CHURCH STREET PRACTICE

DUTY DOCTOR PROTOCOL including Home Visiting Policy

ROTA
The duty rota is organised by Dr Wilding approx 6 weeks in advance. The duty days will be shared between the partners on a pro rata basis and normally once a week possibly twice for a salaried GP.

The duty doctor covers from 0800 until 1830 each day and must stay on the premises until 1830 unless required to attend an urgent house call.

APPOINTMENTS
The duty doctor will have 4 pre-bookable appointments only apart from Monday or Tuesday after a bank holiday Monday.
Each non duty doctor will have 2 embargoed appointments per session (3 on a Monday or Tuesday after a bank holiday Monday) that can only be booked by a doctor either in advance, or on the day if still available.
When a patient calls reception requesting an urgent appointment for that day, or advice, the reception staff will send a practice note to the duty doctor and will inform the patient that they will be receiving a return phone call from the duty doctor.
It is the responsibility of the duty doctor, if appropriate, to make an appointment for each patient at the most relevant time – usually on that day with themselves, and will only defer to another doctor/day if that is more appropriate.
When taking an embargoed slot for another doctor/day, all doctors must initial that it was them who took the appointment under ‘reason’.

VISITS
Visits pre 12-noon –
Requests for visits are recorded in the “Visit Book”. Duty doctor will assess each visit to see if appropriate and normally contact the patient. It may be reasonable to encourage the patient to come down to the surgery or the problem may be dealt with on the phone. The visits can be allocated to the salaried doctor (2 visits) any additional visits will be dealt with by the most appropriate doctor to allow for continuity of care for house bound patients on a fair shared basis.
Each doctor making the visit must tick and underline their initials in the “Visit Book”. Once the duty doctor has reviewed the recorded visits they will underline the page - this is normally around 12 noon and discussed at the end of surgery morning meeting.

As far as possible the duty doctor will not do visits pre -12 noon.

After 12-noon -
All visit requests are passed to the duty doctor via a practice note; the duty doctor contacts the patient to discuss the need for the visit over the phone and to make appropriate arrangements to see the patient.
ADMINISTRATION

Paperwork
This includes correspondence (scanned via DOCMAN) and hard copies of some results for example (paperwork placed in your basket). For any doctor absent for more than one day then paperwork is shared equally between the doctors present on the day (except Duty on Monday).

Prescriptions
Are shared equally between the doctors present on any day (except Duty on Monday), as far as possible allocating requests to the named doctor for the patient. Doctors should aim to complete queries and sign scripts by the end of the same day.

Electronic mail
Results
Duty doctor to check results for absent doctors and to action any that need attention that day. If the doctor is not working the following day the result should be actioned and filed. Do not file reports without subsequently archiving them.

Patient notes
Each doctor will receive their own patient notes. If that doctor is away and the query can not wait until their return then the PN will be sent to the duty doctor. When a doctor is going on leave or leaving early an email needs to be sent to the whole team notifying them of this.

OUT OF HOURS
Out of hours cover is currently the responsibility of Surrey PCT. Thamesdoc is the out of hour’s provider. At 6.30pm the out of hours telephone line is diverted to Thamesdoc. The answer machine on the main switchboard is activated and the message announces that callers should ring Thamesdoc directly (or NHS Direct/Walk in Centre). Thamesdoc deals with all telephone calls received between 6.30pm and 8.00am the following morning. Patients are advised to phone 01932 851100 between 8am and 8:30am and a message will be taken and passed to the duty doctor is appropriate.

Reviewed November 2007, reviewed May 2009, June 2012 (2)