

KNEBWORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

April 2019

Practice News

We are pleased to welcome Dr Tom Buckley to the Practice. He will be with us for about four months as a continuing part of his training. Dr Buckley gained his medical degree at Oxford University and has spent the last six months working in an Accident and Emergency Unit.

Primary Care Network

In an attempt to try to improve patient care and to provide more services within the GP environment, NHS England has come up with a new initiative whereby Practices within the same locality, with a combined total of 30,000 to 50,000 patients, join forces to form a Primary Care Network in order to share resources more efficiently. The Knebworth and Marymead Practice has, until now, been in the North Herts Locality but, because the funding for that locality is focussed mainly on Hitchin, Letchworth and Baldock, the Practice feels that our patients would be better served by leaving North Herts and joining the Stevenage Locality. As a result of this, we will be in the Stevenage South Network along with the Bedwell, King George, and Shephall Practices. Although this arrangement was nominally effective from 1st April, it is unlikely to become fully operational until July 2019, particularly because it will necessitate considerable reconfiguration of computer systems. An additional advantage of the Primary Care Network will be that our Extended Access surgery will be at the Kingsway Centre in Stevenage rather than in Letchworth.

Help Yourself to Health – Wednesday, 24th July

We have now confirmed that our main speakers at this year's Help Yourself to Health evening will be Dr Julie Sharp from Cancer Research UK and Dr Mark Massyn, a Consultant working in the Stroke Unit at the Lister Hospital.

As usual, there will be a number of stands and displays in the hall for you to browse including, among others, Musical Memories, Safety and Security in the Home, Hertswise, Citizens Advice Bureau, Arrhythmia Alliance (which proved to be very popular last year), Macmillan Nurses and Fostering in Herts.

The main part of the Meeting, in Knebworth Village Hall, will start at 7.30 pm but the hall will be open from 7.00 pm to give you time to look around at the stands and to have a cup of tea or coffee or a soft drink.

The New NHS App

As the Knebworth and Marymead Practice was one of the early adopters of the NHS App for smartphones, I thought I would try it out several months ago. It uses the same information that we see on the website, but in your hand instead. Getting started wasn't particularly easy as our Practice uses different software than the App was primarily designed for, however it may be easier now.

To set it up, I was asked to photograph some identity documents and video myself reading a six figure number. Now, each time I use it, a different six figure number is sent by text, which I copy and paste into the App.

I can check symptoms, order repeat prescriptions and view my medical records. I am also able to book and manage appointments, however this is somewhat limited at present so you may well find it rather frustrating.

I've been seeing a couple of Consultants recently and have found the ability to call up the App on my smartphone and show them my detailed NHS blood test results to be very useful indeed.

I anticipate the capability of the NHS App will increase over time so I recommend you install it on your smartphone too.

Robert Sprigge

Hertfordshire Admiral Nurses – an Update

We currently have an establishment for four Admiral Nurses covering the four areas of Hertfordshire. We have one in the Lister Hospital, one in Isabel Hospice and another one commenced employment in Garden House Hospice on 1st April. The CCG has also given permission for two more Admiral Nurses to be recruited. When they are all in place, we will have nine in the county out of a total of 266 in the whole of the UK. When I set out raising money and increasing awareness of DementiaUK and Admiral Nursing care, I only wanted one, so I am absolutely thrilled we have so many. Not all counties are as lucky.

I was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to families caring for people with dementia. When I was presented with the award, the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Robert Voss, announced that a total of 281 BEM's were being awarded UK-wide in the June 2018 Birthday Honours List which puts into perspective that we still only have 266 Admiral Nurses in the whole country caring for over 850,000 people diagnosed with dementia, so there is still a lot of work to do to ensure that we can make a difference to all those caring for a loved one with dementia.

Jan Burt

Pharmacy News

Lloyds Pharmacy, Knebworth

We are now able to report the arrival of a new pharmacy manager, Tobi Akindele, at Lloyds in London Road, Knebworth. Tobi has a wealth of experience in retail pharmacy spanning a period of more than ten years, the last five of which were with Lloyds at their Letchworth branch and so he is well versed in the processes and procedures of the Lloyds Pharmacy group. Please help us to support Tobi and his staff as they set about providing Knebworth patients with an effective and reliable pharmacy.

Electronic Prescribing of Controlled Drugs

The Practice can now prescribe the majority of Controlled Drugs (CDs) electronically. With the electronic prescription service (EPS), you don't have to call at the surgery to pick up a paper version of your prescription, which you then have to take to the pharmacy and, usually, wait for your medication to be dispensed. This saves you time, but it is also more convenient and time-saving for the Practice. At the moment, almost ninety percent of our patients use this service – which is well above the current national average – but with the facility for prescriptions for some CDs to be actioned in this way, we can do better than 90%.

If you are being prescribed Controlled Drugs and you would like to use EPS, have a word with the staff in Reception at either Knebworth or Marymead. They will be able to help and will explain to you how EPS works.

Forthcoming PPG Meetings

The next PPG Meeting will be on Tuesday, 30th April, from 7.00 pm at Knebworth Surgery. All patients are welcome to come along, you don't have to be a signed-up member of the PPG. The Meetings usually last for about an hour.

Our May Meeting will be on Tuesday, the 21st, again commencing at 7.00 pm, but this time the venue will be the Marymead Surgery.

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