

Barnabas Bulletin

Newsletter of the Barnabas Medical Centre

Issue 12, December 2015

So You Didn't Keep Your Appointment?

By Sheila Hayles & Keith Marshall

Missed Appointments Waste Money and Compromise Everyone's Healthcare

How do you feel when you are waiting for the gas man to turn up for that booked call, and he just doesn't appear? Let down? Annoyed? Frustrated? Angry at having wasted a half day's leave?

Yes, of course you do. And that's what happens when you don't turn up for your doctor's appointment.

Increasingly there is a trend in society that if something is free it doesn't matter if you commit but then don't turn up. And as the NHS is seen as free there is a high level of missed appointments. This is a country-wide problem and Barnabas Medical Centre is no exception.

But **the NHS is not free**. In fact on average about 40% of your Income Tax and National Insurance goes to pay for the NHS. That works out at averagely around £2100 a year for every man, woman and child in the country. So by not keeping (and not cancelling) your appointment you are not just stopping another patient using that slot but you are wasting your hard-earned money. And with a missed GP appointment estimated to cost the NHS anything up to £45 that's money no-one can afford to waste.

At Barnabas we have an average of 7 missed appointments every day. That doesn't sound a lot, but it is 35 a week – the equivalent of a full afternoon clinic for a doctor and for a nurse. Many of you tell us you wait too long for an appointment; this is one reason why!

What are we doing?

Apart from displaying each month's DNAs on the screen in the waiting area, and writing annoying nags like this, there is only so much the Practice can do.

If we have your mobile number we can send you a text message both when you book the appointment and the day before – that way you get a reminder which we hope will nudge you into cancelling your appointment if it is no longer needed.

In addition, there is the facility to manage your appointments online. If you are registered for online services you can both book and ➔

**A message to all our patients ...
Have a very Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year**



**From all the Doctors and Staff at
the Barnabas Medical Centre**



← cancel your appointments through the website without having to phone up.

What can you do to help?

When you make an appointment, don't forget about it! If booking by phone, write down the date and time and repeat them back to the receptionist; this helps you to remember. Write the date in your diary and keep the text messages you are sent in view. If you need transport, arrange it well in advance.

But most importantly, **if you no longer need, or cannot keep, your appointment PLEASE CANCEL IT** – by phoning or via the website. If the phones are busy, please don't give up! Telling us even a few minutes before your appointment time may allow someone else to use the slot.

We continue to track the number of missed appointments. So far this year the figures are:

January	125	July	156
February	144	August	135
March	160	September	165
April	129	October	162
May	155	November	154
June	170		

If you no longer need, or cannot keep, your appointment please, please tell us!

Registering for Online Access

If you wish to book appointments or request repeat prescriptions online, and you are not already registered, please come into the practice and talk to Reception.

Please bring some form of photo ID and proof of address with you as we may need to see it for security reasons. ■

Staff News

We are pleased that **Paresh Virji** has joined the Practice as our Integrated Care Plan Advisor. Paresh is a qualified pharmacist and has been doing care planning for a number of years. He will be responsible for working with the doctors to develop care plans for those of our patients who are most at risk. ■

Pharmacists in General Practice

Some GP practices are now including clinical pharmacists in their teams and experience is showing that this benefits both patients and the practice teams themselves. At Barnabas we already have a pharmacist, Yaksheeta Dave, working as part of our practice team.

Now NHS England is making £35m available over the next 3 years to part fund 73 pilots of pharmacists working in GP practices. These pilots will start in early 2016. One pilot will be a group of 17 Ealing practices, including Barnabas Medical Centre.

The clinical pharmacists will support patients to manage their health and long term conditions; resolve prescription issues (for example where the drugs your GP prescribes, what the hospital prescribes and your repeat prescription request conflict) thus reducing multi-drug adverse reactions; advising GPs on complex drug queries; and enabling better drug-related communication between GPs, hospitals and community pharmacists. This might also include pharmacists, rather than GPs, undertaking regular routine drug reviews with patients.

All of which should work because a fully qualified pharmacist has a much more in-depth knowledge of drugs than most GPs.

The key results are expected to be improved care and health outcomes for patients; allowing GPs more time to see patients; and a reduction in drug wastage and therefore cost.

The pilots will be formally evaluated for acceptance and effectiveness during, and at the end of, the 3 years. It is hoped that improved efficiency will be such that pharmacists in practices will be self-funding following the pilots.

It is important to note that although these clinical pharmacists are fully trained and qualified as pharmacists they will not be dispensing drugs directly to patients. Prescriptions will still be dispensed by local community pharmacies such as Boots. ■

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Despite the mild temperatures it is Winter; the days are shorter and colder. It's a time when many of us feel less full of the joys of Spring with maybe as many as one in eight of us feeling really down until Spring arrives. For some it is much worse with Winter bringing on real, often debilitating, depression called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

The severity of SAD varies, but it is reckoned that around 1 in 50 people in the UK suffer, with four times more women than men; and it often runs in families. People living in hotter, sunnier countries suffer less, and SAD gets more common the further north you go. SAD often starts in your 20s and once you have it, you are at high risk of getting symptoms every year.

What are the symptoms?

Most of us have some symptoms of depression at some point; but for a doctor to diagnose depression the symptoms have to be there most days for several weeks, and they will usually interfere with your life – both work and social life. Symptoms may include:

- Problems sleeping (in SAD sleeping too much is common)
- Changes in your appetite (in SAD you are more likely to eat more and put on weight)
- Feeling sad and miserable most of the time (often worse in the morning)
- Not wanting to do anything, even things you usually enjoy
- Feeling guilty or worthless
- Feeling upset and tearful
- Not being able to concentrate
- Feeling tired all the time
- Feeling life isn't worth living
- Palpitations, anxiety, and heaviness in your arms and legs.

What to do?

The first thing to do is to pluck up courage and talk to your GP, because they really can help. In SAD, unlike other forms of depression, high intensity light treatment can be highly effective: all many SAD sufferers need is "sunshine in a box". But this doesn't work for everyone and your GP may suggest other treatments are appropriate for you. ■

PPG Corner

Updates from our Patient Participation Group

The PPG held its Annual General Meeting on Monday 16 November. At the meeting I presented my report for the preceding 12 months, which you can find in the PPG area on the practice website. In my report I stressed that to develop and to help the Practice we need more active members to take on (usually small) pieces of work for the group.

In undertaking activities I want the PPG to focus on helping the Practice achieve an **OUTSTANDING** rating next time we have a CQC inspection. We know this will not be easy; there is a big step between the good GOOD rating we achieved in January and OUTSTANDING. But this should be our focus; if we can achieve it we can be sure we will have made a real difference to every patient's healthcare.

With this in our minds we discussed our priorities for the next 12-18 months: to grow the PPG; patient education; and to support the Practice. We already have some activities ongoing (eg. the book exchange and our monthly members' bulletin) but there will be more. One of the first is that Ewa Siwiec has agreed to help expand our online presence by developing our Facebook group.

Also at the AGM I was pleased to welcome Stan Owen as our Vice-Chairman. Stan will be an important member of what I see as a small team steering the PPG's work – and ensuring we are not running purely on my vision of the way things should be.

All this, plus the growth of the Ealing North North Area PPG Network, makes me optimistic that together we can make that crucial difference.

If you would like to help us to help the Practice then either get in touch with me or come along to our next meeting on Tuesday 12 January, 2pm in St Barnabas Church Hall.

Finally I would like to say "Thank You" to all our doctors, nurses and staff for looking after us so well for another year.

Meanwhile I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Keith Marshall, PPG Chairman ■

Christmas & New Year Opening Hours

Christmas Eve, 24 Dec.	0830 to 1330 **
Christmas Day, 25 Dec.	CLOSED
Monday 28 December	CLOSED
Tuesday 29 December	0830 to 1800
Wednesday 30 December	0830 to 1800
New Year's Eve, 31 Dec.	0830 to 1330 **
New Year's Day, 1 January	CLOSED
From Monday 4 January	Normal opening

** You will be able access the surgery by telephone between 1330 and 1600 hrs; NHS 111 will take calls after 1600 hrs.

Repeat Prescriptions

Remember it takes 2 working days from the time you request the repeat to us having it ready for collection.

Remember too that if you are registered for electronic prescriptions your prescription will go direct to your nominated pharmacy and cannot be collected from the Medical Centre.

Please ensure you request your repeat prescriptions in good time for Christmas!

Minor Ailment?

Don't forget that you can now receive treatment and medication for many minor ailments from your local pharmacy without the need for a doctor's appointment.

Please ask at Reception for more details.

Extended Hours

The Practice is now offering appointments, with a doctor or nurse, from 0730 hrs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. These are **pre-booked appointments only** and are intended to help those needing to get to work.

The Practice will open early only for patients that have a pre-booked early appointment. We will then open our doors to everyone as usual at 0830.

Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road
Northolt, UB5 4SR

☎ 020 8864 4437

www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk

Surgery Times

Mon & Fri: 0830-1300, 1400-1800

Tue, Wed, Thu: 0730-1800

Out of Hours

For urgent healthcare outside surgery times please call 111

Repeat Prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions must be requested in writing or online and will normally be available for collection after 2 working days

Doctors

Dr Mohini Parmar (f)

Dr David Knight (m)

Dr Harpreet Kooner (m)

Dr Harjeet Bhatoa (f)

Dr Sonya Jey (f)

Dr Shankar Vijayadeva (m)

Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta

Anna Wan

Purnima Gurung

Pharmacy Assistant

Yaksheeta Dave

Heath Care Assistant

Sian Fullerton

Practice Manager

Matthew Edwards

Patient Participation Group

Chairman: Keith Marshall

020 8864 7993

barnabas.ppg@gmail.com

*This newsletter is a joint production of
Barnabas Medical Centre and the
Barnabas Patient Participation Group.
© Barnabas Medical Centre, 2015.*

**A large print version
of this newsletter is
available from
Reception**