

Newsletter for Patients

Autumn 2019

Practice News

We welcome our newly recruited GP, Dr Paul Graham, who has now started at Riverside Surgery and will be taking over Dr Ronneberger's patient list. Dr Graham's usual working days are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday but he has kindly agreed to work an additional day per week for us during Dr Mills' long term sick leave.

Dr Mills will be off for twelve months and we're sure all our patients will join us in wishing her the best.

We'd like to thank all of our patients for bearing with us while routine GP appointments have been in short supply. We are hoping that with the appointment of Dr Graham, and with further GP recruitment to be announced soon, the situation will improve over the coming months.

We are very pleased to welcome our new Deputy Practice Manager Ben Bishop to our team. Ben will provide daily support for our Practice Manager, Amanda Coleridge but will take the lead on our premises maintenance and compliance management. Ben grew up locally in Newton Abbot, but currently lives in Tavistock and makes the daily trek across beautiful Dartmoor.

We are delighted to announce that as part of the new NHS Primary Care Network scheme, we have now recruited a practice pharmacist. Rosie Hooper will be joining us from 2nd December 2019 and she will work between our Riverside and Tower House sites as well as working at Kingskerswell and Ipplepen Surgery and Albany Surgery which are the other members of our Primary Care Network.

Improvements at Riverside Surgery

A lift to the first floor at Riverside

Subject to final approval from the League of Friends, plans are progressing to install a wheelchair accessible lift for up to four people. The lift will be based in the main waiting room. We hope to be able to schedule the installation work across a weekend to avoid any disruption to patients. The lift will be very helpful for patients who have mobility difficulties.

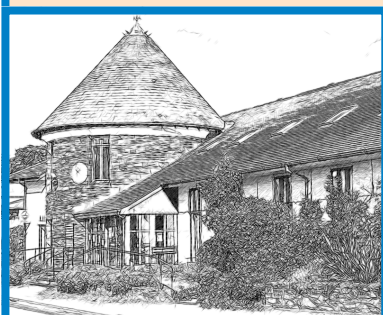
For the hard of hearing

Thanks to the kind support of the League of Friends, portable hearing aid loops have now been made available at the reception desks of Riverside

and Tower House surgeries. A microphone picks up the receptionist's voice and the hearing aid loop converts the sound into a signal which can be heard via the patient's hearing aid. These devices can also be taken into GP consultations.

These loop devices should work with any hearing aid which has either a 'T' position or a more modern equivalent (some aids have a mobile phone app to control them).

Unfortunately, the devices will not work with the small hearing aids which fit completely within the ear canal because that type of aid just doesn't have enough room inside it for the loop circuitry.



Riverside Surgery
Bovey Tracey
01626 832666

Tower House Surgery
Chudleigh
01626 852379



More than 95% of our patients let us know if they can't attend for their appointments—and we can then give the appointments to other patients.

You can cancel your appointment easily by phoning us on one of the numbers shown below or by going to our website <https://www.towerhousesurgery.co.uk>

and clicking on the **Cancel an Appointment** button or, if you've registered to use SystmOnline, you can cancel your appointment after logging on as usual.

Riverside: 01626 832666

Tower House: 01626 852379

What is the HOPE programme?

Our local NHS Trust has developed a programme which will help people struggling with long-term health conditions. The course will build their confidence and help them learn how to better manage their condition(s), including mental health issues such as anxiety, stress and depression. The HOPE Programme (Help Overcoming Problems Effectively) is based on a course developed by the University of Coventry to help people cope better with long-term medical conditions.

The programme will help you to focus on you as a person, not as a long-term condition. It helps you to discover new strengths and rediscover old ones to keep yourself well. It will also boost your self-confidence and resilience to help you cope better emotionally, psychologically and practically with your condition. This is not therapy but it is certainly therapeutic!

The course will help you to:

- ❖ Feel more able to support and share your experiences with others to help you feel less isolated.
- ❖ Feel reassured and able to recognise your own potential and enhance your happiness and quality of life.
- ❖ Feel more confident in dealing with emotional issues such as: anxiety, anger, depression and uncertainty.
- ❖ Increase your ability to handle stressful situations.
- ❖ Discover how to use relaxation techniques to refresh your mind and body.
- ❖ Learn how to make plans and achieve goals that can help you make changes for the better.
- ❖ Use the skills from the course to improve and self-manage your life.

The six-week course is free to attend and it takes place at various times and locations throughout Torbay and South Devon. Each weekly session lasts for 2½ hours and is run by trained HOPE facilitators: health and social care professionals as well as volunteers. Once you have completed the course you might even wish to become a facilitator yourself!

The aim is to have between 6 and 12 people on each course so that everyone can feel part of a supportive

group and be comfortable in offering support to the other members.

Time on the course will be spent in discussions, fun group activities and sharing information. There will also be some suggestions and ideas to try between each session to build your confidence.

What you will find on the course

- ❖ A warm, friendly atmosphere
- ❖ Support when you need it

During the sessions, there will be discussions on topics such as:

- ❖ Managing fatigue
- ❖ Getting more active
- ❖ Feeling good
- ❖ Goal setting
- ❖ Starting a gratitude diary
- ❖ Managing stress
- ❖ Communication

Who can attend?

You need to be at least 18 (there will eventually be courses specifically for young people and these will be advertised when they become available).

The courses are specifically for people who feel overwhelmed with their health issues or who are not so good at self-management of their conditions. If you wish to have someone come with you to the course, for support—a friend, family member, or a carer—that's fine.

Applying to take part

Any patients interested in attending a HOPE course can contact 01803 210493 or use the contact form on the website: <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/hope-programme/>

A view by a HOPE course participant

On the opposite page there's a report from someone who's taken part in a HOPE course. You'll see that she highly recommends the course because she got so much from it. If you think **you** might be interested, do apply now: don't put it off.

The Hope Programme by Torbay NHS

Those of us with a long-term health condition sometimes find it hard to cope with our day-to-day lives. It's to help people like us that Torbay NHS has started their Hope Programme. This takes the form of a weekly group meeting run by two facilitators (organisers) over a six-week period. They lead the group and encourage them to support each other and learn about ways of being more positive about life in general. Remember that we all of us have times when we might be unhappy or not coping too well.

I found that the Help Programme made a tremendous difference to me when I put into practice what the group facilitators had told us about. I became more confident and much keener to get the best out of life. One example was keeping a 'gratitude diary' to make me more aware of things in my life that I was really grateful for.

It's not possible in this short note for me to list all the many ways I've benefited from the Hope Programme. All I can say is that if you are invited to take part in a Hope Course, or you put yourself forward to take part, don't hesitate. Everyone in my group got a lot out of the Course.

When you've taken part, you'll look back and be pleased with yourself for having taken up the offer, especially if you were a bit nervous about what would happen on the course. Everyone, the facilitators who ran the course and the other participants, were all so supportive and helpful that no one on my course had anything but praise for it.

Remember too that everything you learn from the course will remain with you as resources to ensure you get the best out of your life and cope well with any difficulties you might experience in the future.

My best wishes to all of you future attendees: go for it!

Brenda

Weights for all — including the elderly!

When people hear of "weight training" they tend to form an image of young macho men with bulging muscles lifting enormous weights to show that they're stronger than other young men. However, it's been realised lately that even the elderly can gain benefits from using weights to retain muscle strength during the ageing process.

It's the movement not the weight

Research suggests that there's no need to use very heavy weights because what matters is the ability to use the weights in a rapid repetitive way until it becomes difficult to carry on because the muscles being exercised become too tired for you to keep going. It's the long-term repetitive movement that gives the benefit not the actual heaviness of the weight.

Look after your muscles

If you're getting on a bit and would like to remain in good muscular health you could head to a local

gym for help. There, you will find qualified training staff who will be able to draw up a programme of exercise (with weights or without) appropriate to your particular needs.

You won't be on your own

There's a lot of interest from gyms in attracting older people to use their services and it's not unusual now to see older people exercising. Some gyms have special sessions for certain age groups so that the elderly don't feel that younger people will be looking at them.

Exercising at home

A trainer at a gym, or a physiotherapist, can suggest a lot of simple exercises you can do at home, either with small weights, or with an exercise band (a long strip of rubber which you can stretch between your hands). There's lots on the internet on how to work with the bands (search for "using exercise bands").

Some pharmacies are changing their way of working

You may have read about some recent changes to the way in which Boots and Lloyds pharmacies are managing their stock to reduce the amount of medication held on site. We understand that the pharmacies may now need up to an additional five working days to dispense prescriptions. Any concerns about the changes in policy should be directed toward the pharmacy involved.

We are aware of the changes, and would like to remind our patients of our policy on prescriptions.

Contractually, we have two working days to process and produce all prescriptions and will always endeavour to process them as quickly as possible. We ask our patients not to request their repeat before 14 days prior to running out. This is to ensure we are able to monitor compliance and avoid wasted medication.

All patients have complete freedom of choice over where they would like us to send their repeat prescriptions. If you'd like us to update this for you, please inform us via your usual contact method.

Do you use *Emerade* adrenaline autoinjectors?

The Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has received reports of *Emerade* pens failing to activate. This means that the needle is not released, and the injection is not delivered.

Not the same problem as needle blockage

This is different from the needle blockage issue that you are likely to have been informed about previously by your healthcare professional via a drug alert. This risk is expected to be resolved in all new stock manufactured since July 2019 that will now start to be released to the market.

The cause of the activation failures is being intensively investigated but is currently unknown.

Emerade devices not being recalled at present

Following discussions with alternative adrenaline auto-injector suppliers there are currently sufficient supplies available to meet historic demand. However, there are insufficient surplus devices to replace all the *Emerade* pens that would need to be recalled. Therefore, at present, the MHRA is advising that *Emerade* devices should not be recalled.

The activation failures have not been traced to any particular batches of product.

The MHRA understands that you will be very concerned that the pens in your possession may be affected. It is important to note that based on all the information to date, the majority of pens will activate as normal.

Firm pressure needed

If you do need to use an *Emerade* pen, as a precaution, you should press the pen very firmly against the thigh. If this does not result in activation, you should immediately use your second pen. Information is provided below/on page 5 to illustrate what a non-activated pen looks like.

Try again if you need to

If a further dose of adrenaline is needed before the emergency services arrive, additional attempts should be made to administer a pen that has failed to

activate. This is because reports received suggest that a pen may activate after further attempts.

Make sure you always carry two pens

You are reminded to carry two in-date pens with you at all times. For more information, please refer to the patient information leaflet. There is also a fact sheet with advice on the use of adrenaline auto-injectors which you and your carers are encouraged to read.

More information will be made available

A full investigation is ongoing. The MHRA and Bausch and Lomb UK Limited will provide updated information to healthcare professionals and affected members of the public as soon as it becomes available.

Report any problems via the Yellow Card system

You can help the MHRA by reporting any issues directly via the Yellow Card reporting tool: <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Use the free app for more details

Download the free *Emerade* mobile app. The free *Emerade* mobile is available for iPhone and Android phones and includes:

- ❖ Instructions for *Emerade*
- ❖ Symptoms of anaphylaxis
- ❖ Video demonstration
- ❖ Reminders to carry *Emerade* at all times
- ❖ Download the app by visiting the App Store or Google Play and search for *Emerade*.

If you are given another brand

Remember; if you are moved on to a different brand, you must ensure you receive adequate training from your healthcare professional as each product is used differently.

Important reading for users

On the opposite page, there are pictures and instructions about the *Emerade* pen. If you have been provided with an *Emerade* pen, make sure that you read all the information.

If you would like to have a copy of this Newsletter in a different format to make it easier to read, please contact the Practice.



WHAT DOES MY EMERADE PEN LOOK LIKE BEFORE USE? Fig. 1



BEFORE USE

Instructions:

1. An unused Emerade pen, with front cap in place (Fig. 1).
2. For instruction on how to use your Emerade pen please consult the Patient Information Leaflet (PIL).
3. During this period, when activation failure is a possibility, you should press the Emerade pen very firmly against your thigh.

HAS MY EMERADE PEN ACTIVATED? Fig. 2



ACTIVATED

When Emerade Pen has been activated the needle cover will extend and lock.

Instructions:

1. After using an Emerade pen following the instructions found on product labelling, verify that the pen has activated.
2. An Emerade pen that has been activated, will have an extended needle cover (Fig. 2 – circled section of image)
3. Call 999 for an ambulance and state “Anaphylaxis” even if you start to feel better
4. Lie flat with your legs up to keep your blood flowing. However, if you are having difficulty breathing, you may need to sit up to make breathing easier
5. Proceed to administer your second pen if you are not improving in case you need a second dose of adrenaline

WHAT DO I DO IF MY EMERADE PEN HAS NOT ACTIVATED? FIG. 3



NOT ACTIVATED

If the needle cover has not extended, the pen has not activated.

Instructions:

1. If the needle cover has not extended, the pen has not activated (Fig. 3 – circled section of image).
2. If the pen has not activated, use your second pen immediately.
3. Call 999 for an ambulance and state “anaphylaxis” even if you start to feel better.
4. Perform additional attempts to activate, if pen(s) fail to fire initially and further dose is needed. This should only be attempted once all pens have been tried.
5. Retain any suspected, un-activated pen for reporting to the MHRA via the Yellow Card system:

<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>

Planning for wintry conditions

We are sure that all of our patients have seen the recent media coverage regarding the possibly harsh winter on the way and the potential for heavy snow. You'll all remember the significant disruption caused by snow last year, both on the roads and as a knock on effect to local businesses. NHS staff and surgeries are no different!

We'd like to reassure all patients that whatever the weather, we **will** be open and available to treat patients during our normal surgery hours.

Please don't phone to see if we're open

We would politely like to ask all patients to avoid phoning to check if we are open but please do cancel your appointment if you can't attend. Cancel on-line if you possibly can rather than by phoning.

We will prepare for adverse weather

We are already putting plans in place to ensure that we are as prepared as possible in the event of inclement weather.

As we all know, snow and ice can create some of the most dangerous driving conditions, conditions for which the 'average' cars driven by the majority of our staff are not suited.

Volunteers needed

We would like to put out an SOS to any of our brilliant patients with 4x4 vehicles who would be willing to volunteer their time and their vehicle to transport our dedicated NHS staff to and from the surgery in the event of poor weather. If you would be willing to volunteer to be on our 'stand by' list please contact deputy practice manager Ben Bishop by email to contact.btcp@nhs.net or on **01626 832666**

Check your vehicle insurance

Most insurance companies will not increase the premium for volunteer use of cars for this sort of task, but if you are willing to be one of our transport volunteers, it would be advisable for you to check the position with your insurers

All of our patient leaflets can be downloaded

All the leaflets we've produced for our practice are not only available for collection from Reception but they can be downloaded from our website. All you

have to do is go to the following link and download one or more of them:

<https://www.towerhousesurgery.co.uk/pages/Leaflets>

Measles is not a trivial disease

The UK has unfortunately been stripped of its 'measles-free' status—awarded in 2016 by the World Health Organisation—with more than 230 cases of measles recorded in the UK in the first quarter of 2019 alone.

The government says that the rise in cases is the result of falling rates of immunisation. Just 87.2% of children in the UK have received their second MMR dose, compared with 88.6% in 2014/15.

A warning

Losing the UK's measles-free status is a stark reminder of how important it is that every eligible person gets vaccinated. Elimination of the disease can be sustained only by maintaining and improving take-up of the MMR vaccine. Measles is one of the most infectious diseases known to man—just one infected person travelling back to an area with lower vaccination rates can lead to an outbreak. Anyone who has not received two doses of MMR vaccine is always at risk.'

Hundreds of cases

Prime minister Boris Johnson said: "After a period of progress where we were once able to declare Britain measles free, we've now seen hundreds of cases of measles in the UK this year. One case of this horrible disease is too many, and I am determined to step up our efforts to tackle its spread. This is a global challenge and there are a number of reasons

why people don't get themselves or their children the vaccines they need, but we need decisive action across our health service and society to make sure communities are properly immunised."

It's important

If you have not had two doses of the MMR vaccine, please think seriously about getting vaccinated as soon as you can. This is particularly important for those aged from 5 to 25 but is worthwhile for anyone who's missed out on vaccination.

Don't believe all the nonsense "antivax" statements which have occurred, particularly on social media. Measles is a nasty dangerous disease and can be a very serious condition.

Herd immunity

If the number of vaccinated people in a community reaches a certain percentage, then 'herd immunity' is reached and the number of measles cases will fall steeply, and that is so worthwhile.

There are a few individuals who can't be vaccinated because of various medical conditions. When herd immunity is high enough, those people are protected even though they haven't been vaccinated.

Get on with it!

As soon as you've decided to be vaccinated, please book an appointment via our reception team and you'll have your vaccinations as soon as possible.

Local out-of-hours services

We are sorry to have to tell you that there has been a reduction in the Devon Doctors out-of-hours service run from Newton Abbot hospital. A statement from Devon Doctors has given notice of the changes.

“As a result of a number of unprecedented challenges impacting adversely on out of hours care across the entire country – chiefly increasing acuity and difficulty filling clinical rotas – Devon Doctors has undertaken a comprehensive review of its service provision across Devon.

“In doing so it became apparent that the clinical resource required to operate Newton Abbot treatment centre was disproportionate to the demand

from service users in this area and that some of the resource could be better utilised elsewhere.

“People in the Newton Abbot area will continue to be able to access urgent out-of-hours care by phoning the NHS 111 service. However, since September there will be occasions when anyone who might previously have called 111 and been invited to attend the Newton Abbot treatment centre will instead be invited to attend an appointment at the Devon Doctors’ treatment centre within Torbay Hospital.

“If people are unable to travel to Torbay Hospital but need to be seen by a clinician they will continue to be offered a home visit.”

Getting your medicines if there's a no-deal Brexit

At the time of preparing this Newsletter it was not known whether Brexit would take place in the near future. The government prepared information on the steps taken to ensure the supply of medicines. The

link to access the details is :

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/medicines-information/getting-your-medicines-if-theres-no-deal-eu-exit/>

Community Transport

A valuable asset for the around Newton Abbot is the Newton Abbot Community Transport Association (NACTA) which provides a range of transport options for people wanting to get about the area. There are friendly staff and volunteers, all trained and happy to help — and aware that not everyone is as agile as they might like to be.

The fares are kept as low as possible with surplus funds being invested in the charity: mobility for the community by the community!

- ❖ Door to door transport in wheelchair friendly cars and Ring & Ride minibuses.
- ❖ Day trips and coffee stops around Devon
- ❖ Volunteer-driven community minibuses for local groups
- ❖ Scheduled bus services in rural communities: bus routes 361, 672 and 888. You can use concessionary passes on those routes.

If you need a bit of extra help to get around Newton Abbot, they have a variety of Shopmobility scooters, wheelchairs and walkers for hire from their town centre base in the **Multistorey Car Park in Sherborne Road, TQ12 2QY.**

NACTA is approved by the NHS to supply daily living aids, everything from walking stick ferrules to commodes: just ask for details and advice.

Sample charge

The present charge for a return trip from Bovey Tracey to Newton Abbot is £14.30.

Contact NACTA for any further details you need:

01626 335775

www.newtonabbottcta.org

transport@newtonabbottcta.org

shopmo@newtonabbottcta.org



Newton Abbot Community Transport
Providing accessible, affordable transport and services for our local community, supporting increased mobility, social contact and independence since 1991

Wheelchair accessible vehicles
from six to sixteen passenger seats

Ring & Ride door to door transport for Newton Abbot and surrounding areas

Minibuses for community groups, clubs and schools

Shopmobility scooter, wheelchair and walker hire

Aids to daily living sales and advice - DCC/NHS approved

Local scheduled bus services
Routes 361, 672 and 888

01626 335775

What is community equipment?

Community equipment is a range of products designed to help you to continue to stay active, comfortable and independent in your own home, as well as safe in the community.

Equipment ranges from relatively simple items, such as walking sticks, crutches and walking frames to aid mobility, to complex equipment like beds, hoists and pressure care equipment.

The local supplier

In our practice area, community equipment is supplied via an NHS contract with Millbrook Healthcare under the title "Devon Independent Living Integrated Service (DILIS)". Millbrook has been providing community equipment services on behalf of local authorities and the NHS since 2000, and now delivers services to a population of over 7.5 million, across 15 English counties, boroughs, major towns and cities.

The service includes delivery and installation, servicing and maintenance, and collection of equipment that has been ordered by a prescriber, GP, nurse, therapist or a social services provider. They also make adaptations to people's homes.

Assessment of your needs

As the equipment is provided by the local authority or NHS, to find out whether you are eligible, you will need to be assessed by a local therapist or clinician.

After you've been assessed, and equipment has been prescribed for you, depending on where you live, either they can phone you to arrange a convenient time to deliver and install the equipment, or you can phone them.

Once you have received the equipment, or if you already have some, you can contact Millbrook about any concerns or issues that crop up; for example, if you think your equipment might need repairing. If you don't need your equipment anymore, simply contact Millbrook and they will arrange to come and collect it.

Personal callers can view and purchase equipment from a retail suite based at Millbrook's service centre in Exeter. The customer service team can be contacted

by telephone, email, text, fax, post, minicom or NGT Relay (formerly TypeTalk).

Recycling equipment

Millions of pounds worth of NHS community equipment items and wheelchairs are thrown away each year by people who no longer have a need for it. This means that it can't be recycled and issued out to other members of the community who may need it to maintain their independence, or to help them stay in their home instead of being admitted to hospital or care homes. It also means that the NHS has to spend even more money to replace discarded equipment with new, and/or pay for more expensive care packages, such as a stay in hospital.

Returning equipment for re-use

Just phone the number on the barcode label on your equipment and your local Millbrook customer service team will be happy to help. They will either arrange to collect it from you, or tell you where you can drop it off. If the barcode label is faded, or missing, visit the Millbrook website and click through to your local service centre contact page or send them an email.

Items which cannot be reused

Unfortunately, some equipment is not viable to collect, clean and put back into service. The Community Nursing Team suggests such equipment might be offered to a local care home, the Red Cross or another charitable organisation.

Here are the contact details for Millbrook

0330 124 4491

<https://www.millbrook-healthcare.co.uk/contact-us/service-centre-locations/community-equipment-service/dilis/>

DevonContactUs@millbrookhealthcare.co.uk

Units 5-8, Block B, Jacks Way, Hill Barton Business Park, Clyst St Mary, Exeter EX5 1FG

Our practice cannot accept returns of community equipment or deal with unwanted or unused medications. All such medications should be returned to the pharmacy which supplied them.

Hot water bottles

Hot water bottles can cause a number of problems

- ❖ scalds from spilling very hot water while you're filling the bottle
- ❖ burns from having the bottle too hot and using it next to you in bed, particularly if you cannot move about much once you're in bed
- ❖ scalds if the bottle bursts or leaks while it's next to you in bed

Burns and scalds can be more serious the older you are, so if you have elderly relatives who might be using a hot water bottle, check if they're safe when they're using it. It might be a good idea to see if they would be amenable to giving up their hot water bottle and having an electric blanket instead (though you'd have to make sure that they know how to use the electric blanket safely).

You can order your repeat medication up to two weeks in advance. Why not sign up to do it on-line? Ask Reception for our leaflet on how to set up on-line access.