



“Svmer is icumen in, Lhude sing cuccu” – OR, in modern English, “Summer is a’coming in, loudly sing cuckoo”, there are some more verses of course but we have no more space – but what better way to introduce our Summer Newsletter!



## FACEBOOK LAUNCHED FOR NORTHLANDS WOOD PRACTICE

### NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE PATIENT PARTNERSHIP GROUP (PPG)

#### Speaker Update

On 4<sup>th</sup> April we had a talk from The Expert Patient Programme (EPP). The EPP is a free self-management course developed for people living with any long-term health condition, such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, arthritis, multiple sclerosis, depression, back pain, chronic fatigue syndrome, etc. As a result, several patients are booked to attend the next course being held at Burgess Hill and more courses are being organised because of demand. If anyone is interested in joining future programmes please contact the EPP team on 01403 227000 x7547, email: [sc-tr.epp@nhs.net](mailto:sc-tr.epp@nhs.net) or visit [www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/epp](http://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/epp).

Jim Clapperton, a Dementia Champion from The Alzheimers Society, came and talked to us on 31st May. He gave us a good insight into the mind of a person with dementia and we learned much from him. It was a well-supported talk with good participation from our patient group.

#### Suggestions for Speakers

We are always looking for suggestions from our patients for talks, simply contact reception or Hilary at [hilary.henderson@nhs.net](mailto:hilary.henderson@nhs.net) if you have any ideas or requests.

#### SUPPORT GROUP

Our Pain Support Group, recently formed and led by Antony Chuter, is now up and running, meeting in Costa Coffee in South Road, Haywards Heath on the first Friday of every month.

Please contact Antony for more information by email: [Antony@pain.uk.org](mailto:Antony@pain.uk.org) if you are interested in coming along - we know it is no fun living with pain and it can help to talk to others in the same situation.

### FACEBOOK GROUP

Two Facebook pages have been newly created:

One is for the practice in general - Northlands Wood Practice

<https://www.facebook.com/northlandswoodpractice/>

This will be more generic with standard information on it.

The other is for the Northlands Wood Practice Partnership Group – PPG

<https://www.facebook.com/Northlands-Wood-Practice-Patient-Group-PPG-419993861689528/>

Only patients will be allowed to post and comment on this page.

These pages will be used to let patients know about new services and general health awareness – please ‘like’ and follow. At the moment, both the pages appear very similar but as each becomes more used, they will differ.

### CHANGES IN STAFF

We are pleased to welcome back Dr Dominique Hogan, GP Registrar, who returns after her maternity leave.

### DID YOU KNOW?

There is a meeting every quarter at Northlands Wood School for the Franklands Ward which is attended by all councillors. These meetings focus on issues in the immediate locality and are very informative.

**FAILED APPOINTMENTS** For those patients who never miss a precious appointment, it is incomprehensible, but there are many patients who frequently do not cancel and fail to attend their appointments thereby depriving other patients of appointments with the doctors or nurses. These missed appointments are very costly in wasted time with some appointments up to 50 minutes in length. Patients who habitually fail to cancel appointments risk being removed from the practice list.

A frequent complaint is that it is difficult to get an appointment. Whilst waiting times will vary depending on what type of appointment you need and who you need to see, nobody should be waiting more than a couple of days to see a GP – although, of course, any patient who only wants to see a specific GP may have to wait. We offer a combination of pre-bookable and available-on-the-day appointments – the majority being available on the day.

Press coverage on the plight of the NHS and general practice is having a very negative effect, leading to a significant amount of unreasonable patient expectation, demanding what is seen as their entitlement, adding a lot of stress and pressure for all staff, who are doing their best in difficult circumstances.

#### **HOSPITAL DIFFICULTIES**

As hospitals are now experiencing extremely heavy workloads and limited resources too, they frequently push out work to the GP practices; early discharge of patients from hospitals being just one example.

Another example is hospital referrals made by our doctors - once they leave the practice we have no influence or control over the referral process.

To chase up an awaited appointment please contact the hospitals direct:

For Princess Royal or Royal Sussex County Hospitals on 0300 303 8360.

For East Surrey Hospital 01737 768511 – Outpatient Booking Office.

For Queen Victoria Hospital 01 342 414000

For Musculoskeletal (MSK) 0300 303 8063

#### **DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS SERVICE**

A new service is available in the practice. Where there are clinical indications that a DVT may be possible, we can test patients in the practice instead of automatically directing you to the hospital. If the test confirms a possible DVT, then you will still need to attend hospital for a scan, but we will arrange this on your behalf, normally for the same or next day.

#### **FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST CARDS (FFT)**

Please keep filling in these cards, you can complete one with each visit – it is tremendously helpful to the surgery. If you do have a complaint or a problem, please let us know directly, we can then do all we can to try and resolve the problem. Annoymous complaints are difficult to address effectively.

#### **DIRECTORY OF SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE (50+)**

There is now an online edition of the Community Connections Directory of Services for people aged 50+ in Mid Sussex. Please follow the link: <http://www.community-connections.org.uk/>

#### **END OF LIFE DISCUSSIONS**

Often a very difficult subject but a leaflet has been produced, 'Your Guide to Decisions about Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)' giving good information and help – 'what is the right time to think about it, talk about it and write it down!'

Please follow the attached link re Dying Matters – [http://www.dyingmatters.org/sites/default/files/DNACPR%20Patient%20leaflet\\_A4.pdf](http://www.dyingmatters.org/sites/default/files/DNACPR%20Patient%20leaflet_A4.pdf)

#### **Are you eligible for the Meningitis ACWY vaccination?**

- Date of birth between 1.9.98 to 31.8.99 inclusive?
- Aged 19 and over but not yet 25 years old?
- New entrant into University and under 25 year old (University Freshers)?

If you fit any of the above categories and have not been previously vaccinated for Men ACWY, please contact the practice and make an appointment. It could save your life!

### **INCREASING PATIENT NUMBERS**

*It is ironic that having mentioned difficulties in booking appointments, we still need to grow our Practice. We have approximately 7200 patients registered at Northlands Wood. The bigger we get the longer we hope we will be able to stay independent. In the future there is likely to be mergers of practices to so called 'super practices'. Practices of this size will be able to invest in equipment and diagnostic services but there is the risk of the personal touch being eroded away. It is our goal, here at Northlands Wood, to grow our practice but to still remain an independent, friendly, caring and efficient practice. Whilst we understand patients' apprehension about the amount of new housing being built in the area, it is important that we try and attract new patients to allow the ongoing development of the practice and the services we are able to offer.*