

# **KNEBWORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE**

## ***PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER – April 2017***

### **CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) REPORT**

The PPG, on behalf of all the patients, would like to congratulate to the Practice on the news that the outcome of the CQC Inspection, which was carried out in November 2016, gave us an overall rating of “Good”. We offer our heartfelt thanks to all the staff, clinical and non-clinical, at both surgeries for the work that they put in to achieve this rating. This result means that we have a safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led Practice.

The full report can be found at:

[http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new\\_reports/AAAF9320.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAF9320.pdf)

### **24-HOUR BLOOD PRESSURE MONITORING**

Some patients are asked to have their blood pressure monitored over a 24-hour period which, up till now, has required the fitting of a cumbersome device which can be uncomfortable to use and wear. These devices are also expensive to buy although the Practice has purchased two. As a result, there is usually a waiting list for these to be used.

But now we are trialing a new device which is worn like a watch on the wrist. It is slightly larger than a normal watch, easy to use and extremely light and comfortable to wear. It is simple to fit and so this will reduce the time needed for our nurses to fit the device. This device is already in use in the NHS in the Midlands and the North of England. Once we are confident in its use in the surgery we will be getting several more and this will reduce virtually to zero the waiting times to get a 24-hour blood pressure reading done.

### **USING DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS APPROPRIATELY**

One of the areas that the Practice is working on is to ensure that doctors' appointments are being used appropriately. Sometimes appointments are being used by patients to get letters, medical certificates and reports done, which do not really require an appointment with your doctor. For example, several people recently made appointments to see their doctor to get appeal letters for Personal Independent Plan assessments. If you need a doctor to prepare a letter or report, then rather than making an appointment, explain to the receptionist what sort of letter, report or certificate you need, why you need it and when you need it by. The receptionist will then discuss this with your doctor and advise you of when it will be done and, importantly, if there is any charge to be made for the work. If the doctor feels it is necessary to see you, then an appointment will be made. So please help the Practice to help you by working with them on this.

## **THE NEW KNEBORTH SURGERY - UPDATE**

The planning application for the proposed new surgery in St Martin's Road, Knebworth has now cleared all the hurdles and the next stages of the development can now proceed.

The temporary relocation of the library from the site into St Martin's Church will take place shortly. In the meantime the developers, along with the Practice Manager, are beginning to work on planning the internal fixtures and fittings for the various parts of the building, although they will have to take into account certain standards - such as door widths, electrical fittings etc - imposed by NHS England.

It is hoped that the new surgery will be up and running in early 2019.

## **PRESCRIPTION NEWS**

### **Pharmacy Express Service**

Did you know that most pharmacies now offer an express service (ExRx) where you can tick the appropriate boxes on your repeat prescription when you collect your medication? By doing this, the next prescription for the ticked items will then be issued electronically by the surgery and sent to the pharmacy for them to dispense. Your medication will then be ready for you to collect the next month.

The advantage of this is that whilst you retain control on the ordering of your medication, it is time-saving for the Practice because the prescription form is, in effect, produced automatically and is then electronically transferred to the pharmacy. The more patients who use this facility, the more efficient the Practice will become.

### **“Pathfinder” – Six-month Batch Prescriptions**

This is an alternative process in which your prescriptions are produced in six-monthly batches (with one prescription per month) and held by the pharmacy which will then dispense them at monthly intervals. This can also be a time-saver for the Practice, however it is only suitable for those patients who have regular medications on a 28-day cycle at a fixed dose.

“Pathfinder is not suitable for a patient who requires non-standard medication or who doesn't take or use their medication regularly on a daily basis. Also drugs for diabetes, controlled drugs, some preventative inhalers and all monitored medication, such as warfarin or methotrexate, where there is potential for the dosage to be changed during the six month period, are not suitable for the “Pathfinder” prescription process.

*If you require further information on either of these services, please ask the pharmacist or enquire at the surgery reception.*

## **DEMENTIA CARERS SUPPORT GROUP**

At the recent Patient Participation Group Meeting, it was agreed that, under the auspices of Jan Burt, we should set up a formal group to supplement the excellent work to be undertaken shortly by Admiral Nurses to provide support to carers of a person diagnosed with dementia. The Practice will be sending out letters to those patients who are known carers giving more details of our proposals. If you would like further information on the concept of this support group, please contact Jan on 01438 717129 (please leave a message if she is not in and she will return your call) or send her an email on [jan@grannyjanny.co.uk](mailto:jan@grannyjanny.co.uk), or contact one of the PPG Officers listed below.

## **CARING FOR THE BEREAVED CARER**

Do you know that Carers in Hertfordshire have a Bereavement Support Service for carers who have recently lost the loved one they have been caring for? The sessions run from September to July - 14 sessions in total, with the first seven sessions being held at two-weekly intervals covering subjects like loss and grief, coping strategies and can counselling help. The second set of four sessions will be at three-weekly intervals covering subjects like music and treasured memories. The final set of three sessions will be at four-weekly intervals covering subjects like art and writing.

All the sessions are currently held in Welwyn Garden City but, for those who are unable to travel that far, a telephone support service is also available.

If you feel this is something that would be of interest to you and would like more information, please contact Carers in Hertfordshire Tel: 01992 586969 or email: [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)

## **SPOT THE SIGNS AND SAVE A LIFE**

Do you know someone that has talked about suicidal thoughts?

It is surprising to learn that one in five people will have thoughts of suicide at some point in their lives.

Often people do not want to worry friends and family about how they are feeling, but still need to share their suicidal thoughts.

“How do I start to tell someone how I feel?” visit [www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk) for some helpful tips on how to start a conversation about your thoughts.

If you need urgent help;

- Make an urgent appointment with the GP
- Call NHS 111
- Contact Samaritans on 116 123

For life-threatening situations;

- Call 999
- Go to your nearest Accident and Emergency Department

But remember, take any suicidal talk or behaviour seriously, it is a warning sign and a plea for help.

To learn more about suicide prevention, please visit [www.hpft.nhs.uk/spot-the-signs](http://www.hpft.nhs.uk/spot-the-signs).

## **“MY CARE RECORD”**

The people caring for you need access to your health and care record in order to make the best decisions about your diagnosis and treatment. This could include GPs, hospital-based clinicians, nurses, health visitors and social workers. For this to happen more quickly and to improve the care you receive, a new process has been put in place. This will allow your information to be accessed by different health and care organisations, using existing computer systems.

With your permission, *My Care Record* will provide health and care professionals directly involved in your care, access to the most up-to-date information about you.

At first, this will only apply to patients in particular areas of Hertfordshire and Essex who are being treated at the Accident and Emergency department of Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust in Harlow but it will, in due course, be rolled out to the remainder of the county.

## **HELP YOURSELF TO HEALTH – WEDNESDAY, 19TH JULY**

The planning of this annual event, which will be held as usual in Knebworth Village Hall, is now well advanced. As well as the yearly report on surgery activities by Ken Spooner, our Practice Manager, we are hoping to have presentations on subjects such as antibiotics and sepsis, diabetes, abdominal aortic aneurysm screening and Admiral Nursing Care.

It's not too soon to make a note of the date in your diaries!

## **PPG DIARY**

**Next PPG Meeting – Tuesday, 25th April at Marymead Surgery**

**Next Health Walks – Tuesday, 25th April and Tuesday, 9th May**

**Next Surgery Coffee Morning – Monday, 15th May at Marymead**

## **PPG CONTACTS**

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