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# NEWSLETTER



BIRCHWOOD  
SURGERY

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COLOUR COPY AVAILABLE THROUGH WEBSITE!

ISSUE 5: JANUARY-MARCH 2018

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**Birchwood Surgery would like to wish all of our patients a HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

We hope you all enjoyed the festive season with family and loved ones. Another year has been and gone and 2017 brought a lot of changes to the surgery. 2017 saw the introduction of our new appointments system, new and improved methods of being able to contact the surgery with a new option 0 on the phones to cancel an appointment, a new DNA policy, MJOG to allow two way messaging and also allowing patients to cancel appointments, also the introduction of our new interactive website in December. We also had to say good bye to some fantastic doctors and welcome new editions to the Birchwood Family.



## **Congratulations!**

- ❖ Dr Ng who gave birth to an adorable baby boy back in June 2017.
- ❖ Dr Papp who gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and we look forward to her return September/October 2018.
- ❖ Dr Parhar who was a long term locum who gave safe delivery to a beautiful little boy.

## **Goodbye**

In January we say a sad good bye to Dr Ng who has been on maternity since June. Dr Ng has decided to concentrate on her family and we want to wish her all the best for the future. Patients registered with Dr Ng will be transferred to our new partner Dr Botley and will receive a letter in the post to confirm.

## **Welcome**

We are happy to welcome Dr Claire Botley who started with us back in April 2017 as part of a fellowship scheme. Dr Botley has settled really well with the team and we are happy to announce that from January 2018 she will become a partner and we are all thrilled to have her on board.

We also have the lovely Nikki Timlett who has joined our nursing team and has settled well and will be expanding our admin team with 3 new recruits joining in January, please be patient with them whilst in their training stage.

## Birchwood Team

### **Doctors**

Dr C A Brooks – Senior Partner  
Dr R J O Graham – Partner  
Dr F R Raymond – Partner  
Dr C R Ali – Partner  
Dr C Whelan – Partner  
Dr S Setty – Partner  
Dr C Botley - Partner  
Dr Sue Graham – Salaried GP  
Dr Szilvia Papp – Salaried GP- Mat Leave

### **Management**

Zoe Smith – Practice Manager  
Louise Briggs – Deputy Manager  
Inder Gill – Front of House Supervisor  
Lauren Coates – Nurse Manager

## \*NEW\* Update on Ordering Medication

### PRESCRIPTION REQUEST & COLLECTION

PRESCRIPTION REQUEST HANDLED IN:	PRESCRIPTION READY BY:
Monday	Thursday <b>AFTER 3PM</b>
Tuesday	Friday <b>AFTER 3PM</b>
Wednesday	Monday <b>AFTER 3PM</b>
Thursday	Tuesday <b>AFTER 3PM</b>
Friday	Wednesday <b>AFTER 3PM</b>

**PLEASE TAKE BANK HOLIDAYS INTO ACCOUNT  
AND ALLOW US AN EXTRA 48 HOURS WHEN  
REQUESTING YOUR PRESCRIPTION.**

### Important Notice!

Since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017, the surgery has not been registering new patients, after receiving approval from NHS England to close our list. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and hope to be open again soon to new patients.

### Emergency Out of Hours Telephone Number

If you require urgent medical advice Monday  
to  
Friday 6.30pm – 8.00am or at weekends or  
bank Holidays please call **111**.

### Winter Bugs – KEEP THEM AT BAY

With cold winter days on the way, here are a few tips on how to keep those bugs at bay.

- Have your Flu Jab.
- Healthy eating, contributes to a healthy body.
- Keep up your vitamin C intake to boost your immune system.
- Visit your local pharmacy for over the counter medicines for the common cold and cough.
- Regular washing of hands, to stop the spread of germs.
- Wrap up warm when going out.

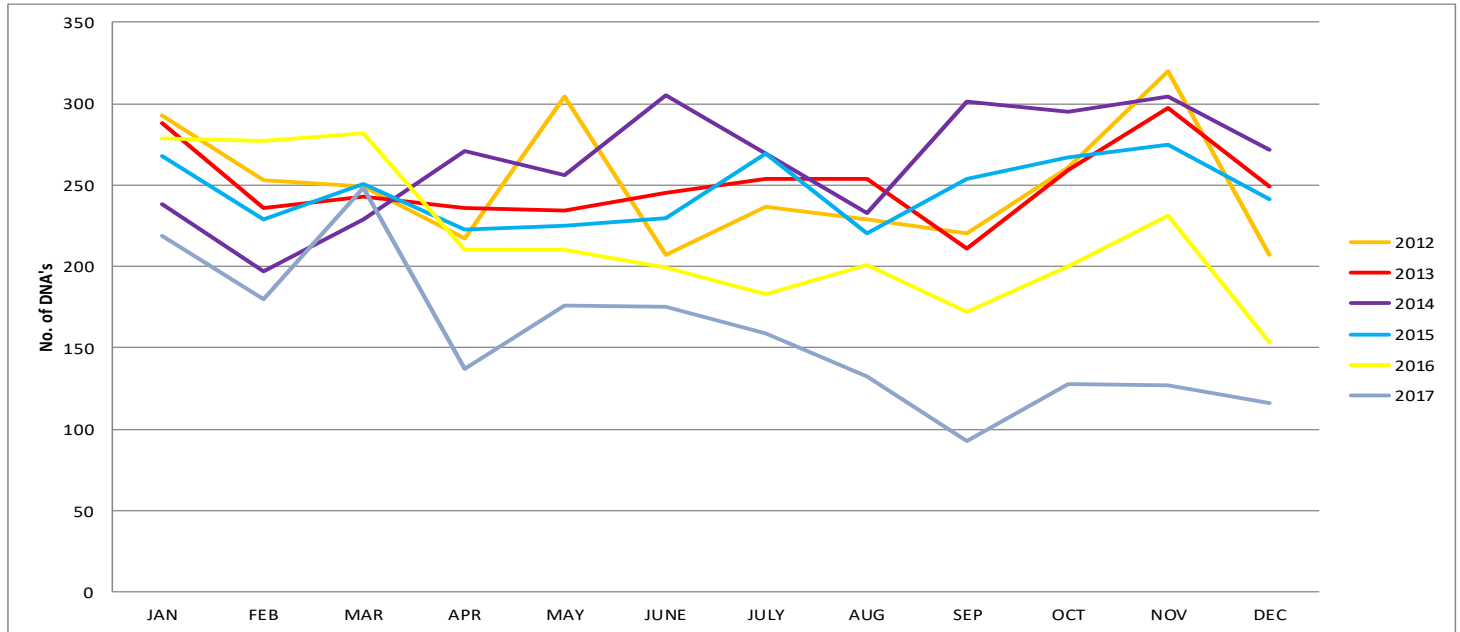
There is no need to visit your doctor, if you have a common cold or cough. [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

### Electronic Prescribing

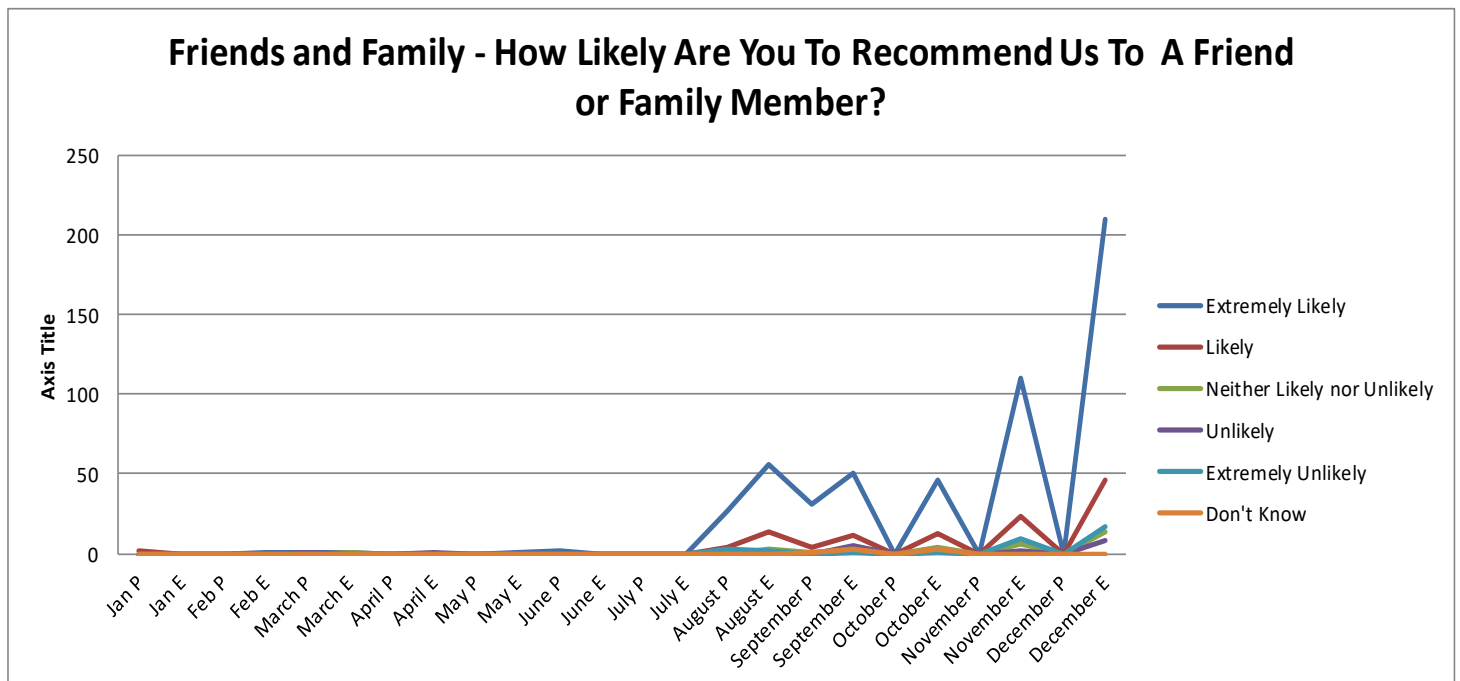
Have you considered opting for electronic prescribing? Nominate yourself at your pharmacy, who will sign you up. No more having to drop off a side slip to the Surgery. Once signed up you can request repeats through your chemist and collect from the chemist at your convenience.

## 2017 PERFORMANCE

In April 2016 a new DNA Policy was introduced to encourage patients to contact the surgery to cancel appointments, allowing them to be reused for others. Many General Practice's and Hospitals see a high number of DNA's; however demand for appointments is increasing. Since introducing the DNA policy, along with improving ways in which patients could cancel their appointments we have seen a significant decrease in 2016 and 2017, compared to previous years.



The surgery collects feedback to see how likely our patients would be to recommend us to a friend or family, previously we could only collect these through paper slips. Since the introduction of MJOG, our new SMS system we can now collect responses electronically and via our new website and now have a much wider response rate. For 2017 we received 747 responses, of which 537 responded extremely likely, 118 likely, 32 neither likely nor unlikely, 20 unlikely, 33 extremely unlikely and 7 didn't know.



## Minor Illness Nurses

Our Minor Illness Nurses are available to help with acute problems and illnesses and can prescribe medication where appropriate.

Conditions where seeing a doctor/minor illness nurse is **NOT** usually necessary:

- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Conjunctivitis
- Most sore throats
- Coughs and colds
- Emergency contraception
- Insect bites within first 72 hours
- Chicken pox
- Hayfever
- Backache
- Scabies/lice/worms
- Mild joint pain/soft tissue injury

The Doctor's advice for these conditions is to seek self-care advice from [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk) or your local pharmacist.

As most of these conditions can be managed at home they do not require treatment from a doctor or minor illness nurse

### **Patients to be booked in the Minor Illness Clinic:-**

- Breathing problems-
- Mild to moderate abdominal pain
- Sore throat (for more than 5 days)
- Ear pain (for more than 5-7 days)
- Prolonged/worsening coughs especially asthma/COPD patients
- Severe back/joint pain
- UTI's
- Unwell with a rash

When booking an appointment the admin staff have been trained to triage you to ensure you are booked into the appropriate appointment and will seek medical advice from both the doctors and nurses on duty that day.

## Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 22-

28/01



### Symptoms

#### ***Bleeding***

The most common symptom of cervical cancer is bleeding from the vagina at times other than when you're having a period. You may have bleeding:

- between periods
- during or after sex
- at any time after your menopause

#### ***Bleeding after sex***

Bleeding after sex isn't necessarily a sign of cervical cancer. It's often caused by something called a cervical erosion or ectropion.

A cervical erosion means that the cells that are normally inside the cervical canal (glandular cells) can be seen on the outside surface of the cervix. It is common in:

- young girls
- during pregnancy
- in women on the contraceptive pill

This is due to changes in hormone levels. Sex can make it start bleeding.

Cervical erosion is nothing to do with cancer. It's harmless and often goes away by itself or by changing contraception. Although sometimes it might need treatment. Your doctor does this by freezing the area under local anaesthetic (cryotherapy).

As cervical cancer can also cause bleeding after sex, it is always sensible to get it checked by your doctor.

### ***Discomfort or pain during sex***

Some women have discomfort or pain during sex. This is called dyspareunia.

There are many other conditions that can cause this symptom. But you should see your doctor straight away if you have this.

### ***Other symptoms***

#### ***Some women also have:***

- a vaginal discharge that smells unpleasant
- pain in the area between the hip bones (pelvis)

### ***When to see your doctor***

There are many other conditions that cause these symptoms. Most of them are much more common than cervical cancer. But you should go to your doctor straight away if you have any of these symptoms.

You probably don't have cancer. But if you do, the sooner you are treated, the more likely you are to be cured and usually will need less treatment.

Pre cancerous cell changes do not have any symptoms. The cervical screening programme aims to pick these changes up – preventing cancer from developing in the first place.

For more information, please visit <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cervical-cancer>

### **FLU**

**Did you know you can still get your flu jab. Please ask at reception to make an appointment.**

## **Prostate Cancer Awareness Month in March**

### **What is the Prostate?**

Only men have a prostate gland. The prostate is usually the size and shape of a walnut and grows bigger as you get older. It sits underneath the bladder and surrounds the urethra – the tube men urinate (pee) and ejaculate through.

Its main job is to help make semen – the fluid that carries sperm.

### **Symptoms**

Most men with early prostate cancer don't have any signs or symptoms.

One reason for this is the way the cancer grows. You'll usually only get early symptoms if the cancer grows near the tube you urinate through (the urethra) and presses against it, changing the way you urinate (pee). But because prostate cancer usually starts to grow in a different part of the prostate, early prostate cancer doesn't often press on the urethra and cause symptoms.

If you do notice changes in the way you urinate, this is more likely to be a sign of a very common non-cancerous problem called an [enlarged prostate](#), or another health problem. But it's still a good idea to get it checked out. Changes include:

- difficulty starting to urinate or emptying your bladder
- a weak flow when you urinate
- a feeling that your bladder hasn't emptied properly
- dribbling urine after you finish urinating
- needing to urinate more often, especially at night

- a sudden urge to urinate – you may sometimes leak before you get to the toilet.

If prostate cancer breaks out of the prostate ([locally advanced prostate cancer](#)) or spreads to other parts of the body ([advanced prostate cancer](#)), it can cause other symptoms, including:

- back pain, hip pain or pelvis pain
- problems getting or keeping an erection
- blood in the urine or semen
- unexplained weight loss.

These symptoms can also be caused by other things that aren't prostate cancer, like [prostatitis](#) (infection and swelling of the prostate), diabetes, or some medicines. But it's still a good idea to get any symptoms checked out by your GP so they can find out what's causing them and make sure you get the right treatment if you need it.

For more information, please visit <https://prostatecanceruk.org/>

### **Patient Transport Services**

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EAST) have made further progress in managing

Patients should call **01603 481208** to book transport.

The contact center is open Mon-Fri 8am-6pm and has an answer phone service which operates outside of the opening hours.

### **Chlamydia Testing Kits**

If you are concerned that you may have Chlamydia, testing kits are available for patients aged 15-24 years through your GP surgery. Patients that fall outside of this age group will need to contact a sexual health clinic.

***Bedford Road Health Centre  
Hitchin  
Hertfordshire  
SG5 1HF  
01462 427 130***

***Any Age Appointments held on Tuesdays  
6.30pm-08.30pm.***

***Under 25's only walk in on Mondays 3.30pm-  
5.30pm***

***Southgate Health Centre  
Stevenage  
Hertfordshire  
SG1 1HB  
0300 008 5522***

***Any age walk in on Monday 9.00am-4.00pm  
Tuesday 09.00am-12.00pm  
Wednesday 1.30pm-4.00pm  
Thursday and Friday 9.00am-12.00pm***

***Under 25's walk in on Tuesday 5.00pm-7.00pm***

Both clinics listed above cover:-

- \*Emergency contraception
- \*Family planning
- \*Sexual Health screening