

NEWSLETTER



From The Godstone Pond Tail Surgery & Patient Participation Group

ISSUE 5, February 2024



Surgery Overview

At Pond Tail Surgery, each patient has a named GP. However, you are welcome to consult with your preferred GP for routine issues.

Our permanent GPs and their working days are:

Dr Penny Geer (Thursday)
Dr Emma Linnard (Monday AM, Tuesday AM, Wednesday)
Dr Edward Tang (Wednesday and Friday)
Dr Akudo Umeh (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)
Dr Khadija Ali (Monday and Tuesday)

The current Clinical staff are: 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners, 2 Practice Nurses and 2 Healthcare Assistants, 1 Pharmacist. We also offer appointments with a First Contact Physiotherapist and a Mental Health Practitioner. We are linked with community-based services such as the District Nurse, Midwifery and Health Visiting Teams.

The Surgery opening hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 8am to 6.30pm, Thursdays from 8am until 8pm. The online triage service is open from 6am – 5pm Monday to Friday, and our telephone lines are open at all times, except from 12pm – 1pm daily.

On the Surgery Website, there is a very useful list of Services available for specific issues such as Support for Carers, Cervical Screening, Managing Pain, Mental Health Support for Veterans and Ex- service personnel, and Weight Management.

The surgery encourages all patients to download and use the **NHS App** to request appointments, order repeat medications and view your medical record (including results)

The Patient Access App

As well as the NHS App and our Pond Tail website, some very useful & helpful guidance and advice is available from the 'Patient Access App' which can be found in your App Store on your phone, iPad, or computer you can also use it to contact the surgery, order repeat prescriptions and check your medical record.

Patient Access has been devised by a group of Doctors and Health Professionals with the aim of supporting digital access to our health care. Once you have registered with this App. you receive regular weekly downloads with information about a wide range of health care subjects – recently including for example, Renaud's disease, the benefits of a calcium rich diet, hearing advice and something known as dessert stomach!

There is also info about health services available -although it must be stressed that these need to be privately funded and are not provided by the NHS

Hearing Loop now installed at Pond Tail

A fully functional hearing loop was recently installed and tested at the Surgery. If you have any feedback on the system please let us know using the email godstoneppg@gmail.com.

Update on Digital Triage

From 29th November 2023, the Surgery has been handling all patient requests and appointment bookings through Digital Triage, an advanced method of assessing and categorising patients based on the urgency and nature of their medical concerns.

The system operates through a user-friendly online interface accessible via the Pond Tail Surgery website or your NHS App. Patients can input their symptoms, medical history, and other relevant information, providing healthcare professionals with a comprehensive overview to help deal with the request quickly.

Patients fill in the short form through our website (by selecting request an appointment – medical request) available from 6am Monday – Friday. These forms are looked at by the triaging team (made up of admin and clinical staff), usually within 6 hours of their submission. The triaging team then decides on the appropriate next step, which could be a phone call or a face to face appointment with a GP, pharmacist, minor illness nurse, practice nurse or first contact physiotherapist. You may also be referred to your local community pharmacy for advice and over the counter treatments. You will be notified of the outcome by text message or phone call within a few hours of your message.

If the query is either very simple, or not something that we are not the most appropriate service for, then you may receive a text message signposting you to another service such as a dentist or minor eye conditions service, or with a link to the appropriate medical advice online.

We will provide further updates on the new digital triage system in future PPG Newsletters. In the meantime, please see the Pond Tail website for more details.

Launch of NHS Pharmacy First Advanced Service

NHS Pharmacy First advanced service has launched on 31 January 2024. Rather than having to see a GP, patients will be able to contact their pharmacist directly, for illnesses including shingles and sore throats. This, alongside expansions to the pharmacy blood pressure checking and contraception services, will save up to 10 million general practice team appointments a year and help patients access quicker and more convenient care, including the supply of appropriate medicines for minor illness.

Under the Pharmacy First scheme, pharmacies taking part will take on the prescribing of drugs for seven common ailments:

- earache
- sore throat
- sinusitis
- impetigo
- shingles
- infected insect bites
- uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women

Patients can now walk into the pharmacy directly or where appropriate, by contacting them by video consultation. In addition, patients will access the service via referrals from:

- NHS 111 (online, telephone and NHS App)
- integrated urgent care clinical assessment services
- urgent treatment centres
- emergency departments
- 999
- general practice (GPs cannot make a referral for urgent repeat medicine supply)