



# Oaktree & Pensilva Patient Newsletter

SUMMER 2020 EDITION

## Welcome to the new layout of your Patient Newsletter

Welcome to the new layout of our Patient Newsletter for Oaktree and Pensilva. We are very excited to share with you our first edition which will allow all patients to read and understand everything that is currently happening at our wonderful practices.

### Covid-19 Update

During the last three months the practice has had to radically change the way in which we see and consult with our patients.

NHS England has published a standard operating procedure with which Primary Care Services must comply. A vital part of this procedure is to minimize footfall through the practice and to operate a "remote management" appointment system.

Oaktree and Pensilva had a well-established telephone triage system in place long before lockdown occurred. This means that a lot of our appointments already occurred via telephone consultation. This allows our clinicians to triage patients appropriately and to only see those patients that they cannot treat remotely.

You may have noticed two large white tents in the car park at Oaktree. These tents are used by Oaktree and Pensilva, along with the other GP surgeries in the local area for seeing "high risk" patients. This means that any

patients who are at higher risk of developing significant illness from Covid-19 can be further protected from risk of infection by not having to enter the surgery for their essential appointments. The tents can be used for things such as blood tests, blood pressure monitoring, injections, clinical examinations, amongst many other essential appointments

If you have symptoms of Covid-19 and are unwell and need to see a clinician we have a "Red Zone" appointment area in Liskeard Community Hospital. Strict protocols are put in place for the use of this area, which will be explained to you by the clinician during your telephone triage appointment.

**Attending an appointment** – If you do need to attend an appointment at the surgery at any time we kindly ask that you follow the latest guidelines and wear a face covering whilst inside the building (mask or scarf). Failure to do so will result in your appointment being re-scheduled.

**Shielding patients** – From 1 August, the government will pause shielding unless the transmission of COVID-19 in the community starts to rise significantly.

This means; the government will no longer be advising you to shield, the support from the National Shielding Service of free food parcels, medicine deliveries and care will

stop, NHS Volunteer Responders will carry on delivering the food you buy, prescriptions and essential items to you if you need it, you will still be eligible for priority supermarket slots (if you have registered by 17 July).

You may still be at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, so stay at home as much as you can and continue to take precautions when you do go out. You can do this by washing your hands regularly, avoiding touching your face and keeping 2 metres away from people outside of your household or bubble wherever possible.

From 1 August, you'll be advised you could go out to more places and see more people, for example, the advice is; you can go to work, as long as the workplace is COVID-secure – but carry on working from home if you can, children who are clinically extremely vulnerable can go back to school (when the rest of their class goes back), you can go outside to buy food, to places of worship and for exercise – keeping 2 metres away wherever possible.

The latest advice from the government can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>.

## Online Services

### LIVI - Wave good-bye to Waiting Rooms

LIVI is perfect for those times when patients cannot get into the surgery or if we do not have the appointment availability that is convenient for you. They are available 7 days a week during evenings 6pm-10pm and weekends 8am-4pm, with appointments accessible in minutes meaning patients no longer need to wait until Monday to see a GP! You can also book up to 7 days ahead. With LIVI on your mobile you can see a doctor from wherever you are – at home, in work or on the go -

<https://www.theoaktreesurgery.co.uk/website/L82016/files/Who%20are%20LIVI%20update.pdf>

Common problems that can be treated are acne, allergies, anxiety and depression (moderate), asthma, constipation/stomach problems, contraception and family planning, eye inflammation, fever, headaches and migraines, indigestion and heartburn, insomnia, nail problems, sinus problems, skin rashes and eczema, UTI's and other health enquiries.

### NHS App

The NHS App is a free App for all patients connected with a GP Surgery. It allows the patient to book GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions, and access a range of other healthcare services. The NHS App is for patients aged 13 years and above who are registered with a connected GP practice. We are one of those practices that is connected to the NHS App. With the NHS App patients can:

1. check their symptoms and find reliable NHS information on hundreds of conditions and treatments and get immediate advice.
2. Book search and cancel appointments at both Oaktree and Pensilva sites.
3. Order repeat medications and see the availability of medicines currently.
4. Register to be an Organ Donor and choose how the NHS uses their data. If you have any issues using or downloading the app, check the NHS App help and support page here - <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/the-nhs-app/help/>

### New Practice Website

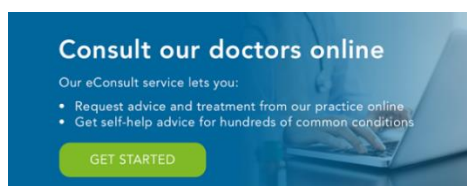
We are currently working on a new practice website. Further details of this will be published at a later date as we are still in the early stages of this. For a sneak preview please use this link - <https://oaktreeff.siliconpreview.co.uk/>



### e-Consult

As well as helping to prevent the potential spread of Coronavirus, online consultations provide several additional benefits for patients. Online consultations allow you to access a range of healthcare GP services through your smartphone, tablet, or PC. This gives you a quick, convenient, and simple alternative to visiting the surgery.

To access the e-Consult Service click on the link that says "consult our doctors online" on the homepage of our website (example below) - [www.theoaktreesurgery.co.uk](http://www.theoaktreesurgery.co.uk).



You will be asked to fill out an online form answering some simple questions and giving details of your existing condition or new symptoms. You can also use e-Consult for administrative queries such as requesting sick certificates and test results etc. There is also an option to add photos should you feel your GP might find these useful.

We have a dedicated e-Consult Team dealing with your online consultations. The team will pass your e-Consult on to the most appropriate department/clinician and we aim to deal with e-Consults within 48hours (during the working week).

### Covid Symptom Tracker App

Help slow the spread of Covid-19 and identify at risk cases sooner by self-reporting your symptoms daily, even if you feel well. Download the app <https://covid.joinzoe.com>

### Warning re Coronavirus related scams

Unfortunately there have been several reports of scams circulating relating to the Coronavirus. It can be easy to fall target to these unless you know what to look out for. Here are a few useful links to help provide you with information on what you should be looking for:

**Ofcom** - <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/features-and-news/coronavirus-scam-calls-and-texts>

**Which** - <https://www.which.co.uk/news/2020/06/nhs-covid-19-contact-tracing-message-how-can-i-tell-if-its-real-or-a-scam/>

**Action Fraud** - <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/alert/coronavirus-scam-costs-victims-over-800k-in-one-month>

If you are contacted by someone claiming to be from the surgery and you are asked for payment for services of any kind, please do not make any payments or give out any personal information and report it to us immediately.

## Dispensary & Pharmacy Services

### Change to opening hours

All of our teams have been exceptionally busy during the Covid pandemic; this is especially the case for our Dispensary and Pharmacy Departments. To try to help with the increase in demand we have adjusted the opening hours slightly to allow for a more productive output. Until further notice the Pharmacy and Dispensary will be open as follows:

**Monday to Friday - 9:30am – 6:30pm**

**(Closed between 1pm – 2pm)**

**Saturday – 9am – 1pm (Oaktree only)**

**Sunday – Closed**

### Repeat Prescriptions

Please allow 5 working days, excluding weekends and Bank Holidays, for your repeat prescription request to be processed. Any problems please telephone the surgery on 01579 32 42 52 or email [dispensary.oaktree@nhs.net](mailto:dispensary.oaktree@nhs.net).



## Queues and Social Distancing

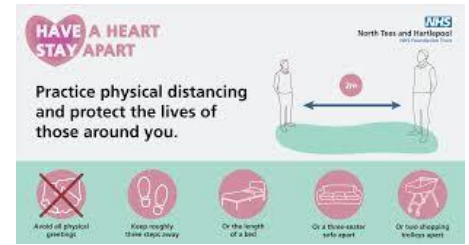
We are aware of the issues that social distancing is causing in regards to queuing for medication collections, especially during adverse weather conditions. The distancing rules and processes are governed by Public Health England and the NHS and it is imperative at this delicate stage of the fight against this pandemic that we continue to do everything we can to safeguard against the unwanted spread of the virus. We ask, if possible, that you prepare yourself adequately and wear suitable attire depending on the current weather. We will continue to explore alternatives to the service, particularly as the weather changes, but fundamentally the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 must and will remain the primary factor in any decision or system we implement.

### A note from the team

An average month sees us process over 30,000 prescription items over both sites, and this number has increased over the last few months.

Also, due to Covid many pharmacies across the country have been unable to source various medications due to national shortages. Our Pharmacy and Dispensary Teams have proactively sourced these limited items to ensure, where possible, continuity in your important medicines.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during these difficult times and please be assured that we are doing everything we can to provide an efficient and reliable service during the pandemic.



## Returning Unused Medicines To Us

We have been made aware that some pharmacies are not accepting returned medicines during the Covid pandemic. This is not the case for Oaktree Pharmacy. Please continue to return any unused medicines to our Pharmacy via the front reception staff (you will not be required to enter the building). If you, or anyone in your household, have had any symptoms of Coronavirus within the last 14 days please contact the surgery first to discuss how best to return your unused medicines.

The contractual requirement for community pharmacies to accept unwanted/out-of-date/waste medicines for disposal from the public remains an important service during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it does bring potential risks for pharmacy teams. Safeguarding patient/public safety and that of the pharmacy team is of paramount importance to us. Can you please help us by removing all patient labels, double bagging the medication, presenting them in a form that is easy for us to dispose of and following general hygiene measures at all stages of handling to minimise risk of infection transmission. We would like to thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

## Pharmacy/Dispensary Queues - Enhanced Delivery Service

We are aware that practical and robust plans are required to reduce the dispensary/pharmacy queue. The situation regarding Covid measures is likely to remain the same for the foreseeable future so we need to have a plan in place before the weather really starts to change.

The plan is to invest heavily in a delivery service where eligible patients will now get a free delivery for their medicines. We believe that this is the right thing to do to try and rectify this situation and ensure people do not have to wait in bad conditions and for extended periods of time. This will be rolled out in the coming weeks and will be fully operational by the end of August.

Existing delivery patients will receive an information slip in their prescription bag for the months of August and September. This will include information about which zone you are in, which day of week you will receive your delivery, and advice on how to order your medication in enough time for your delivery to be made. Information regarding zones will also be advertised on social media and our practice website.

If you do not currently have your medications delivered please enquire about whether you are eligible for this enhanced service when you next order your medications.



## Update on referrals

As hospital services gradually resume please can we remind patients that if you are due to be referred to secondary care clinics we will need an up to date height, weight, blood pressure and smoking status for your referral. The machines in the waiting room are still currently closed off, therefore your Dr/Nurse should do this for you during your appointment.

You will be aware that due to the pandemic routine appointments were put on hold. Some hospital clinics are now starting to book routine appointments again. If you have been referred for a hospital appointment (excluding local services such as physiotherapy, podiatry etc.) and have not received a letter from the Devon Referral Support Services to say you have been added to a waiting list please contact the surgery to enquire about this. If you have received a letter from Devon Referral Support Services then you will be contacted as soon as an appointment becomes available.

- Research can give hope to people with rare or difficult to treat illnesses.
- Access to the very latest treatments

**What are clinical trials?** Clinical trials are research studies in which people take part in looking at new treatments or approaches to prevention or diagnosis of health conditions to evaluate whether they are safe and effective.

**How do you think health data should be shared and used?**

How should your NHS / HSC health data be shared? Who should share your health data?

What consent should be given?

Health data is information collected in the course of health care provided by the NHS or HSC. It is used to provide care, and sometimes also for research to improve care for others. However, there are ways of controlling how health data is used. Researchers based at the University of Cambridge would like to know your view.

**Have your say – your views are important!**  
Take part in a national survey.

You are eligible to participate in the survey if you are:

- Resident in any part of the UK
- Over 16 years old (or under 16 with the consent of a parent / guardian)

To access the survey, scan the QR code or visit [www.climbproject.org.uk](http://www.climbproject.org.uk)

**IMPORTANT**  
Please enter this location information into the survey:

Oak Tree Surgery, Liskeard

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE MRIC

## Research

We believe it is important to offer our patients the opportunity to benefit from participation in research and have been involved in primary care research for over 20 years. We have a dedicated and enthusiastic research team including 3 Doctors, 2 Nurses and a Healthcare Assistant. Oak Tree works as part of a group of primary care research teams: the Cornwall Clinical Research Group. We are winners of 'Embedding Research Culture Award 2019' and shortlisted for Research Practice Award 2020 (results pending). Please follow this link to our website to learn more about what we are doing:

<https://www.theoaktreesurgery.co.uk/page1.asp?p=1&t=8>

### Why do we do research?

Research study participants say benefits of taking part include:

- Learning more about their health condition and how best to manage it
- Feeling empowered
- Reassured by closer monitoring of their health condition

**Help the fight against COVID-19**

Has your doctor or nurse said you are likely to have a COVID-19 infection, or do you have any of these symptoms?

- Continuous new or worsening cough
- High temperature

And have had them for fewer than 15 days?  
OR had you had a positive test for SARS-CoV-2 infection taken fewer than 15 days ago AND are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19?

Are you aged 65 and above?  
Or aged 50 to 64 with any of these illnesses?

- High blood pressure and/ or heart disease
- Diabetes not treated with insulin
- Asthma or lung disease
- Stroke or neurological problems
- Weakened immune system due to serious illness or medication (e.g. chemotherapy).
- Liver disease

**Then you could be eligible to join the PRINCIPLE trial and help the fight against COVID-19.**

The PRINCIPLE trial aims to find treatments that reduce hospital admission and improve symptoms for people with COVID-19.

To find out more, please visit:  
**[www.principletrial.org](http://www.principletrial.org)**

Tel: 0800 138 0880 email: [principle@phc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:principle@phc.ox.ac.uk)

ETHICS REF: 20/SC/058 Patient recruitment poster, v1.2 19.05.20, IRAS no: 281958

PRIMARY CARE HEALTH SCIENCES Primary Care Clinical Trials Unit NIHR National Institute for Health Research UK Research and Innovation PRINCIPLE

## Local Services

### Volunteer Cornwall

Volunteer Cornwall are a charity dedicated to building social capital and developing the wellbeing of individuals and communities in Cornwall. They do this by working in collaboration with a wide range of organisations to promote and support active citizenship and voluntary action covering the emotional, social, environmental and economic needs and opportunities in Cornwall.

As well as helping vulnerable patients in the community with shopping and medication deliveries throughout the Covid pandemic, Volunteer Cornwall offer a vast range of services such as telephone befriending and walking buddies for people who find themselves isolated and lonely. They have also set up a key worker support line to offer a listening ear to key workers across the public, voluntary, and private sectors who may benefit from having someone to talk to through this difficult time. Please visit the website for more information: <https://www.volunteercornwall.org.uk>

### Cornwall Council – Stay in Touch

Further information regarding local services can be found in the Cornwall Council resident email newsletter, sign up here - [https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/sign-up-to-stay-in-touch/?mc\\_cid=46e0f6f2df&mc\\_eid=a7c92f2ccf](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/sign-up-to-stay-in-touch/?mc_cid=46e0f6f2df&mc_eid=a7c92f2ccf)

### Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is a way for local agencies to refer people to a link worker. Link workers give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me' and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support. Link workers also support existing community groups to be accessible and sustainable, and help people to start new groups, working collaboratively with all local partners.

Social prescribing works for a wide range of people, including people:

- with one or more long-term conditions
- who need support with their mental health
- who are lonely or isolated
- who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing

When social prescribing works well, people can be easily referred to link workers from a wide range of local agencies, including general practice, pharmacies, multi-disciplinary teams, hospital discharge teams, allied health professionals, fire service, police, job centres, social care services, housing associations and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations. Self-referral is also encouraged.

**Please speak to someone in the surgery if you feel you would benefit from a referral to our Social Prescribing Link Worker Julie.**

### Virtual Mindfulness Sessions

Free 15 week mindfulness programme for adults (18+). This incorporates mindfulness, meditation and therapy, and includes looking at how our mind and body work and learning to respond rather than react. The programme is fully funded so there is no cost to participants. Patients can self-refer by calling 07745248551 or email [gylb.now@gmail.com](mailto:gylb.now@gmail.com). The session can be held over the telephone, via FaceTime or Zoom, whatever individuals are comfortable with. For more information please visit [www.gylbnow.com](http://www.gylbnow.com).

#### Further Support for Vulnerable Patients

If you are having difficulties getting shopping or medical supplies, please contact Volunteer Cornwall on 01872 266988 or email [requestforhelp@volunteercornwall.org.uk](mailto:requestforhelp@volunteercornwall.org.uk). Cornwall Council and Volunteer Cornwall have already delivered 1,462 food parcels, medication and other support to those people who need assistance.



### Green Impact Award

Green Impact is a United Nations award-winning programme designed to support environmentally and socially sustainable practice within organisations.

This can mean anything from communicating recycling systems, to committing to go Fairtrade; from supporting team health and well-being campaigns, to working towards carbon-neutrality! Every year participants receive awards to recognise their achievements, marking the organisation as one that respects people and planet.

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded a Silver award for 2019-20.

## FLU SEASON

Flu season is nearly upon us. Obviously our delivery program will need some adjustments this year to allow for any guidelines in place due to the coronavirus. We are yet to finalise our new flu protocols but our flu programme will start at the end of September as usual. Please support your practice by attending the surgery for your flu vaccine. Your safety and the health of our community is our priority.



### The eligibility criteria for flu vaccination are as follows:

- .You are 50 or over
- .You are a carer
- .Pregnant women
- .Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as ; asthma (which requires an inhaled or tablet steroid treatment, or has led to hospital admission in the past), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
- .Chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
- .Chronic kidney disease
- .Chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
- .Chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), learning disability or cerebral palsy
- .Diabetes
- .Problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- .A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medication such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- .Being seriously overweight (BMI of 40 or above)

## Pensilva PPG

Since the start of Covid 19 in March, life has proved difficult for many people. How pleasing it is to see how so many have helped each other. As supporters of our Health Centre, we are aware that many patients became anxious when the practice was being run from Oak Tree Surgery in Liskeard but this was to help contain the virus in one place. Thankfully, due to the dedication of Pensilva health and administration staff we still have access to the dispensary. Sincere thanks to all.

We must also give heartfelt thanks to all Doctors and staff who have been, and continue to be, under extreme pressure, risking their own welfare in order to help us, the patients. We are also aware that people are feeling uncertain and frustrated with regards to the temporary changes of how the practice is being run but we need to support and protect our health service.

Stay Safe, Stay Well - Marlene Carr (Chair)

## Oaktree PPG

Our community has been dealing with the most major health issue of our time over these last four months, and at the forefront of that for many of us has been our own surgery. Some of us have been fortunate enough to have been affected by new and changing measures only distantly, others more so. The practice has had to follow stringent government and NHS regulations while still maintaining standards and delivering an essential health service to all patients. Changes in how that service is delivered have been brought in, and staff and patients have had to work with them. As chair of Oak Tree Patient Participation Group I want the best patient experience for all of the patients, but even so I recognise that we can't all get it right all of the time, especially in these challenging times.

I hope we are a strong enough community to work together. The PPG is a voice to the practice to give feedback, suggestions, and recommendations; to act as a critical friend. As patients we are best placed to give patient feedback - constructively. This is true always, and even more so during the handling of the Coronavirus crisis. I am grateful for the fast, effective response the practice has had. I know that the staff have stepped up to the mark in working so many extra hours and working in different, unfamiliar ways. I know patients have been delayed in accessing their medication. I know there have been problems, but I am shocked at how some patients have treated our health professionals. I'm pretty sure that if you have read this far you are not such a person!

I hope that we can all work together to ensure that we promote, maintain and support the best health practices we can, and even let the practice staff know that we value them. As always, if you want to speak to me, leave a message at the surgery and I will telephone you back.

Keep safe - Penny Prisk, (Chair)

## Staff News

### Charity Fundraiser

On Monday 15 June we held a "Bake-off" style competition here at Oaktree. This was to help raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society and the Liskeard Food-bank. The staff had a lovely lunch hour eating cake and pulling raffle tickets, whilst our "Special Guest Judges" tasted the entries. In total we raised £323.98 which will be split between both charities.



### Happy Anniversary

This month we say a huge thank you to our colleague Sue for all of her hard work over the last 40 years as a medical secretary!

### Welcome Back

Dr Lauren Baines returned to the practice in May from her maternity leave. Dr Baines will be working on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

### New Staff

We have had quite a few new starters in each department over the last few months. This should help with the increased demand, partly due to Covid, that we are facing. Whilst we can appreciate that it might be frustrating when things take a little longer than expected please bear with us whilst these new colleagues are in training.



### A Great Big Thank You!

We would like to thank everybody who has helped to support us over these past few very difficult months. We have received donations of PPE, homemade scrubs and masks, hand sanitiser, cakes and chocolates, flowers, Easter eggs, breakfast cereal and much more. Not only have we received donations but we have also had some very kind messages of support and positive feedback from our patients to help raise our spirits. We are very grateful to everybody in our community for their wonderful support.

## A Final Word from Dr Jefferies

The Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacy and Administrative staff would like to thank all of the patients who have wished us well and been so complimentary about the ways that we have tried to keep all of you, and all of us, as safe as possible during the Covid-19 Pandemic. It has been a frightening time for everyone, health professionals included, and - regrettably - it looks like it will be a very long time before life returns to what we used to regard as normal.

There have been, however, some silver linings in the dark storm clouds. Many people have found more personal space and time with a slower pace of life dictated by a reduction in things to do. Gardens and homes have never had so much attention lavished on them! At the Surgery we have noticed a significant reduction in the number of consultations for acute, short lived "self-limiting" illness. This has, thankfully, freed up our time to be able to spend longer looking after our most unwell patients who often have several potentially serious conditions. It would be a really positive outcome from the lockdown if patients remain aware that they are very capable of managing many conditions themselves and don't always need to see a Doctor or Nurse.

At a time when we were all struggling, the "Love our NHS" campaign and the Thursday evening clapping really made a difference to our morale and our spirits rose when patients said nice things to us and praised our efforts. Now that the lockdown is easing we have noticed that a small but vocal minority of patients have started to become very unpleasant to members of staff, particularly in the Pharmacy queues. Please bear in mind that our staff members you come in to contact with are putting themselves on the frontline and deserve appreciation and respect. Please ensure that your complaint is reasonable before sharing it.

So, thank you to all you lovely patients out there for your ongoing support. We will continue to develop innovative ways of providing you with the best possible health care with the resources available and we will always try to do it with good humour and a caring manner and we hope that this will be reciprocated.

Dr S B Jefferies – Senior Partner