

# Skerryvore Practice Newsletter

July 2013

[www.skerryvorepractice.co.uk](http://www.skerryvorepractice.co.uk)

Issue 28

## Our Appointments...

We have noticed that our appointments are booking up more quickly than usual. As a Practice we want to offer good access for our patients, so we have been looking at this.

We have discovered a few reasons why this is happening, and have instituted a number of changes as a result. We wanted to inform you about these changes, and advise our patients about some ways that patients can help too.

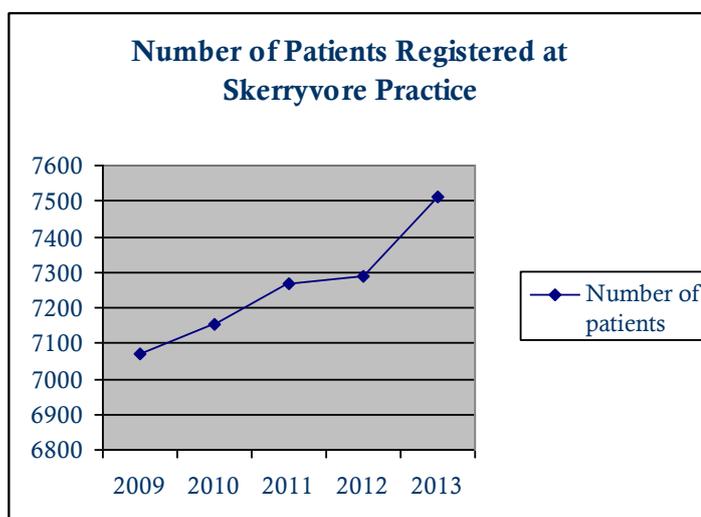
## Why is the Practice busier?

### The Practice is getting bigger.

In the last 4 years our Practice list size has increased by around 500.

Unlike most Practices in Orkney our list size is growing year on year.

There have been many new houses built in and around Kirkwall in the last few years and there is a shift in population from the islands to the mainland.



### Patients are attending their GP more.

In the year 2000, patients attended their doctor on average 3.5 times per year. Now patients attend 5.5 times per year on average. There are many reasons for this including advances in patient care, patients are looked after at home by their own GP rather than in hospital and an increasing population of older people. For Skerryvore Practice this means we need to provide an extra **15,000** appointments each year.

## What is the Practice doing about this?

### Extended Hours

We now offer extra early morning appointments each Wednesday from 8.00am.

### Nurses

Our Nurses are changing the services they provide for patients.

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|---------------------------|--|
| Contraceptive Pill Checks | Nurses now review patients yearly who are on this, instead of the GPs.   |
| CVD Clinics               | This is an annual review for patients with heart or kidney disease, high blood pressure or a history of strokes. |
| Travel Immunisations      | If you are travelling abroad, the nurse can arrange any vaccines you may require.                                |

## **Recruitment**

Nationally there are difficulties in all rural areas to recruit permanent and locum GPs. We were happy to announce that Dr Anne Tierney is returning to us as a new partner in August. Unfortunately, until then we have not been able to cover all her sessions with locum cover. This means our appointment availability should improve from August.

## **Repeat Prescribing System**

The GPs have been looking at the repeat prescribing system. In line with most practices, we have changed most prescriptions to allow a maximum of 12 months prescriptions before we ask you to attend.

## **What can patients do to help?**

**Cancel your appointment if you cannot attend the Practice.**

This month alone **95 patients did not attend their appointment with their GP** and **49 did not attend for their Nurse appointment**. This makes an average of 7 appointments wasted every day. All these appointments could have been used for other patients if they had been cancelled in advance. **Please try to cancel your appointment if you cannot attend.**

The majority of our patients are considerate, however if you fail to attend 3 appointments within a short timescale you will be sent a warning letter regarding this.

## **Minor Ailments Scheme**

You can register at a chemist for the Minor Ailments Scheme where your pharmacist can advise and provide **free** treatment for:

Back ache, sprains and stains	Haemorrhoids	Minor fungal infections of the skin
Colds	Hay fever	Mouth ulcers
Conjunctivitis	Head lice	Nappy rash
Constipation	Headache and fever	Sore Throat
Coughs	Heartburn and indigestion	Teething
Diarrhoea	Insect bites and stings	Threadworm
Earache	Mild eczema and dermatitis	Thrush

The following patients are eligible to register for the service:

- Patients under the age of 16 or under the age of 19 and in full-time education
- Patients aged 60 or over
- Patients who have maternity, medical or war pension exemption certificates
- Patients on Income Support
- Patients who are entitled to Exemption Certificates

## **Self Management of Minor Ailments**

You can visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) which gives you an A-Z of conditions and treatments.