



NewsWATCH

The Watlington & Chalgrove GP Practice Newsletter



Issue 014

Email us at: wat.chal@nhs.net - Website www.watlington-surgeries.nhs.uk

December 2014

PPG Members

Watlington

- Roger Beattie
- Josephine Carrington
- Jenny Tindale
- Doreen Hobbs
- Shirley Brown
- Beryl Parkinson
- Jacky Wagstaff
- Marian Davis

Chalgrove

- Neil Topping
- Evelyn Chakera
- David Lee
- Ann Reed
- Lesley McCourt
- Gill Walker
- Lynn Baker
- Peter Grout
- Helen Moss-Black
- Audrey Mainwaring

If you have any issue that you would like raised at a PPG Meeting, please contact any of the above or email us.

Special points of interest:

- Updates
- Mental Health News
- Rate Us!
- Cancer Help
- Do You Care?!

Contact Us
By Email
wat.chal@nhs.net

Another Year Flies By!!

It seems a fact that the older we get, the faster time goes by us. Not true of course, it just seems like that. In health related issues, so much is changing. Many of these changes will pass most people by. They only become relevant when they affect you, or someone close to you, personally.

Part of our function is to keep you abreast of these changes so that you can participate in how the NHS functions - the Government wants us to believe that implementation of reform is patient led.

We can only inform. If you want to make your voice heard, make a contribution, you must let us know your views.

To that end we review here some key developments that you should be aware of.

- By 31st March 2015 all GPs must offer patients the facility to access certain elements of their patient history: allergies, medication, active problems, immunisations etc. Look out for confirmation of when the new facility will be available. Once it is, you will be able to view the information detailed above. If you are already registered for online appointments and prescriptions you will be able to make the request to view your history online as well. Your GP will then, over the following 2 weeks, check that there is no mention of a third party, for privacy reasons, and once the information has been uploaded you will be able to view it. If you are not able to access online, you will be able to make a request for a copy or to view the information onscreen at one of the surgeries.
- Both waiting rooms now have **wi-fi** which patients can access for free - just select the **OXON-NHS-GUEST** network. However, please remember, if watching a video or listening to music, to keep the sound down or use headphones (watch for the buzzer though!) as a courtesy to other patients.
- You may have seen the recent publicity about a proposal to pay GPs £55 for each **diagnosis of Dementia**. For various reasons, Chalgrove and Watlington GPs unanimously voted not to sign up for this. If you want to know why, please contact us.
- **Go-Active** - we're determined you will! Further to the item in our last issue, look out for the leaflet that has been produced by members of the PPG which will give you lots of ideas on how to make the best use of the exercise equipment that is available for anyone to use on the recreation grounds in Chalgrove and Watlington. There are a variety of different exercises illustrated and suggestions for how much to do for your level of ability. Visit <http://www.getoxfordshireactive.org> to find out more about other fun ways to keep fit and keep healthy.
- **School-pupil consultation**; in the last issue we told you about the initiative to get children and young people more involved with the Practice. At the last **Locality Group** meeting the results of the consultation with the children from Chalgrove Primary School were reported to the group and the work undertaken via our PPG has generated a lot of interest within the county; **Healthwatch** is interested in publishing our report. The next step will be to set up a steering group to action some of the recommendations arising from the consultation.
- The **flu clinics** proved successful again with 1350 people being vaccinated in just 2 days. Over 80 eligible patients also received a shingles vaccination. The children's clinics worked well too; 2, 3 and 4 year olds are now offered vaccination against flu via a nasal spray. There are still some vaccines available so if you missed the designated flu days just make an appointment to see a Practice Nurse.

**If you want to make your voice heard,
you must let us know your views**

Finally, a healthy and happy Christmas and New Year to all our readers!!

Mental Health Issues - Are You Affected?

At our last PPG meeting Dr McManus gave us a talk on Mental Health Issues. She informed us that a staggering 40% of GP consultations deal with a mental health problem. Some of these are related to a specific physical disease, such as Parkinson's, but others include a range of conditions which are not linked to a recognised disease. Of the latter, the most common are feelings of depression and anxiety and include bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and personality disorders.

Although drugs are sometimes used to treat a patient there is now a greater focus on one-to-one support and teaching people how to manage their condition. Being told to "**Pull yourself together!**" is not helpful for sufferers but there are plenty of organisations and groups who will recognise that your condition, not visible and hence often dismissed, is very real and can be having a major impact on your life.

An NHS initiative called **Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)** has, as part of its programme, a service called **TalkingSpace**. This offers a patient with mild to moderate symptoms of depression or anxiety a chance to talk through, and learn to handle, their problems face-to-face, via telephone or through the computer.

Visit <http://www.oxfordshire-mind.org.uk/help/talkingspace> to find out more. You can even self refer to this service. Alternatively, look up 'Mindfulness' - "*a mind-body approach to well-being that can help you change the way you think about experiences and reduce stress and anxiety*" - which is currently growing in popularity.

There are 2 additional websites which are worth a visit: www.lltff.com (Living Life To The Full) and www.beatingtheblues.co.uk (also available in book form).

More serious problems will of course require more specialised and on-going treatment. Details of all the mental health services available in Oxfordshire are available in a guide via <http://www.oxmindguide.org.uk> or there are hard copies available in both surgeries.

Friends and Family Test

At this time of year we usually tell you all about the **Patient Satisfaction Survey** which has been conducted annually in order to generate a picture of the Practice from the patients' perspective.

Well this year we won't! The Survey is being replaced by an on-going online questionnaire (**The Friends and Family Test**) which patients can complete after each consultation. This questionnaire was introduced for hospitals in 2013 and has been extended to GP Practices from 1st December this year.

The results will be analysed each month and this will give the Practice on-going feedback and the opportunity to address issues quickly - and to pass on compliments too - please don't just use this when you are unhappy about the service you have received! The comments and the Practice's responses will be used to generate an overall score which will appear on the NHS website.

Visit <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Pages/nhs-friends-and-family-test.aspx> for more information. There will also be hard copies in the waiting rooms for anyone who does not have access to the internet.

New Service for Cancer Patients

Oxfordshire Advocacy is a new service offering free, independent and confidential advocacy support to vulnerable residents of Oxfordshire.

The service is available to anyone aged 50 or over who has been affected by cancer, either as a patient or family member, friend or carer. Support is offered by volunteers who are themselves over 50 and have been affected by cancer. The advice covers not just issues related to treatment and care but also social, financial and employment concerns.

For more information go to www.gettingheard.org or telephone 01865 230203.

On a related note, the **Maggie's Centre** based at the **Churchill Hospital** offers a free drop-in service for anyone with cancer; an opportunity to talk to professionals about a whole range of topics, attend classes and workshops or just relax and have a chat. Visit <https://www.maggiescentres.org/our-centres/maggies-oxford/> or telephone 01865 751882 for more information.

And Finally.....!!

As mentioned on the front page, the NHS is changing rapidly. Some changes will be good, others may affect you or a loved one in a detrimental way. As they say in the adverts, once it's gone, it's gone!! In this instance the phrase may not refer to a bargain but a service you rely on.

Your PPG exists to give you a say. We should provide a conduit between patients and the decision makers at a higher level. There is little evidence to make us feel this happening in practice. One of the reasons is that we receive an excellent service from the Practice at both surgeries in Chalgrove and Watlington. This is endorsed year after year from patient surveys.

However, don't get complacent, nothing stays the same and change - when it comes - is not always what we would welcome.

So, your PPG needs **YOU**. Have you ever asked a member of the PPG to bring up an issue at one of our meetings? Do you think we do a useful job? Do you find the Newsletter informative? Would you like to become a member?

These are some of the questions we have been asking ourselves. We receive very little feedback from patients and are beginning to wonder whether we serve any real purpose as far as patients are concerned. What's your opinion?

E-mail us on wat.chal@nhs.net