

# **KNEBworth AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE**

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

### **PRACTICE NEWS**

There have been some additions to our clinical staff in November. Dr Caroline Shaw has joined us and is providing routine and urgent appointments on Mondays and Fridays and will also be supporting and extending our care to the elderly.

This month, Lisa Underwood is joining us as a clinical pharmacist. Lisa will be dealing with all your prescription queries and questions and will also be working with our doctors to make sure that, when we receive correspondence from a hospital consultant, any medication changes that are required are actioned and dealt with as quickly as possible.

A further addition to our team are Natasha and Janet, two new receptionists at Marymead.

### **CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS**

During the forthcoming holiday period, both Knebworth and Marymead surgeries will be closed from 6.30 pm on Friday, 22nd December until 8.00 am on Wednesday, 27th December and then again from 6.30 pm on Friday, 29th December and will reopen on Tuesday, 2nd January at 8.00 am.

If you require urgent medical assistance during these periods, contact the 111 Out-of-Hours Service, or visit the New QEII Hospital Urgent Care Centre in Welwyn Garden City for minor injuries or the Accident and Emergency Unit at the Lister Hospital for more serious injuries or problems.

For the most part, local retail pharmacies, other than those within supermarkets, will be closed on the same dates during this period. A notice giving the locations of those pharmacies that will be open on specific days in the holiday period will be displayed in the windows of local pharmacies, on the outer doors of both surgeries and it will also be posted on our website.

### **HERTFORDSHIRE NHS SERVICE CHANGES**

A special joint committee of representatives from Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group and East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group has recently announced a number of decisions about NHS services in the county.

The decisions follow a 10-week public consultation on a series of proposals designed to make best use of the money and resources available to the local NHS and to encourage people to live healthier lives, thus avoiding preventable illnesses.

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The changes are:

- Obese patients with a body mass index (BMI) over 40 will be required to reduce their weight by at least 15% before accessing non-urgent surgery and for those with a BMI of over 30 a 10% reduction will be sought. These criteria will apply unless waiting for surgery would be more harmful.
- Smokers will be required to quit smoking before being referred for non-urgent surgery, unless waiting for surgery would be more harmful for them.
- Gluten-free food will no longer be available on prescription, except for patients with learning disabilities or where there are welfare concerns.
- Other than in exceptional circumstances, patients wanting a prescription for medicines, products and food items that are available to buy from pharmacies, supermarkets or shops for short-term conditions will need to purchase them directly.
- Female sterilisation will only be funded in exceptional circumstances; these will be assessed on a case-by-case basis if alternative forms of long-acting contraception are unsuitable.
- IVF and other specialist fertility treatments will no longer be funded, except in exceptional circumstances. This decision will be reviewed after one year, in the light of the financial position Herts Valleys finds itself in at that time.

Dr Nicolas Small, Chair of Herts Valleys CCG, said:

“None of these decisions have been taken lightly, but people understand that the NHS faces major challenges and must adapt to meet them. There is wide public backing for most of the changes that have been agreed today – even from people who told us that they would be directly affected. ....

GPs will still make decisions based on the individual needs of their patients, and will be able to refer individual cases to a specialist decision-making panel if their patient faces exceptional clinical circumstances.”

The changes will be implemented over the coming weeks and months, along with a public information campaign about the changes.

*{The “exceptional circumstances” are not specified in any of the above statements!}*

## **DEMENTIA CARERS SUPPORT GROUP**

**The mission of the Dementia Carers Support Group (DCSG) is to improve the quality of life for all people affected by dementia.**

When someone is diagnosed with dementia, it has a profound impact, not just on them but also their family and others in their life. As a person’s needs increase, family carers can become the most important source of support for them. It is vital those carers are supported throughout their journey and that is what we hope to achieve by having the Dementia Care Support Group as a part of the PPG at Knebworth and Marymead.

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When my husband was diagnosed, I needed one person from the beginning who understood what I was going through and advice on how I could deal with it all but there was very little practical and emotional support in those days. To have had someone who could have helped me steer through all those sickening peaks and troughs would have been invaluable and that is why I wanted to start this group.

The first coffee morning attracted 11 people which was a little disappointing being that the surgery sent out 56 letters in the post to people who are affected by this debilitating illness. It raised questions as to whether or not my vision in developing this group was worthwhile but I do believe that there is a need for this group so we will continue but perhaps we need to re-visit the best way to offer support for the carer. Is it providing literature and information or should we be more hands on and provide a group where people can come and chat through their problems and have speakers and presentations with the hope that we become a dementia friendly surgery. I would welcome your comments on the best way forward.

*Jan Burt; 01438 717129, [jan@grannyjanny.co.uk](mailto:jan@grannyjanny.co.uk)*

## **EXTENDED SURGERY HOURS**

Thank you to everyone who responded to our recent survey of what you would like from the plan to provide General Practice and nurse services between 8.00 am and 8.00 pm Monday to Friday and at weekends. The survey covered the whole of the North Herts locality (approximately 112,000 patients).

The main outcomes were that most people wanted to be able to see their doctor or nurse up to 8.00 pm most evenings, although there was a significant drop in this requirement for Friday evenings. At the weekends, most of you wanted to be able to see your doctor or nurse on Saturdays, but with a significantly reduced need for Sundays. One very significant result from the survey was how many of you wanted to continue with our early morning services which start at 7am. This is important because that is not part of the requirement for us to provide services between 8.00 am to 8.00 pm and at weekends.

Based on the results of the locality survey, we are now working on plans to deliver appointments from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday, on Saturdays and to continue with our services which start at 7.00 am.

Once we have some draft plans we will discuss them with the Patient Participation Group.

*Ken Spooner, Practice Manager*

## **PATIENT NETWORK QUALITY (PNQ)**

Under the auspices of the CCG, the Patient Network Quality Group meets at regular intervals. Justin Jewitt, a former member of our Practice and PPG is one of its Patient Members continues to keep us informed of their activities.

Topics presented or discussed at their recent meeting included:

- Suicide Prevention – this was a presentation by Nathan Davies of Herts County Council
- Quality Committee Report – this focused on key events at the East and North Herts NHS Trust and at the Queen Alexandra Hospital (Harlow). These included, among others, the roll-out of Lorenzo (the new computerized patient record system), improved results relating to the identification of sepsis and concerns surrounding the Private Ambulance Service (which subsequently went into administration!)
- Growing PPG networks and effectiveness – this was discussed at length since it would appear to be an ongoing problem within certain parts of the region. To this end, the National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) had been commissioned to provide a day and a half's support to the CCG to develop patient participation groups, and therefore hoping that this could be used as part of the annual get-togethers for joint locality meetings in November.

## **FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS**

Our PPG Meetings are held once a month, on Tuesdays at 7.00 pm, and all patients are welcome to attend (you don't have to be a "signed-up" member of the group!). The meetings only last for one hour and we rotate the venue between the Knebworth and Marymead surgeries.

The next Meeting is on Tuesday, 28th November at Marymead surgery and then in December, on Tuesday the 19th, we will be at Knebworth surgery (which may include some mince pies and a glass of wine).

We have a schedule of dates for our meetings throughout 2018 and if you would like a copy of this, or further information regarding the Patient Participation Group, please contact one of the members listed below.

*Mandy Preedy, 01438 811512, [mandypreedy@hotmail.com](mailto:mandypreedy@hotmail.com)*

*Tony Stowe, 01438 812327, [anthonylstowe@aol.com](mailto:anthonylstowe@aol.com)*

*Graham Fothergill, 01438 813371, [gafothergill@gmail.com](mailto:gafothergill@gmail.com)*

*Joy Hall, 01438 812609, [bandj.hall@ntlworld.com](mailto:bandj.hall@ntlworld.com)*

*Clive Steele, 01438 815800, [clive.steele@ntlworld.com](mailto:clive.steele@ntlworld.com)*

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