

# **KNEBWORDH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE**

## ***PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER***

***February 2020***

### **Practice News**

#### ***Extended Access***

Now that the Practice is a member of the Stevenage South Primary Care Network, our Extended Access appointments are soon to be delivered from King George Surgery at 135 High Street, Stevenage, SG1 3HT. This is likely to start in April and the service will be exactly as before, Extended Access covers the period from 6.30 pm to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday and from 10.30 am to 2.30 pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Appointments must be booked for you by the receptionists at our Practice. This service is only for routine appointments, not for emergency ones.

#### ***Counselling***

As the result of an initiative by the Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, the Practice now has the services of a counsellor at Marymead and Knebworth on alternate Thursdays. This is to support patients with mild to moderate mental health problems. Appointments have to be made by referral through one of our doctors and they are only available to patients over the age of eighteen.

#### ***Blood Pressure Monitors***

The Practice has some monitoring equipment that may be borrowed by patients in order to check blood pressure and pulse rate over an extended period in the comfort of their own home. Unfortunately, because some patients have failed to return the equipment after use, the Practice is now obliged to ask for a small returnable deposit when it is borrowed.

### **Get Fit For Your Operation - Help Us to Help You**

The East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group are in the process of introducing new criteria for patients who are overweight and who are waiting for planned surgery. These changes will be related to the patient's Body Mass Index (BMI) and the percentage of weight loss that would be required prior to surgery. Referrals for surgery will continue to be made by GPs but the decision regarding the patient's fitness for the operation will be determined by the hospital. This does not apply to referrals for acute emergency surgery.

## **Packaging of Medicinal Products**

You may have noticed that it has recently become more difficult to open the outer cartons of your tablets, capsules and other medicines. For example, the ends of the packaging are now either glued down or sealed with a piece of clear plastic.

This is as the result of an EU Directive which came into effect in February 2019 and applies to most prescription medicines and some over-the-counter ones. The Directive describes this as an anti-tampering device which is regarded as a safety feature that will show whether the packaging has been opened or altered since it left the manufacturer, thus ensuring the authenticity of the contents.

Interestingly, this is not described as an enhancement in terms of child resistant packaging but it most certainly contributes to that, as well as making it more resistant to the efforts of rather older fingers!

## **Dementia Carers Support Group**

With effect from 1st March, we will have ten Admiral Nurses located within Hertfordshire. Seven of these will be community-based, located within Carers in Hertfordshire, covering the whole of the county. Two are based within Garden House Hospice and Isobel Hospice and one is based at the Lister Hospital. Admiral Nurses are specialist dementia nurses that provide psychological and emotional support to those caring for someone living with dementia, working with families that are at risk of, or are experiencing, carer breakdown.

The hospices and the Lister Hospital have different criteria and need to be contacted individually. However, if you feel that you would benefit from this support within the community setting, the referral criteria are as follows:

- the person being cared for has a diagnosis of dementia or suspected dementia
- the person with dementia, or carer must be registered with a local GP
- the carer is providing a significant level of care
- the carer must consent to their referral to the Admiral Nurse service.

Referrals can be made to Herts Help on 0300 123 4044

For professionals wishing to refer, contact through [Admiral.nurses@nhs.net](mailto:Admiral.nurses@nhs.net)

Referrals can be discussed with Julie Lloyd, the Admiral Nurse Duty Worker on 0796 639 6206.

*Thank you to Jan Burt for this valuable contribution to the newsletter.*

## **eConsult - the Future for Appointments?**

There is now a section on the Practice website (see below) which will take you directly to an app called eConsult. Through the use of this app, patients can inform the Practice of any medical problems they may have and receive an appropriate response from a member of the clinical staff before the end of the next working day.

RECEPTION AND ENQUIRIES	COMMON ILLNESS ROOM
eConsult CONSULT YOUR GP ONLINE	TRAVEL ROOM
ADVICE AND HELP ZONE	HEALTH REVIEW CLINIC
PRESCRIPTIONS AND MEDICINES CENTRE	ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

eConsult is already being used by a number of patients at the Practice, including two members of the Patient Participation Group, both of whom were very positive about it and were particularly impressed by the response they received from the Practice.

### ***FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS***

The next PPG Meeting will be on Tuesday, 18th February at 7.00 pm at Marymead Surgery; the March Meeting will be on Tuesday, the 17th, the venue for which will be announced in due course. All patients are welcome to attend, you don't have to be a signed-up member of the PPG. The Meetings are usually over within an hour.

### ***PPG CONTACTS***

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