

Grove Road Surgery Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 2

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Editors Comments

(Stephen Fowler, Practice Manager)



Welcome to the latest newsletter, bringing updates on our staff, patient matters, NHS finances and administration. I have kept my column brief in this edition as there is much to impart and hopefully something of interest to everyone.

Dr Sue Tran



Following the Bank Holiday week-end Dr Tran informed her partners that she wished to give 6 months notice of her intention to leave the practice at the end of November 2013. Dr Tran has worked Tuesday & Wednesday's here at the practice since 2007 and will be leaving us to take up a full - time working position at Stone Cross surgery. We are obviously very sorry to see her go but she feels it is the right career move for her and so we wish her well. I am sure some of you will be devastated at this news but hope that you would be supportive of her decision, which she will not have made lightly. We are looking at how best to cover her departure and will keep you posted on matters.

NHS 111 Service

After a somewhat shaky start and some bad press, the 111 service has improved and is now ' fit for purpose '. If after the 1st June, you experience any problems with the service, we would like to hear from you, so we can pass your feedback up the chain to the relevant NHS managers.

Changes to Maternity & Paediatric Services

Changes to these units came into force at the beginning of May and so far no adverse effects have been felt. At the time of writing, there was one baby delivered in a lay-by on the A27 but overall the changes, whilst unwelcomed, have not caused any undue suffering. The Trust is yet to make a formal announcement about the way things have gone but this is expected in due course. A question has been raised as to whether anyone has carried out a survey of patients who have been affected by the changes but this is not known. However, it is expected that the trust will report specific cases when they do eventually make a press release.

Books on Prescription

(Eastbourne Library)

Books on Prescription is something that has been piloted in this area for 2 years. It will be launched nationally in June 2013. This service enables people with specific disabilities, difficulties or medical conditions, to access the

Library Service, whereby GPs and other health professionals can prescribe books from a list of high quality self-help manuals. Patients can also speak directly to the library staff about the service, and we at the surgery would encourage this. The Books on Prescription Scheme is a very effective way of helping people with common health problems, such as anxiety, depression, phobias and eating disorders, to name but a few. There is clinical evidence to show that books can be just as effective as other forms of therapy and with the advantage of having no side effects. Books can work well either on their own or used in conjunction with other forms of treatment.

NHS Finances



NHS cuts for 2013 / 14 are now in place and all practice budgets allocated, which makes for grim reading. The NHS like other sectors, is expected to make savings meaning that this year will be harder than last for a variety of reasons. In real terms the surgery is faced with making 7½ - 8% savings in its use of :-

- Hospital appointments
- Admissions
- Use of Ambulances
- Accident & Emergency
- Prescribing.

This is a massive reduction on 2012 / 13 which we thought was hard enough but the next 12 months are looking gloomier. As one PPG member said " the NHS is doomed ". We are not convinced that is so, but it certainly places the surgery in a very difficult position and means having to watch our hospital and ambulance usage including prescribing even more closely.

It appears that the DGH finally ended the year with a £15.4M overspend. As we have informed the PPG and patients previously via our newsletters, website and the patient survey, hospital overspends have to be paid for from all the local surgery budgets in the following year.

Proportionally our share is just over £1M which means we are starting the new financial year with £1M less in our pot. Rest assured if you need to be referred to hospital or admitted to hospital, you will be. If you need an ambulance will get one for you. If you need a particular medication we will do our best to get this for you. What we cannot control are self referrals to hospital or patient requests for an ambulance. These are hidden costs to the practice, which we have to meet. The NHS is ' NOT FREE ' as we are all led to believe. There is a cost somewhere and it has to be paid. What we would ask is that our patients stop and consider :-

1. *Do I need that ambulance or can I get a taxi or ask a family member, friend or neighbour to drive me?*
2. *Do I need to go to accident and emergency (A&E) or can I go to the Walk-in-Centre or get advice from NHS 111 or the chemist etc?*
3. *Do I need all my medications this month or do I have some unused stocks sitting in the cupboard?*

Every little will help make a saving, which means we have a little bit more to spend on the needy. We are not asking you to take risks with your health but just to consider, whether A&E is the right place to go, as there are a range of other and more

appropriate NHS services on your doorstep.

Half - Day Closing Event

The next half day closure impacting all local practices is the afternoon of Thursday 27th June. This is for all practice staff to attend an organised training event. There is already a note of this on the surgery website to advise patients in advance.

Practice Booklet 2013

This is now at the printers and is expected to be available shortly. In the meantime, a copy is available on the practice website.

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Recruitment



We have recently had one of our original founder members of the group leave and she will be sadly missed. This means we have a vacancy in the patient group. We are always looking to recruit new members to the PPG, so if you would like to volunteer, please let us know. The group meets at 10:30am on a Wednesday morning, every 8 weeks or so here at the surgery, with meetings lasting 1½ hours.

PPG - Stakeholder Group

Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is looking to set up across all surgery PPG's a combined Patient Group made up of regional members, which will be known as a Stakeholder Group. Initially this is an invite to all practice PPG members to attend a meeting which outlines the CCG vision. Those attending would be invited to put themselves forward to stand as a member for the Stakeholder Group that would be involved in shaping local medical services. Stakeholder groups will be an integral part of the discussion process and agreement of any new plans for local medical

services. This effectively means patients would be involved and engaged in any new schemes and ideas that the medical profession was looking to implement locally.

Practice Website



The website is regularly updated and there have been some recent inclusions which you should be made aware of. Firstly, several patient leaflets and practice policies and protocols, as well as guidelines, have been placed on the website, in the ' further information ' section. These will help reduce some freedom of information requests but will also give you some handy tips on how things that affect our patients are carried out at the surgery. This section will be updated, as well as expanded, so you will need to revisit the website to keep yourself updated. Secondly, a patient decision-aids section has been added, also under further information. If there is anything in particular that you would like us to include on the surgery website please let us know.

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