

THE MARKET SURGERY

Patient Participation Group

Surgery News

We are sad to announce Dr Pete Lawson retired from General Practice at the end of March. Dr Lawson has been a partner at The Market Surgery for over 30 years. I'm sure that you will join us in wishing him a long and happy retirement.



We are pleased to announce that Dr Anna Stenberg will be joining us in May as a salaried GP. Dr Stenberg has over 10 years experience working as a GP in Norfolk and will be a great asset to the surgery.

Spring 2024 | Newsletter

Useful Numbers

- Reception - 01263 733331
- Dispensary - 01263 738580
- Dispensary Repeats - 01263 7734840
- Email - nwicb.reception.marketsurgery@nhs.net

Guidance for Older drivers (GOLD) - A patient perspective

I was faced with a dilemma, my husband was, eventually going to finish driving our car. I had a driving license, but through no fault of my own, I hadn't driven for about twelve years. I needed to refresh my driving skills, before taking the helm from my husband.

A friend gave me a leaflet for **Guidance for the Older Driver**. I read the information on this leaflet and applied for a session. The appointment came through in a few days. I used our car, which I had never driven before. After a few questions on the highway code and general chat we were ready. So off we went for an hour on the road. I was a bit nervous to start with, had a few kangaroo jumps, but soon settled down and it was a good session. The instructor was human and friendly, he pointed out my faults and the bad habits were soon ironed out. After the hour was up I was feeling more confident, and as a result I was now on course to be back on the road driving.

I would describe the session as a mini driving test, but not as scary as the original one. It made my life so much more fun. The cost is minimal compared to a driving lesson. The surgery have some of the leaflets. I recommend this course if you want to refresh your driving skills.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/39705/Training-for-drivers-and-motorcyclists>

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the ways you can contact your doctor or nurse about your case with queries or even extra information is by the surgery website. This can be about a wide range of issues such as referral timescales through to sending photos of your symptoms. Visit the website at www.marketsurgery.nhs.uk

Patient Participation Group

Marsham Meet and Mardle

We are a small friendly group from Marsham, the surrounding villages and even as far as Norwich, who meet on the first Friday of every month for a chat (mardle) in a warm and safe space at Marsham Village Hall (NR10 5AE). Our aims are to promote friendliness, offer support to each other and combat loneliness.

We start at 10am and usually finish at 11.30am. Refreshments are available and there is free parking. We sometimes have speakers or activities and have an annual Autumn trip. On May 3rd we will be joined by the Aylsham Fire Service who will be giving a talk on Fire Safety in the Home. There is no charge for attending, we just ask for donations to cover the cost of refreshments. Everyone is welcome including children who are accompanied by their responsible adult. If you don't have time to come for the whole session, then just pop in for a tea or coffee and take a quick break in your busy schedule.

If you would like more information, please contact Nicola Hibberd on 01263 733557.

A view from Reception...

In October 2021 headlines on BBC News included, *GP staff abuse: Receptionists 'bear brunt' of patient aggression.*

It's not the same in Aylsham. As the Reception lead member of staff at the Market Surgery for over three years, Grace has a long track record in customer-facing jobs.

'I enjoy it so much,' she says, 'I like helping people and love the work. There's so much more to a surgery than the public realise.'

Like several others, Grace does her work part-time, though a full day on Fridays. This is when she often goes home completely exhausted, not wanting to talk a lot: *'It's a tough job to do full-time'*. A typical day involves dealing with crises on the phone, a few challenging patients, urgent calls and queries from colleagues, and it can be emotionally draining. *'I'm constantly asked questions by managers' and colleagues and keep a notebook and lists always with me... The key is not panicking and to listen. I try to clear my list by the evening.'*

Grace and the other seven reception staff spend much of their time on the phone. The training involves greeting, checking in, understanding the complex systems and the different teams in the surgery, but, most importantly, asking good questions. These are essential if every patient is to get the right help. *'We listen for 'red flag' symptoms. Sometimes we have to delve a little. We don't want to know all the details but we*

want to help and signpost patients to the right place: if you have a backache then the physiotherapist might be the right person'.

The hardest thing in a receptionist's life is dealing with patient queries and concerns: *'Dealing with someone with a mental health crisis on the phone; a really busy, demanding set of calls all day... I've had patients make me cry... I had a patient swear at me this week...'*

The good things include the pleasure of helping others. The most positive thing about being a receptionist is being part of the team. *'You have to be a positive person to work here. We respect each other, use first names for everyone, and we have a laugh and a giggle with colleagues... I have never questioned my decision to work here. I enjoy it so much. The team provide support for each other.'*

And what would you want the public to know about your role on reception?

'We don't bite. We are trying our best to help you. We do care and we want to signpost you to the right place. If you have a verruca, I know that a pharmacist can help you more appropriately. It's about helping them to get the right treatment for their problem. I do love it.'

Helping Ourselves - a patient viewpoint

"You're so different from how you were a year ago." My friend was reflecting on the huge change that physiotherapy had brought to bear on the arthritis in my knee. In fact it is my efforts to carry out the regular exercises advised that has made the difference. I do about 5-7 minutes most days which I can fit in easily. In my early 70s I can now not only go up and down stairs again easily but can even run (short distances that is!).

At our surgery we now have the benefit of referral to a physiotherapist linked to the practice. This means being seen at the surgery for a detailed assessment with tailored exercises prescribed. All we each have to do is make sure we play our part. After all it's our bodies and we owe it to ourselves to do our very best.