

KNEBworth AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

November 2019

PRACTICE NEWS

Christmas and New Year Arrangements

Knebworth and Marymead surgeries will both be open as usual up to and including Christmas Eve. They will be closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day and will reopen on Friday, 27th December. The surgeries will be open until 6.30 pm on New Year's Eve, then closed on New Year's Day and will reopen on Thursday, 2nd January.

If you require medical assistance when the surgeries are closed, call Herts Urgent Care on 111. If it is serious, go to the Accident and Emergency Department at the Lister Hospital or call 999. Similarly, the Extended Access surgery at Kingsway Health Centre will not be open during the three Bank Holidays.

For the most part, retail pharmacies will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. However, a list of those in the locality that will be open on one or other of these days for the dispensing of prescriptions will be posted in pharmacy windows.

Prescription Arrangements over the Holiday Period

With the surgeries closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, it is important that you have enough of your medicines to see you over this period. If you think that you will run out or have difficulty picking up prescriptions, make sure the Practice is aware of this by 17th December at the latest so that the necessary prescriptions are processed in good time.

The New Knebworth Surgery

We understand that, due to delays in the construction, the Practice is unlikely to be moving into the new Knebworth Surgery until the early part of the New Year. A revised project plan is being developed and once there is a new completion date, we will let you know. Although this is a bit of a disappointment to the Practice staff, they are looking forward to the move, albeit later than planned.

THE DEMENTIA BUS – A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

About twelve of us met in Woolmer Green Village Hall at 1.00 pm for sandwiches and coffee. The two ladies running it the "Bus" had started the scheme three years previously, although it had been going in the USA, and possibly in the UK, before that. The gentleman who took us through the whole procedure had Parkinson's disease himself, which made it interesting. Ten the participants were local NHS carers who go from home to home, helping people. Only two of us were people caring for our loved ones, the other one being a lady who works in the local Lloyds pharmacy.

We put on head-phones which played the sound of very noisy crowds all talking at full volume, large thick gloves, glasses which were almost impossible to see out of, and spiky soles inside our shoes which made walking uncomfortable. In the dark in the bus we were each given a task to do; piling up dishes in a sink, tying a tie (for the gentleman) and folding clothes on a bed, all of which we found very difficult. It lasted about five minutes, and then we watched the next three people come in and do the same thing. When we had all had the experience, we sat in the hall and were given a talk on how to make life easier for dementia and Parkinson's patients.

I found the talk afterwards, and being able to ask him questions, the most informative part of the exercise. But then I think living with someone with Parkinson's disease and dementia for so long, I probably had a different slant on it all. I think it was excellent for the carers, who all worked for the NHS and who do not have the 24 hour and emotional problems that the live-in carers have. I am glad I had the opportunity to do it, though.

The talk afterwards covered pain (the inability to express what hurts), slippers and footwear, clothing, limited sight, noise, TV and social noise, colour (as all-white shower and toilet rooms are difficult to figure out where the lavatory is, blue carpets look like water, plates and bowls should be coloured, flannels and towels should not be red (blood connotations) etc.

The session ended at 4.30 pm; they wanted everyone to have a photo taken with the bus, but we had to get back and missed the photo bit.

Chryssie Cobbold

PLAYING OUR PART IN ' CANCELLING OUT CANCER'

This year a new Patient Initiative called 'Cancel Out Cancer' (COC) started in our area with a steering group led by the East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This is to share information about cancer, to help people prevent and recognize it and to seek early treatment.

The awareness sessions are delivered by volunteers. Rosie and Mandy, two of our PPG Officers, presented an overview at the October Meeting of the Knebworth and Marymead PPG.

The interactive session is structured to emphasise the importance of preventative measures such as lifestyle changes (over 40% of cancers are due to lifestyle), to raise the awareness of national screening programmes, cancer signs and symptoms, early diagnosis and cancer pathways (nine out of ten referrals turn out not to be cancer). It is also a chance to raise questions, for some myths to be busted and to share experiences.

The group session, which is positive and reassuring, lasts about an hour. If you are part of a group who can welcome a volunteer to run a session or would like to attend a local community session, please visit www.enhertsccg.nhs.uk/canceloutcancer or contact Rosie on 01438 817906 or Mandy on 01438 811512.

We welcome your involvement to help to 'Cancel Out Cancer'.

FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS

The next PPG Meeting will be on Tuesday, 26th November, from 7.00 pm at Marymead 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 December Meeting will be on Tuesday, the 17th, commencing at 7.00 pm as usual and again at Marymead.

The schedule for PPG Meetings throughout 2020 is as follows:

21st January, 18th February, 17th March, 21st April
19th May, 16th June, 15th September, 20th October
17th November, 15th December

The annual "Help Yourself to Health" Meeting will be on Wednesday, 22nd July.

PPG CONTACTS

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A Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year to all

Produced by The Knebworth and Marymead Patient Participation Group