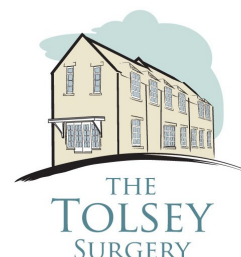


Tolsey Times



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Snow

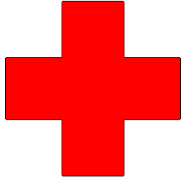
The last blast of winter left us all reeling, or stuck in a snow drift!

We were extremely grateful to Dr Jeffery who donned her walking gear and left home two hours early to trek through the snow from Acton Turville on Friday, 9th March, so that our patients could be seen at the surgery. With so many going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the surgery was open for business, our patients were well looked after during the short but severe weather episode. As more of our staff live further away, it was left to staff in Sherston to keep the surgery open. Lucia, on her day off, and Sarah came in early to open up and staffed reception and dispensary on their own all day. Lisa and Michele also managed to get in as did Dr Pettit. Dr Watkins was unable to get through the snow drifts from his village and worked from home telephoning all his patients.



We were also very grateful to the kind people that cleared the snow away from the entrance and ferried patients, doctors and staff around in their 4x4s. We couldn't have carried on without any of you! Thank you!





Don't forget you can use the web-site :

- To book routine appointments
- To order repeat prescriptions
- To Cancel appointments
- To update your contact details
- To complete our Friends and Family Test questionnaire
- For links to other useful websites
- Get Health and Travel advice
- To see your Summary Record

www.tolseysurgery.co.uk

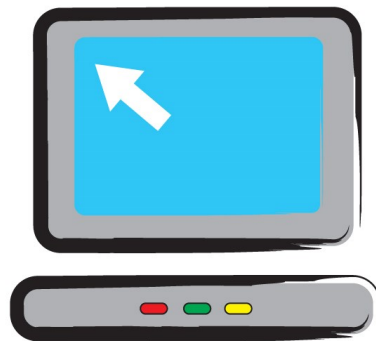
Prescriptions

Can we please ask patients collecting repeat medication to wait until after 9.30am if possible. The first hour of the day is extremely busy with deliveries and phone calls and it would help us if we could reduce the demand for collections at this time.



All patients will be moved to 28 day prescribing, following the Medicine Management's directive. This helps to reduce workload and waste. Patients who are on 2 or more medications per month who pay should consider buying an NHS prescription prepayment card. The cost of a prescription is going up to £8.80 per item on 1st April 2018 but you can buy a card valid for 3 months for £29.10 or £104 for 12 months (or 10 monthly instalments of £10.40). For details go to <https://apps.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppcwebsales/patient.do>
Your co-operation is appreciated as this will help to provide a more efficient service.

Online Access



Wouldn't it be great if you could look at your GP records online? Well, you can! You can go online and see information in your GP record, including your medications, allergies, test results, immunisations and illnesses. You can also book and cancel appointments and order repeat prescriptions online.

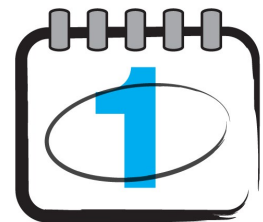
Just like online banking, you can look at your GP records on a computer, a tablet or a smartphone, using a website or an app. If you would like to start using online services, see the 'Getting started with GP online services' guide for more information. This guide is also available online at [nhs.uk/GPonlineservices](https://www.nhs.uk/GPonlineservices). Or contact the surgery.

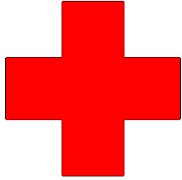
In order to activate your online services, we will ask you to complete a form and bring in photo ID and proof of address, such as a utility bill. If you don't have any ID, don't worry, we can find other ways to confirm your identity.

Many of our patients already benefit from our online services and we would like to extend this to as many patients as possible.

New Appointment System

Our new appointment system was trialled during an exceptionally busy time with a national flu epidemic and was the busiest time in NHS history this winter. It involves doctors speaking to all patients wishing to see a doctor urgently on the day. It has taken some time for us all to get used to and there is some patient resistance to giving any details to our medical receptionists. The new system is being carefully monitored and reviewed each week when small changes can be made to the clinics. The doctors feel that it has helped us through an extremely busy period, but there is still some way to go in directing patients to the most appropriate service, which in some cases could be to the local pharmacy for over the counter medicines or advice. Waiting times for routine appointments are now up to 4 weeks and this again is a national situation.





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Diabetes Prevention Programme

Every 2 minutes someone finds out that they have Type 2 diabetes. There is no cure for this chronic medical condition, which can lead to major health problems such as heart disease, blindness and even amputations.

The Tolsey Surgery has been invited to take part in a National Diabetes Prevention Programme. The NDPP is a new evidence-based lifestyle programme commissioned and paid for by NHS England (working with Public Health England and Diabetes UK) consisting of 18 group-based sessions over nine months to help people make changes to their lifestyle to lose weight, eat a healthier diet, and increase their physical activity levels.

Patients that receive an invitation to join this programme may not be aware that they are in a risk group for Type 2 Diabetes, but they may have had a recent blood test that shows increased blood sugar levels which could lead to diabetes in the future.

The reason we agreed to take part in this initiative is that it is really important that patients understand the possible risks and they are being given the opportunity to access free advice to help reduce these risks before they become a reality. We would encourage any patients invited to take part in this programme to consider joining.



Referrals

If the doctor refers you to a consultant, please ensure that you do not book your appointment within 4 days of the referral. It can take at least 4 working days to dictate the referral letter, have it typed, signed and ready to send to the service. Our staff are all too often having to deal with unhappy patients trying to book appointments before the paperwork is ready.

Please don't waste appointments!

From time to time I remind patients that when they book appointments, we really would like them to turn up for them. We have a number of ways to help avoid wasted appointments:

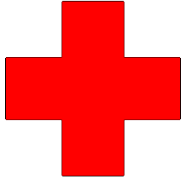
Text patient the day before (please ensure we have your mobile number for this)

Dedicated answerphone to leave a message to cancel appointment if not required

Online cancellation (log in details are required for this, ask for details at reception if you do not have online access.)

But most importantly, we rely on the patient to remember their appointment or cancel it if it is no longer required.

We had over 70 DNAs (Did Not Attend) in November! This is very frustrating for some patients that sometimes have to wait longer than they would like for an appointment. This represents many hours in wasted clinic time and there is very little we can do about it. Repeat offenders will get a letter and ultimately could be removed from our list.



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Power Cuts

Many of you may have suffered, like us, from some recent power cuts. Unfortunately, during the time our power was off, our telephones were unavailable. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused. We have looked at a number of solutions to this problem, but without spending huge amounts of money to provide generators, which may never be needed again, and cannot be practically accommodated, there is very little we can do about temporary, short-term power cuts.

As always, the advice, if there is a medical emergency, is to call 999. For less urgent medical advice, there is the NHS 111 service which is free to call from landlines and mobile phones, and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Easter Opening/Closing

Please note that the surgery will be closed on Friday, 30th March and Monday 2nd April.



Dr Simon Watkins Awarded Honorary Status at Bristol Medical School

We are very proud to announce that in recognition of the substantial teaching commitment by Dr Watkins, he has been awarded honorary status to provide access to University systems and databases as an approved GP Teacher.

Students at The Tolsey

We were very pleased to be able to take two 5th Year medical students again this year. Reece and Rob were with us for 4 weeks this time and were able to sit in on many patient consultations with our regular doctors. They also attended some of the nurse clinics and spent some time in the Dispensary. At the end of their stint with us they presented their findings of a research project which will help us in dealing with medication for the care of our end of life patients. It was a most impressive piece of work which we will be using going forward.

We would like to thank all our patients who consented to their presence during consultations as this is such an important part of their training, and ultimately helps to provide GPs for the future.

We wish Reece and Rob all the best and hope they will keep in touch and let us know what they are doing.

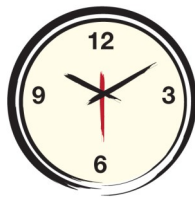
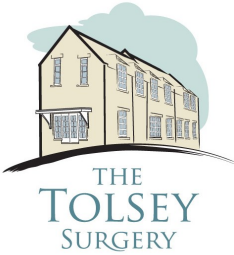
(Pictured below with Dr Simon Watkins and Dr Lorraine Jeffery)



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tolseysurgery.co.uk



It has certainly been a long, cold winter. It is so nice now that the weather is starting to improve and all the spring flowers are in bloom.

I want to thank all our patients for their good wishes and amazing generosity over the festive season. It is always heart-warming to see how much you appreciate the hard work and dedication of our doctors, nurses and staff. Thank you!

As I write, we are in the consultation process for our Neighbourhood Plan, which we very much hope will result in a new surgery being built in the village, thus ensuring our long-term future. Further developments on this will appear in Cliffhanger and on our website where there are details of the current process.

We wish all our patients a very Happy Easter!

Judy Sharp
Practice Manager



Reception:-

Monday to Friday - 8:30am to 6:30pm

The Telephones are not attended between 12.30-1.30pm each day

Dispensary:-

Monday to Friday - 8:30am to 6.30pm

Extended Hours on Wednesdays and Thursdays :- (see staff for further details)

Early appointments from 7.30am - 8.00am (Weds)

Late appointments from 6.30pm - 7.30pm

First class healthcare on your doorstep