

KNEBWORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

July 2021

A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

The Practice has now received guidance from NHS England and Public Health about how they should operate from 19th July. The guidance states that all current infection control processes that are in place should continue. This means that the Practice will continue to operate the way it has been operating since the pandemic started. All patients will have to wear a face covering, to sanitise their hands on entry and to maintain social distancing within the building. Access to the surgeries will be controlled, as it is now.

Taking these steps will enable the Practice to continue to provide many of the services that would otherwise have been postponed and will help to keep the staff safe and operating efficiently.

Thank you for your understanding and your cooperation with this – it makes a huge difference.

SHARING MEDICAL DATA

The Department of Health has recently announced that, through NHS Digital, it plans to transfer the GP medical records of all NHS patients, in an anonymised form, onto a database from where they would be available to academic and commercial firms for research and planning purposes.

To ensure that all our patients understand the implications of this, we will be trying to contact as many of them as we can by providing links to the relevant www.gov.uk sites and the information explaining the benefits of this exercise, the actions being taken to protect your data and, if you so wish, how you can opt out of this. These links will be provided on our website and our Facebook page, and we will be texting them to everyone for whom we have up-to-date mobile numbers. The Practice realises that this will not reach all our patients. We will be displaying notices in the surgery with the relevant information. If any patient has queries they can go onto our website and send us their query and we will do our best to answer them.

To obtain a form to register your choice to opt in or opt out, go to <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/data-collections-and-data-sets/data-collections/general-practice-data-for-planning-and-research/transparency-notice#opting-out-of-nhs-digital-collecting-your-data-type-1-opt-out> and then click on “[returning this form](#)” in the section headed “Opting out of NHS Digital collecting your data (Type 1 Opt-out)”.

If you are aware of relatives, friends or acquaintances who you think may not be aware of this situation, please inform them. However, we do not suggest that you should influence them in any way as to whether they should opt in to, or opt out from the scheme.

RELOCATION OF THE DEFIBRILLATOR

At long last we have found a new home for the PPG's defibrillator in Knebworth. You may remember that it used to be positioned on the outside of the old Knebworth Surgery, to the right hand side of the entrance. Since the surgery moved to St Martin's Road more than a year ago we had, until now, been unable to find a suitable place for it to be relocated. We felt that the defibrillator should be positioned where it could be most effectively used, when needed, and hidden away on the outside of the new surgery building did not fulfil that requirement!



However, the PPG recently received a kind offer from Clare Biddle to help us to find a suitable new location somewhere in or near the centre of the village. Clare worked diligently on this on our behalf, making enquiries at a number of local shops and businesses to see if any of them were willing to accommodate the defibrillator on an outside wall of their premises. Eventually, as the photograph shows, J J Burgess & Sons, the funeral directors located at the corner of London Road and Station Road, came up trumps. After discussions with Clare, Jack Burgess, one of the directors, agreed that the defibrillator could be positioned on their outside wall and that they would bear the cost of the electricity needed to maintain the equipment in working order.

Through this newsletter, the Officers of the PPG wish to thank Clare Biddle for her efforts and persistence that has enabled us to have an operational defibrillator in a central position in the village, and to thank Jack Burgess for his generous gesture which brought this about.

PHARMACY REFERRAL SCHEME

Both Knebworth and Marymead surgeries are now participating in a new service for minor ailments, whereby patients may be directed to a community pharmacy when they call to book an appointment. To enable this, the receptionists have been fully trained and have a list of the minor ailments that they know can be confidently dealt with by the pharmacies.

The referral is made by the receptionist to a pharmacy of the patient's choice. The pharmacist will then contact the patient by telephone within four hours in order to provide the appropriate treatment or advice. If the pharmacist feels that it would be helpful, they can call the patient in for a face-to-face chat.

This scheme, the Community Pharmacy Consultation Service (CPCS), is already in operation in several parts of the country and is now a permanent way of working at all four Practices in our Primary Care Network. It will help to free up GPs to deal with more complex health needs and ensure that everyone gets treated at the right time, by the right healthcare professional.

This is a new way of working, but the Practice staff have been very enthusiastic and the service has had a very successful start.

All referrals made through the CPCS, including the outcomes, are audited each day by the Practice to help improve patient care.

FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS

The next PPG Meeting is at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 20th July, which will again take place via Zoom. The main speaker at this Meeting will be Pete Vine, one of the team of social prescribers for the Primary Care Network. 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 joining details.

As in previous years, there will be no PPG Meeting in August. The September Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, the 21st. We expect that this will again be held via Zoom and further details will be available in due course.

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