



# MISSION BAY DOCTORS

## NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2018

### Great news for Community Services Card holders!!

From 1<sup>st</sup> December Mission Bay Doctors will be opting in to a voluntary scheme to reduce fees for our registered CSC holders to only \$18.50 for standard medical and ACC consultations (\$12.50 for 14-17 year olds). We really believe in trying to improve access to primary care for people who need it. We're also raising the age for free consultations to include under 14s.

If consultations take extra time or involve referrals we may charge extra on occasion for this, as we do for other people.

The government is widening access to these cards: the Ministry for Social Development will contact eligible people in coming months.

### Christmas hours

The surgery will be opening on Monday, Xmas Eve for urgent appointments then closing at midday. We will reopen on Thursday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> with normal hours. Please try and check all your prescriptions and have requests in by mid December.

### Using the portal, just like Dr Who

All right, NOT like Dr Who. But you can now use Connect Med - see our website at [www.mbdors.co.nz](http://www.mbdors.co.nz) - not only to make appointments but to read your own results with our comments on them, check immunisations etc. You may need to ask for this free "upgrade" at reception to confirm identity.

### Thanks for the feedback – it helps to change babies...???

We do appreciate those who complete the regular Patient Experience Surveys – they do lead to change..... literally! Well, a baby change table was installed as one response, as we try and listen to your ideas. Keep them coming please ☺

### Drivers' licences

Just a reminder that when you are coming in to renew your driving licence you need to make two appointments – first with the nurse who will do some checks, including possibly some cognitive questions, then with the doctor. Otherwise we may have to ask you to come back. ALL other medical examinations need ONE nurse appointment and TWO with the doctor.

### Smear campaign

We now have two nurses who are trained in smear-taking. This means that there is someone who can do this for you almost all the time. If you had planned to see the doctor about a smear as well as something else, please make a separate appointment with the nurse before or after the doctor appointment. Or simply let reception know and they can sort this out for you.

## It's a knockout!

If you or someone you know has had a concussion injury, you can self-refer to Axis sports medicine if it's less than 10 days from the injury (the sooner the better).

### How to put off that knee replacement.... and reduce pain

There is good evidence from recent studies that reducing your weight by 10% (if overweight) can reduce your arthritis pain scores by 50% - better than any anti-inflammatory pills. Ask if you want help with this.

## What might our kids die of? Not what you might think.....

By 2050 antimicrobial resistant infections will cause more deaths globally than currently are caused by cancer, unless we can dramatically slow down antibiotic resistance. Unfortunately, for decades antibiotics have been very widely prescribed for conditions in which they provide no clinical benefit – most commonly for patients with self-limiting respiratory tract infections. High levels of antibiotic use in recent decades have accelerated the evolution and spread of bacteria that are very resistant to many antibiotics. Most alarming has been the emergence of infections caused by microbes resistant to all available antibiotics.

We also need to be aware of use of “last resort” antibiotics in animals increasing this problem. For instance Colistin is given to chickens and other farm animals to make them gain weight faster and as pre-emptive protection against disease. But this antibiotic is also used as a last line of defence in humans whose infections are not responding to other drugs. 2,800 tonnes of it were shipped in 2016, for animals.

## Keep an eye on your shadow this summer

While we have several experts in skin surgery ready to remove skin cancers, please work hard on reducing your sun exposure this summer. An easy way to tell how much UV exposure you are getting is to look for your shadow:

- If your shadow is taller than you are (in the early morning and late afternoon), your UV exposure is likely to be lower, though skin protection every day is best.
- If your shadow is shorter than you are (around midday), you are being exposed to higher levels of UV radiation. Seek shade and protect your skin and eyes.

## Vaccine news – preventing horrible diseases

- Meningitis B has been in the news lately; it develops rapidly into severe illness, sometimes with loss of limbs or death. Now we have **Bexsero meningitis B vaccine** available for babies and children over the ages of 8 weeks – it's not free but costs \$120. This has been available elsewhere including Australia but is now in NZ; talk to the nurses about it when having immunisations or come and chat. All of us – doctors, nurses, and parents are terrified of this scary disease so it is good to have the vaccine available.
- If you have kids going off to boarding school or hostels, be sure to have the **meningococcal ACYW vaccine** – these are particularly vulnerable times.
- **Gardasil vaccine** is back in stock, great news for all under 27! Young people - you are the lucky generation to have this for cancer prevention. Parents, please encourage/nag your kids to get on with this.

**Have a wonderful holiday break with family and friends!**