answer the phone?”

We have a dedicated telephone room upstairs, so Receptionists downstairs may not always be seen answering calls. Patients can register online to book appointments and view their medical records and you can also cancel appointments via text message.

● “Why can’t I see a doctor for verrucas or warts?”

Herts Valley Clinical Commissioning Group, have directed GPs not to prescribe for ‘over-the-counter’ medicines for minor ailments, in an attempt to reduce financial pressures and increase availability of appointments for more serious conditions. www.hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk

● “I need help or advice about benefits or other non-medical problem”

‘Community Navigators are able to help with anything from staying safe and independent at home to completing forms. Please call 0300 123 4044 or go to www.hertsdirect.org/hertshelp

● “I’d like to be referred for counselling or am experiencing a crisis”

You can self-refer to the wellbeing team by calling 0300 777 0707 or visit www.hpft.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service. If you are experiencing a crisis during the night, call the nightlight team on 01923 256391.

● “I think I’ve broken a bone”

Just go straight to the Urgent Care Centre, St Albans Minor Injury Unit or Watford General. Check opening times before making a journey or call 111 for advice.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The service can give you direct access to GPs, nurses, dentists, prescribing pharmacists and mental health professionals. Out of hours appointments can also be made to see a clinician.

- **Please allow 3 working days to process repeat prescriptions and sick notes (med3)**
- **Car Parking - Please complete a form from Reception if you are parking for more than one hour in our car park to avoid a penalty.**
- **We do not offer an emergency prescription service, unless it is medically necessary. It is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate medication.**
- **Letters or forms required to be signed by a doctor take 10-12 working days. A charge may be applied as this is not part of NHS work.**

Our Doctors

Dr Raj Mapara
Dr Ann Shipley-Rowe
Dr Meeta Duggal
Dr Ash Patel
Dr Rebecca Asquith
Dr Olivia Versluys
Dr Cyndi Britto
Dr Sonal Mapara
Dr Aisha Aslam

**Patient Services
Manager:** Mandy Curtis

Operations Manager:
Kaushal Dave

Hearing Loop Available



We now have a portable hearing loop available at Reception for patients who are hearing impaired and wear hearing aids. The hearing loop is a special type of sound system that amplifies the spoken word directly to the hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting. Because the loop is portable, it can be taken with you into your consultation. Please ask at Reception for more details.

520 Missed Appointments

A DNA is someone who **Did Not Attend** an appointment and did not cancel beforehand. The doctor or nurse would have been waiting for you to arrive. In the last 3 months, 520 appointments were wasted at Fernville. This is despite us sending appointment reminders by text message (one week and 24 hours) prior to your appointment. If you can no longer attend an appointment, simply text back the word 'cancel' and your appointment will automatically be cancelled. Please ensure you notify us of any changes to your contact details. Patients who miss three appointments in a year (without good reason) may be removed from our Practice List and asked to register elsewhere.

Flu- It's not too late

Are you over 65 and not yet had your flu jab?

It's still not too late to protect yourself and others! Admissions into hospital due to flu related illnesses are currently peaking, causing an additional pressure on an already over-stretched service.

Having the flu jab will not give you flu and any possible side effects will be far less severe than actually having the illness. Please ask at Reception to book your free jab.

Fernville Friends

Who are Fernville Friends? We are currently a small group of 6 patients, who are officially called the PPG (Patients Participation Group). We meet on a bi-monthly basis in Fernville, for about an hour to discuss recent or proposed happenings or matters which are likely to affect the surgery or its patients.

We could meet alone and simply report back to the surgery, but we have developed an excellent relationship with surgery staff and much prefer the Fernville team to be represented at our meetings. Accordingly, we have representatives from the management team at our meetings whenever possible. These may include Managing Partner - Mark Jones, Operations Manager - Kaushal Dave and Patient Services Manager - Mandy Curtis.

If you wish to see who is in the patient group, you will see our photographs on the wall to the left as you enter the waiting room. If you would like to know more about us, or whether you can to join us, just drop a note to the Patient Services Manager at the surgery and one of us will get back to you.

-John Carlton-Ashton, Chairman of PPG