

Grove Road Surgery Newsletter

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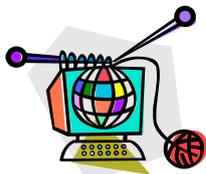
Editors Comments

(Stephen Fowler, Practice Manager)



As I pen my column the sun is shining and the Bank Holiday week end is about to start, so everything seems wonderful. Or is it. England and the impending World Cup might just take the gloss off the vision and give us something else to moan about. Elections have just taken place and so we have UKIP to debate right now, but life goes on. In this edition we have some on-line services to make you aware of. An update on Dr Ribbons retirement and a personal note from myself. The Government is pressing ahead with its ' Choice of GP ' initiative and we are processing the named GP's for our over 75 year olds, which is another government initiative. I am sure there is something of interest for everyone in this edition and for more on these and other articles please read on.

On-line Services



We are in discussion with our computer software provider (Vision) about two new features that we will be available to our patients from 1st July. We believe that these will be very welcomed by many of you. Firstly, book / cancel or change appointments on-line and secondly, ordering repeat medications on-line. Similar to on-line banking and ordering goods and services off the internet, you need a username and password and this is no different to those. If you forget your username

and / or password, the system allows for this, sending a reminder email to you, just as these other established services do. Similarly, if you enter data wrongly on 5 consecutive occasions, your account is locked but will automatically unblock itself after 4 hours. You can contact the surgery and we can unlock it for you. You must have an email address in order to access these services and families can use the same email but individuals are encouraged to have their own email accounts, as sharing may cause confidentiality issues between family members. Your access account creates a profile of your email address, password etc. which you can log in and change, should your details change or you simply wish to change.

On-Line Appointments



We are undergoing staff training on how to provide access to patients to be able to book appointments on-line. This requires patients who wish to utilise the service to have a username and password. You can then access the appointments system 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You simply search for and make an appointment, thereby negating the need to contact the surgery by phone or in person. Each patient and family member must have to have their own separate accounts, but parents / guardians can do this for their children or charges. Each user has to be set-up for a user account in that persons name. If you are interested in making use of this service, please ask at reception for information or check out our website.

On-Line Repeat Medication



We currently have this facility in place already as patients can email their requirements to our generic email address or they can order via our website. Unfortunately the ordering via the surgery website cannot be linked into our clinical systems on-line services and so patients would need to register for this service separately. The email and website ordering will continue for those who wish to continue ordering that way. This new way of ordering through our clinical system is an additional way for you to order your medications. If you register for on-line appointments, your username and password will allow you to order your medications as well. You do not need two accounts to do these. These two new systems are really easy to use and on screen help / prompts are there to guide you along. If for whatever reason, if either of these services were being abused, the practice reserves the right to disable either or both services and block you from login in.

Dr Ribbons Retirement



We have reported previously that Dr Ribbons intends to retire at the end of August, in fact his last working day will be Friday 29th August. The arrangements that have been

agreed between the doctors is for Dr Nayak to increase from her current working of 3 days a week, to 4 days a week and Dr David Grant, who has been with us since last August, will stay on after he is due to finish his time with us this August and work 3½ days a week. It has been agreed for him to work a fixed contract until August 2015, when he and the practice will agree about his long term future, which could result in him remaining permanently, if that is what both parties want.

Choice of GP



For several years the Government and the Department of Health has been looking at ways that patients can register with a GP of their choice, irrespective of where they live or where the surgery is based. As from October 2014, patients will be able to register with a GP even if they live outside of that GP's normal catchment area. The one stumbling block in the scheme relates to home visits, as it has been agreed that the GP's surgery **will not be obliged** to do home visits to these 'out of area' patients. Exactly how the home visits situation is to be resolved is unclear but further guidance is expected on this matter and will be shared when known. This scheme is likely to prove popular with someone who works in one area but lives in another, and would prefer to see a GP in the area they work. This is because they spend much of their time there. However, week-ends and evenings pose a different problem. This is another thing that needs further rulings on. Equally, an individual or family that has been registered for several years with a particular doctor, may move to the other side of town, and whilst technically outside the practice area, the choice of GP scheme would allow them to remain with that surgery. Again the home visit issue would need further guidance. The Government and the Department of Health have agreed this scheme will commence in October 2014, but the update information on the home visit aspects will be shared once known.

Stephen Fowler. Retirement



A personal note from myself. I reach the milestone of 60 years of age on July 20th this year and after working in the medical profession for over 40 years, have decided to retire. I will leave the practice at the end of September. My decision to retire was actually made and notified to the doctors well before Dr Ribbons notified of his intentions to take early retirement. It is recognised that some may see this as a bit of a double whammy but I would like to reassure you if I may. It has been stated in a previous article of how we will continue with doctor cover after Dr Ribbons goes but a fresh announcement to that, is that we have recruited Mrs Kelly Hartland, who is the current practice manager at Stone Cross surgery as my replacement. You can see that we have put in place measures that will see the practice continue and thrive long after we both have gone. Kelly will join the practice in September. She is in her early 40's and has worked at Stone Cross for almost 25 years, starting there as receptionist / secretary and worked her way up into the managers chair, where she has been for almost 20 years. I am sure you will make Kelly welcome. With the introduction of on-line services you can see we are not standing still, despite pending departures. More reassurance to each of you hopefully.

Named GP for the over 75 yr olds



From the 1st April 2014 everyone over 75 year of age is to have a named GP and they are to be notified of whom this is. At the surgery we believe that almost 100% of our over 75 year olds already know who their GP is and so this would seem like a lot of work for what is seen as a pointless exercise. The practice has almost 1100 patients over the age of 75 years and we have a contractual obligation

to notify them of their named GP. This notification can be in writing but as the cost of stationery / postage and staff time, is to be borne by the practice, we would much rather spend this money on your medical care. For this reason some patients will be informed of their named GP during consultations, either face to face or telephone. Other patients will be notified during home visits or any other encounters. These patients will have their medical records annotated, which means we will only need to write to those who we haven't had any dealing with since the 1st April or with whom the discussion was inappropriate at the time of the consultation / home visit. These opportunistic encounters therefore reduces the number of letters that will need to be written and ultimately the costs involved as well. The patient group questioned the logic of this scheme but apart from notification to those individuals, there is no additional information that we can share at this time. It is unclear if this is a forerunner to something in the pipeline but at this time we can only speculate.

Half - Day Closing Event



The next all local practices half day closing afternoon(s) are Tuesday 24th June, Thursday 4th September and Wednesday 5th November. These events are for all practice staff to attend jointly organised training events. Our surgery website is now showing these dates to advise patients well in advance.

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