

# winter newsletter

Dr Rial & Partners  
RED & GREEN PRACTICE

Dr Hamilton & Partners  
WATERSIDE AND BLACKFIELD HEALTH CENTRES

*“new surgery  
on Saturday  
mornings, on  
a trial basis  
at first, starting  
mid-February”*

## Happy New Year from your new Practice Manager

Since taking up the challenging post of Practice Manager to the largest joint practice in the area (looking after nearly 26,000 patients in Hythe & Blackfield), I have been looking at ways that our two surgeries can serve you better.

Some of the ways we can help you are outlined here and I welcome suggestions of ways we can take that 'extra step' for you.

So, if you use us, now is a great time to tell us what you like about us - and what you don't.

## Appointments – Today & Next Day

There has been plenty written in the national newspapers recently about how it is getting harder to book an appointment with a doctor.

I'm pleased to say, a recent survey showed making an appointment in our Hythe or Blackfield surgeries is easier than in many areas.

The National Patient Survey (2007) showed 80% of our patients are happy with telephone access and 90% happy with their ability to see a doctor within 48-hours.

## Appointments – Advance Booking

Where we seem to fall down is providing you with appointments in advance.

It has always been our policy to offer bookings, with a doctor or nurse, anything up to a fortnight in advance.

These appointments may be limited (and do fill quickly) so be sure to ask for an appointment that suits you best.

## Appointments – Saturdays

We have always promised patients an appointment on the first time of calling and, where this is not always possible, that a doctor will return your call on the same day.

To help meet demand, we are planning to run an 'appointment only' clinic at Waterside Health Centre, Hythe, on Saturday mornings, on a trial basis, starting mid-February 2008.

*This will be for pre booked non emergency appointments only and aimed primarily at those who find it difficult to come to the surgery during the week because of, for example, work commitments. Appointments for this service will become available shortly.*

# winter newsletter

Dr Rial & Partners  
RED & GREEN PRACTICE

Dr Hamilton & Partners  
WATERSIDE AND BLACKFIELD HEALTH CENTRES

*“making sure  
our car park is  
available for our  
patients when  
they need it”*

## New Switchboard

A new switchboard will be installed at Blackfield at the end of January. Please bear with us while we overcome any teething problems as it will make contacting us, and booking appointments, even easier. We plan a new switchboard for Hythe surgery later in the year too.

If you have a comment regarding contacting the surgeries by telephone, especially at peak times, I'd be delighted to hear from you.

## New Reception Area

We refurbished the reception area at Blackfield Health Centre in November and we are planning a refurbishment at Hythe to be completed later this year. We hope you like the bright new look.

## Car Parking

For patients registered at Blackfield Health Centre, I don't need to tell you how difficult parking can be some days. Thanks to three great patient volunteers, we recently undertook a two-week survey of the car parking and are now looking at that information.

The volunteers who helped with the survey will form a 'patient action group' in the New Year and look at ways of making sure our car park available for our patients when they need it.

**Watch this space.**

## Patient Groups

At present we do not have a formal 'patient group' at either Hythe or Blackfield Health Centres and I'm now looking for volunteers to become more involved in helping to shape the services we offer. This is an important part of surgery life and a good patient group can also help other patients by offering support, transport and assistance.

If you are interested in helping to form, or join, a patient group with us, please let me know.

I'm looking forward to serving you and supporting your doctors in the year ahead, and will keep you regularly informed of our progress.

**I wish you a happy and healthy New Year.**

**Gary Young**

Practice Business Manager