

# KNEBORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

## PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

September 2020

### PRACTICE NEWS

#### Flu Vaccinations and Clinics

As previously explained, the organisation of flu vaccination clinics is a complex task this year; we have to do something like 4000 vaccinations, which is a significant increase on previous years, and we have to run the clinics in a Covid-safe way.

By now, all shielding patients should have received a letter advising them of the clinic dates. We also have to prioritise certain other groups, and these patients will be receiving letters in the very near future. We will then, within the next week or two, be writing to the remaining patients who qualify for a free flu vaccination.

Unfortunately, to maintain Covid-19 safety, we will be unable to offer our usual, and very popular, walk-in clinics. All our clinics now have to be run in such a way as to maintain social distancing, and with patients wearing masks and hand sanitising.

Clinics for shielding and highly vulnerable patients from both surgeries are being held on 3rd, 10th and 17th of October at Knebworth surgery (these are all Saturdays). Clinics for other patients will be running on the following dates in October:

<b><i>Marymead</i></b>			<b><i>Knebworth</i></b>	
Tuesday	6th, 20th and 27th		Monday	5th, 12th, 19th and 26th
Thursday	15th and 29th		Wednesday	7th, 14th, 21st and 28th
Friday	9th, 16th and 23rd		Thursday	8th and 22nd

There will then be “catch-up” clinics in November, the dates of which will be announced in due course.

The dates for flu vaccinations for children will be communicated as soon as we know when supplies of the vaccine will be available for parents/guardians.

## **Getting Back to Normal - Appointments**

We are continuing to get our normal services back on stream. The IUCD/Implanon clinics have restarted on Tuesdays, NHS health checks are due to recommence in November (once we have got the bulk of our flu vaccination programme completed) and pneumovax vaccinations, together with those for shingles and B12, are now being done along with other vaccinations. We are hoping to get our surgery-based phlebotomy services available soon.

We have now also made available on the website a number of patient-bookable telephone slots to discuss medical issues with your regular GP. However, we will still continue to do as much as possible via telephone and video consultations and through our online services. Face-to-face appointments will still be available but, before these are booked, your GP or nurse will discuss with you the need for a face-to-face appointment. I know this is disappointing but we have to maintain a high level of Covid-19 security and this inevitably means that the need and availability of face-to-face appointments has to be there.

*Ken Spooner, Practice Manager*

## **Warfarin Clinics**

Thankfully, these will continue to be available at both the Marymead and Knebworth surgeries. The clinics are now part of the Herts Community Trust who will be responsible for them. This is good news because at one stage it was feared that patients on warfarin would have to be seen at one of the local hospitals. All warfarin patients should have been contacted and made aware of the service and its continued availability at both surgeries. If you have not been contacted, please let Ken Spooner know at the Practice (by email please [knebworth.manager@nhs.net](mailto:knebworth.manager@nhs.net)). Alternatively, get in touch with one of the PPG Officers (contact details below) who will then pass the information to the Practice Manager.

## **DEMENTIA CARERS SUPPORT GROUP**

The Admiral Nurse team is now back supporting most families face-to-face, following risk assessment, social distancing and using appropriate PPE. Support is still being offered by phone where possible or where preferred. Referrals to Admiral Nurses have been continuing to increase rapidly and the referral criteria have now been reduced back to pre-Covid expectations in order to manage the demand on the service. Since Covid-19, there have been fewer referrals from GPs and more from the voluntary sector (mainly Hertswise and Age UK), which is to be expected.

In the last quarter, the local team supported 371 families/carers, compared to 383 during the whole of the first full year of the service (April 2018 to March 2019). It was acknowledged that the Triage Admiral Nurse role has again proved to be incredibly supportive of the team, and she has also held a small caseload in recent months.

Dementia UK has a supporter magazine, "Your Way", which is full of updates, stories and information from Admiral Nurses. It is hoped to get more copies of the magazine out to people by making them available in GP surgeries.

Much of the additional demand and pressures on the Admiral Nurse team are due to continued closure of other services, such as day centres, etc. Carers in Herts continues to campaign for these other services to re-open and it has been suggested that four day centres may re-open around the end of September to the beginning of October.

Carers in Herts are investing in more training for bereavement support and have applied for funds to support training specifically in traumatic bereavement. Dementia UK is also currently looking at bereavement support and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) support.

*Jan Burt*

## **HEALTH WALKS**

The best laid plans of mice and men....  
Or, one step forward and two steps back....

Hoping to start our regular walks in the park again as soon as possible, last week the eight Leaders received training in the new rules that must apply if we are to do this in a Covid-safe manner.

Since then we have tried to contact as many of our walkers as possible to explain what we had been told:

1. Social distancing (two metres apart) would need to be enforced.
2. It would be necessary to limit the number of people who can take part on each walk to 10 plus two leaders.
3. This would mean having to 'book' a spot online by 4 o'clock the day before the walk.
4. Sadly, there would be no opportunity for sharing refreshments at the end of the walk.

Replies from our walkers were being collated, with some happy to restart when possible under the new restrictions and others preferring to wait until the restrictions might be relaxed.

**BUT – now the government rules have changed again and groups of over six are no longer allowed.**

Who knows when the walks will be able to resume?

I guess, it's a case of **watch this space!**

*Joy Hall*

## **COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME**

As more medical appointments are resuming now, this is just a reminder that the North Herts and Stevenage Community Car Scheme has a team of volunteer drivers who use their own cars to help with transport to medical and healthcare appointments, collecting and delivering prescriptions and medications, even with food deliveries.

**Covid-19 safety regulations are in place to assist the safety of those travelling.**

If you need help or more information, please telephone 01462 689402 or go to <https://www.nhcvstransport.org.uk> .

If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer driver, please contact the North Herts & Stevenage Transport Team on the above telephone number. They are also always keen to recruit more volunteer drivers, it's such a wonderful and flexible role.

## **FORTHCOMING PPG MEETING**

The PPG is holding a meeting of its members, via the magic of Zoom, at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 22nd September. If you are interested in joining this online event, please notify one of the PPG Officers (contact details below) so that you can receive the Zoom code and password, together with a copy of the Agenda.

## **PPG CONTACTS**

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***Produced by The Knebworth and Marymead Patient Participation Group***