



NEWSLETTER

No.57 WINTER 2014

**Church Street Practice
Patient Involvement Group**



CONGRATULATIONS!



To Dr. Matthew Gaw and his wife on their birth of their son Phoenix.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE PROPOSED CARE HOME

The application to build a Care Home on the land behind the Health Centre was refused by the Vale of the White Horse District earlier in the year.. Following that refusal, an appeal was lodged with the Planning Inspectorate and a formal Hearing was held in November 2013.The following is a quote from the very detailed report.

" Decision

The appeal is dismissed

Conclusion

21. Notwithstanding the conclusions on design, parking, flooding and employment, it is the detrimental effect the proposal would have on the provision of future Health Care provision in the area that is the determining factor in this appeal.

K D Barton INSPECTOR "

Thank you to all those who wrote seeking to ensure that the land will be available to expand the Health Centre in the future.

May Paul

CHURCH STREET PRACTICE PATIENT INVOLVEMENT GROUP [P.I.G.] AGM

Wednesday 13th November 2013
held in the Practice waiting room at 7.30 pm

May Paul welcomed everyone about 40-50 people. Apologies were received from Connie Tonks. May introduced Committee members to give short reports

1: Joyce Coombs: Intercare medicine re-use. 31 large boxes of unused medicines have been sent to Intercare since 2010. The team sorts, packs and sends the medicines to Intercare who then send them to clinics in Africa. Intercare is a charity and targets specific clinics, not big centres. 94% of what is collected is re-used. The charity won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2012. It is a worthwhile charity, please tell people. Joyce repeated the request for medicines. These must have 15 months to the expiry date, be in complete blister packs, no bottles and none that need to be refrigerated. Please give your medication to reception. More volunteers are needed at the Practice, they meet for about 2 hours every 4-6 weeks, generally on a Friday afternoon. Joyce thanked Dr Arthur who initiated the collection here, and Bridget, Janet Jill and Pam for their help

2 Connie Tonks: report on the South West Oxfordshire Locality Clinical Commissioning Group Patient Reference Group. Read by May Paul in Connie's absence. Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) **NB**We have included the full report that Connie sent for the Newsletter rather than repeating some of the information

Finances :Required to save £13,000,000 in 2013-2014 across the whole of Oxfordshire

South west locality receives only 13% of the Oxfordshire budget.

Patients in our area may be interested to know the following information
OCCG are funded at £1300 per person per year. This has to cover services from Hospitals, GPs, Community Services, Opticians, Pharmacies and Dentists. Examples of costs are £382 per year for a person with no chronic conditions and £1534 per year for a person with 2 chronic conditions.

Typical cost examples a cataract operation £748: hip replacement costs £5500, Heart bypass costs £7400.

Challenges:

- 1./ ageing population
2. / Increase in number of houses being built – greater pressure on the Health service

Things we can do to reduce risk factor

- 1. Avoid obesity with healthy eating and regular exercise.
- 2. stop smoking
- Keep alcohol consumption within recommended levels. *Connie Tonks*

3: .Jean Sutherland, wearing 3 hats:

- **Treasurer's report.** The only expense during the year was £46 for coloured paper for the newsletter cover. The balance in hand is £301.37.
- **Diabetes support group** had a good talk from Dr Gary Tan, the Clinical lead in diabetes in Oxfordshire, and an excellent session with Age UK. The Christmas session will be "Laughter is the best medicine".
- **Newsletter editor.** Jean thanked May and commented on how difficult it is to get people to contribute – I look forward to receiving your contributions.

4: .Sue Hannon spoke about the 111 service explaining it is for non-emergency medical cases. She is collecting people's experiences of the service (good and bad) for the newsletter. (*See article in this newsletter*)

5: .May Paul:

- Made a plea for younger people with energy and enthusiasm to become involved in PIG.
- Reported on the public meeting held in Abingdon on 12th November about the proposed care home on the health centre site. May, Sue and Dr Arthur had attended and spoken. The long view for the Wantage area is important not a short fix.
- May emphasised the advice that patients should get to know two doctors well not just one (especially as hours are extended

and doctors work part time. Appointments can be made on-line and more people are using this service.

- There is a rack in the waiting room with useful leaflets about the practice.

May concluded by asking if people wanted PIG to continue. The answer was emphatically YES! She expressed her concerns about there being no obvious successor to her in the role of "Chief Pig" and asked how it could continue what was the way forward.

6 There were 2 comments from the floor

1:how good and informative the newsletter is

2:how useful PIG is in getting information/ideas to and from the Practice; ours is a listening Practice. *Report by Christine Lisi*

The meeting continued with several very interesting questions that were answered by members of Church Street Practice. We will be featuring these in the next edition! Look out for it in late spring.

DO YOU CARE? SO DO WE ...

Do you provide unpaid help to a family member, friend or neighbour, to help them with everyday living?

Do you look after someone who has a long-term illness or disability or who is elderly or frail?

Do you have a child with special needs?

Do you help a relative or friend who is about to be discharged from hospital?

Are you under 18 and caring for or helping to care for someone in your family, who has a long-term illness or is disabled?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you would benefit from contacting South and Vale Carers.

South and Vale Carers is a specialist charity, set up in 1994, that supports unpaid carers living in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council areas. South and Vale Carers provides a personal, professional and confidential service offering a wide range of advice, information, and practical and emotional support, visiting you in your own home at a time to suit you

South and Vale Carers can help you with:

- Emotional support and practical advice to help you with your caring role
- Help in claiming Allowances and Benefits for you and the person you care for
- Completing a Benefits Check to make sure you and your family are maximising the family income
- Knowing your rights, including at work
- Help with Appeals and Representation at Tribunals
- Advice on your entitlement to services
- Advice on choosing and paying for care
- Trips and activities to give you a break – you deserve one!

Last year we helped over 1,000 carers and supported carers in achieving in excess of £920,000 in benefits and allowances for carers. If you would like to know how we could help you, please call South and Vale Carers on 01235 510 212 or visit our website (www.svcarers.org.uk)

As an independent charity we do not receive any statutory funding. If you would like to support our work, please get in touch, your donation would make a difference.

South and Vale Carers

111 CONSULTATION

There have been a lot of reports in the press recently on the new 111 system and how it is working. With this in mind PIG asked for feedback from you, as patients, about your experiences of the 111 system in our area. We received comments from 18 people who have used the system which, whilst not comprehensive, has given a taste of how patients are finding it. We were interested in the 111 system rather than individual patient symptoms and so to protect confidentiality have removed any identifying information from the comments.

In most cases, patients were satisfied with the service they received and praised the doctors and nurses. However, in a few cases, it was felt the system had let them down. It appears it can take slightly longer to be seen or to get a

call back at weekends and there is sometimes confusion over what medical services are running or the opening times of clinics where patients are being referred on. A couple of times, patients were expected to get themselves to Abingdon in the middle of the night which is a major problem if you don't or can't drive, and in these cases friends had to be contacted so the patient could get there.

One of the overriding things people reported was that they did not like having to answer so many questions. Having to repeat what has just been said to each different person they spoke to is also very frustrating. This appears to be a way of identifying and diagnosing but can be tedious.

The main experience was for the call to be answered promptly and, after a series of questions, either an ambulance would be called, a doctor would ring back, or the patient would be advised to go to the Abingdon Out-of-hours unit.

The experience of a doctor (or paramedic or nurse) telephoning back or visiting seems very positive. It is prompt – in most cases within an hour of calling and the doctors were highly praised and diagnosis and administering of the correct drugs was fast. There was a good deal of reassurance and telling the patients to call again if they still felt ill and referrals went smoothly.

Visiting the Abingdon Out-of-hours unit had a mixed response but on the whole was good unless it was the middle of the night. The diagnosis was correct and those transferred to the JR meant patients were admitted seamlessly.

Having to have an ambulance called was not as good. The 111 operator did this but in two of the three cases we saw, the patient had to dial 999 themselves to get the ambulance to come and there seems to be confusion over what an emergency is. This is being addressed and a new leaflet, which you can pick up from the surgery, describes scenarios and what to do in each one so signposting you to the correct service - but we do need to be educated in what an emergency is!

So, on the whole, most patients seem happy with the service and felt it was working well, although there is some room for improvement. *Sue Hannon*

LIP READING

*I am trying to learn a new language
It's not very easy to do
And I need your help and assistance
So I thought I'd explain it to you.*

*Next time you're going to speak to me
Don't turn your face away
For only by seeing the words on your lips
Can I understand what you say.*

*Talk to me more distinctly
Not too loud and not too fast.
Don't hide behind a cup or a hand
Or keep talking after you've passed.*

*When you impatiently say "oh never mind"
I shrivel up inside
For I frantically fought to hear what you said
And you don't even know how I tried*

HEAR WE GO!

The Hearing and Balance Mobile Unit has touched down at Church Street Practice! You may have already noticed the presence of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust's Hearing and Balance Team in their new, purpose built, mobile Audiology unit in the car park and we would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little more about it.

Plans for the mobile unit began two years ago when discussing how to make the service accessible for those in more remote areas. As ideas progressed the team launched the 'Hear we go' charity campaign to raise money to help fund the unit; local schools participated and the Audiology team tried their hands at some 'mountain-EAR-ing' in June 2012 by scaling Mount Snowdon in efforts to raise money. All their hard work paid off when in March 2013 the unit took to

the road and regular clinics started in local GP surgeries around Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Although compact the mobile unit possesses all the state of the art equipment necessary to provide a full audiology service for adults (and children) with the added convenience of being closer to home which is beneficial for those arranging appointments around work/school so that less time off is needed. The service is also more accessible to those who struggle to travel long distances and so far patients have not failed to tell us how much they appreciate it:

“We are so lucky to have Royal Berkshire Hospital’s Mobile Audiology Unit on our doorstep. It is so convenient for the people in the area and the service I have received so far really has been first class. In fact my new digital hearing aids are far superior to my previous and very expensive private hearing aids!”

It’s very easy to arrange an appointment with us. All you have to do is visit your GP who will send us a referral letter on your behalf. You will then receive an appointment via post to attend the mobile audiology unit. Currently we are running weekly clinics on a Thursday morning and afternoon at the Church Street Practice.

At your appointment, your audiologist will discuss your concerns, perform all the necessary tests, ensure that you understand your results and together, decide on the best possible management for you. So if you’re having any issues with your hearing or balance, then don’t delay!

See you soon!

The Mobile Audiology Team. Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

DIABETIC SUPPORT GROUP

Feb. 6th: A diabetic nurse specialist Perdy van der Berg

April 3rd : A discussion & sharing meeting, “My experiences”

June 5th: A speaker re diabetic retinopathy

August 7th: Remember the fun we had with the exercise group, they will be back!

October 2nd Dr. Garry Tan

Dec.4th: Discussion , I haven’t yet thought of a specific topic, I am open to suggestions.

If you haven't been already to one of our meetings, please come along, we are a friendly group and we all find it so helpful to be able to talk to others with similar problems,
Jean Sutherland 01235 868396

ABSENT DOCTORS

We would like to apologise to any patients who are presently, or will find over the coming months, that their usual doctor is less available than usual. We ask that you bear with us and choose an alternative doctor when needed.

Dr Emma Alcock is an excellent, very experienced doctor and will be helping to cover the various absences. She will be working Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday throughout January and February and then coming back and working Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 1 April to 6 June.

Dr Gaw has been on paternity leave following the birth of his first baby and will be back for the week of 13 January but is then away on holiday for the last two weeks of January – this may seem bad planning but baby was a bit late!! He will be back as usual from 3 February (and hopefully not suffering from sleep deprivation due to young master Phoenix).

Dr Godlee will only be working a day and a half each week throughout January, all day each Monday and Thursday mornings. He will back to his usual Monday to Thursday from the beginning of February. Sadly, Dr Godlee has also announced that he will be retiring at the end of July 2014. If anyone has any interesting or amusing stories or pictures concerning Dr Godlee could they please, send them to me - email sheila.dearman@nhs.net or hand them in at reception (I can copy and return originals if required).

Dr Bryan will be away the first week of February and only be working a day and a half for each of the following 3 weeks. He will be back as usual from 3 March, except that he will no longer work Friday afternoons. Dr Bryan would like everyone to know that he will not be considering retirement for quite some time – he has likened himself to “young Mr Grace” (if you have ever seen Are you Being Served) i.e. going on for ever!

Dr Arthur is taking a Sabbatical from 1 April and will be back in surgery on 23 June. Not much I can say about this except that, after 20 odd years, she

probably deserves a bit of “time out”, not that it is a holiday but she will be free to concentrate on something different for a couple of months and I am sure will return revitalised and charged with renewed enthusiasm to move the Practice forward.

Dr Sonecha will be finishing with us at the beginning of February, moving on to the next phase of his GP training and we would like to thank him for all his hard work over the past 6 months. Dr Laura Pemberton will be joining us in his place for 6 months.

If anyone has any concerns over doctors' accessibility, please feel free to contact me.

Sheila Dearman, Practice Manager

NRAS @ THE NOC: A Patient Group for People with RA Generation Games - 12th November 2013 Hosted by Jessica Wilson – Rheumatology Physiotherapist

Jessica addressed the assembled 17 NRAS members about the benefits of a new initiative from the NOC and Age UK. Started in March 2013 the purpose is to make available to patients aged 50 and over in Oxfordshire, exercise which delivers an ‘exercise prescription’ catering for everyone’s particular limitations and personal choice of exercise method.

The talk centered on the website ‘Generation games’ which provides a database of exercise activities all over Oxfordshire and costs, many of which are free. Although for those who are not on computer a simple Generation Games Orange card is available which when filled in and returned provides the information by phone. For a card ring Jess on 01865 737559 or email info@generationgames.org.uk.

With the idea of ‘Keeping you stronger for longer’ Jess took us through the simple 4 step sign in process on www.generationgames.org.uk which was very straightforward.

Also available either through the website or by request is a free DVD of exercise methods for all abilities.

After there was a brief question and answer session in which Jess re-emphasised the positive effects of exercise especially during flare ups, and the benefit of aiding sleep and potentially off setting some of the threat to all RA sufferers of associated health issues.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 14th January at the NOC at 18.30; Jackie Sherwood is speaking on methods of relaxation.

Have a very Happy New Year.

Nigel Kilbey

(NRAS is the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society)

2014 PROGRAMME Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, 6.30 pm in the Lecture Theatre

11th March Dr Joel David, RA Consultant: Psychological Impact of RA

13th May Dr Karen Barker, Clinical Director: Evidence for exercises of the upper limb in RA – what should we be doing?

8th July Prof Peter Taylor, Chair Musculoskeletal: PRISM – A Follow Up

9th September To be Confirmed

11th November Maureen Cox, RA Nurse Practitioner: Medication

RA Week:

16th to 22nd June Awareness stand and fund-raising cake stall

Further Information: National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society: www.nras.org.uk

or Tel: 0800 298 7650

All sessions are Free and all RA patients, friends and carers are welcome

LETTERS

On behalf of Wantage District Guides, Brownies and Rainbows and Rangers, I would like to say a very big thank you to everyone at Church Street Practice, in particular to Dr Bryan and Sheila, the Practice Manager, for allowing us to have our stalls on the 2 Flu clinic Saturdays and to all the generous people, patients and staff, who bought our cakes, books and Tombola tickets. We raised an incredible £942.70 for the District funds. This money will mainly be used to help with the running costs of our hall in Priory Road. Many thanks to you all and we hope to see you all again next year. (Saturday 4 and 18 October 2014).

Sally Matthews, 4th Wantage Guides

If you don't wish to keep the newsletter please pass it on, especially if you know someone who has difficulty getting out. We have learned that some patients who love the newsletter sometimes have problems in obtaining a copy.

The editor thanks everyone who has contributed to this Newsletter which is prepared and compiled by and on behalf of the patients of Church Street Practice. Suggestions, letters, articles and ideas are always welcome.

Please contact:

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Practice website (which includes PIG Information)

www.wantagechurchstreet.co.uk

PIG suggestion box in the waiting room

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