

KNEBWORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

April 2021

COVID VACCINATIONS – HOW ARE WE DOING

The programme to vaccinate as many patients as possible is continuing at a fair pace. As of the middle of April, these are the percentages of patients in the various age groups who have received the first dose of either the Pfizer or Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine:

Housebound patients	98%
Care Home patients	88%
80+ year old patients	98%
75-79 year old patients	98%
70-74 year old patients	97%
60-69 year old patients	95%
50-59 year old patients	87%
Clinically highly vulnerable patients	93%

At this stage, overall 59% of patients registered at the Knebworth and Marymead Medical Practice have had their first vaccination. Supplies of both the Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine to the Practice and the Primary Care Network now appear to be more reliable; this will improve the planning of future vaccination clinics for follow-up doses and for the next cohorts of patients covered by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) guidelines.

It is important to remember that you will be vaccinated in line with these guidelines and priorities. Please do not phone the surgery to try and get around these guidelines. The Practice has to work to them; every vaccination they give is reported to NHS England, and if they do not follow the guidelines issued by the JCVI they will be reprimanded.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

As a result of new staff being taken on by the Primary Care Network over recent months, the Practice now has access to two social prescribers.

Social prescribing is a non-medical programme which supports patients and helps them to improve their health and wellbeing. Many people can benefit from social prescribing, this includes those who may be:

- feeling worried or anxious
- feeling lonely or socially isolated
- living with a long-term condition
- wanting to make changes to their lifestyle
- caring for someone

If you feel that you would like to talk to one of our social prescribers, please contact the surgery to make an appointment.

STAFF MATTERS

Marie Norman

In a way, we are sad to report that Marie Norman has retired from the Practice, but on the other hand we are pleased for her and her husband, Paul, who have moved up to Yorkshire where they are looking forward to spending a lovely retirement.

Marie has been with the Practice for seventeen years. Her job title was Administration Manager and she also held the important position of Carers Champion. She worked very closely with Ken on a day-to-day basis, doing daily searches and preparing reports for him to ensure that the Practice met all the targets set out for it.

Marie was a very popular member of the Practice – she would do anything she could to help other members of staff, she could put her hand to any tasks, quite often helping out on Reception when the need arose. Marie will be sadly missed by all her colleagues and by the many patients with whom she came into contact.

Marie's replacement is Nicola (Nic) Dungan who has relocated from Marymead to the Knebworth surgery. Nic is very well-liked and respected by the team and we understand that she already has great plans for the job!

Matthew (Matt) Charles

Matt gained a BSc (with Honours) in Coaching Studies from the University of Luton in 2003. His subsequent career involved key roles in a number of sport, leisure and health-related management roles, before moving into hospital discharge and social prescribing. Matt then joined South Stevenage Primary Care Trust (PCN) as the Business Manager in February 2021.

Matt continues to be interested in a variety of sports but admits to being more of a spectator than a player these days. Although, when lockdown ends he is looking forward to getting back to the gym and some mountain climbing in and around the UK.

Matt is happy to join our PPG Meeting on 18th May when he will outline his role as PCN Manager and give some insight as to how he sees the PCN moving forward in the next three to four years.

Peter (Pete) Vine

After graduating in Science and Sports Studies at Bangor University, Pete pursued a number of varied career routes until, a few months ago, when he joined our Primary Care Network as a social prescriber.

Pete has been very active in a variety of sports, including playing and coaching in soccer as well as competing in triathlons and marathons. He is an enthusiastic quizzer and captained a team on the BBC quiz show "Eggheads"; his general interests include a love of films and music.

Later in the year, we are hoping to persuade Pete to give a presentation to the PPG on his work as a social prescriber.

PRACTICE NOTE

A new telephone system has been installed at the Practice and it is proving useful for monitoring the volume of incoming calls through the day. This year will see the Practice using an SMS service as a means of contacting patients. This will help to reduce pressure on incoming and outgoing telephone calls, and has been shown to be an effective means of communication between the Practice and its patients.

THINK 111 FIRST

From its origins as “NHS Direct” in 1998, the 111 Service in Hertfordshire has undergone a number of revisions and improvements and is now moving forward under the title of “Think 111 First”. This new initiative was the subject of an excellent presentation at the PPG Meeting in March by Phil Lumbard, the Assistant Director of Urgent Care at the East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group. His key message was **Call 111 when it’s less urgent than 999**.

When you call 111, you will be asked a series of questions, through a computer-generated algorithm and, at the end, you will be offered appropriate advice. This may be a telephone call or possibly a video consultation to determine what to do next – for example, an appointment may be made for you to visit a GP, to attend A&E or to be directed to Ambulatory Care.

Phil explained that this was an opportunity to modernise and refresh their approach to delivering same day urgent and emergency care and to embrace the technology being used elsewhere in everyday life. It will improve patients’ experiences of using urgent services and continue to improve making the best use of our healthcare resources. The benefits for the NHS are that it can minimise person to person infection spread, including of Covid-19, in waiting rooms and can help keep emergency departments available for the patients who are most unwell. It can support our busy hospitals in times of extreme pressure and can better link the NHS 111 system to existing GP Practices.

FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS

The next PPG Meeting is at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 18th May, which will again take place via Zoom. If you would like to join this online event, please notify one of the PPG Officers (contact details below) so that you can receive the Zoom contact details.

PPG CONTACTS

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