

GREAT STAUGHTON SURGERY

NEWSLETTER *** 2012

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Patient Participation Group(PPG) Annual General Meeting **Wednesday 23rd May at 3pm at the Surgery**

All our patients are invited to come along to enjoy tea and cake, and learn more about how the PPG helps us to help you. We have a guest speaker from **Age UK** coming along to outline **Older Persons Care services**, together with a short presentation from Dr David Roberts on our current services and future plans. More information regarding the PPG and their work is available on Page 4 of this Newsletter.

Times, they are a-changing

Dr David Roberts

In March, the government's NHS Bill was passed and the proposed changes to the NHS are going forward. In fact in Cambridgeshire the Primary Care Trust had already recognised that there needed to be more input from clinicians, particularly GPs, if we were to address the future health needs of the population. Local changes are already well advanced.

A lot of things had been said in the press about fears that GPs would not make the right decisions, that the NHS would be privatised, and that the changes would result in deterioration of services. The decisions ahead are complex and frightening but most GPs are passionate about making sure that their patients receive the best services for their needs. However, with the aging population and the increasing complexity of patients' needs, we need to use our resources more wisely and effectively. One thing you can be certain of, local GPs, and in particular those at Great Staughton Surgery are committed to making sure you get the best services available.

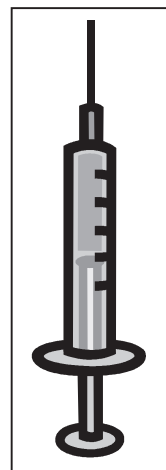
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FLU CLINIC – THURSDAY 4th OCTOBER - IN THE VILLAGE HALL

If you are aged 65 or over or have certain long-term illnesses you are entitled to a free flu jab. So don't forget to phone the surgery early in September to book your appointment. As well as the main Flu Clinic in the Village Hall there will be other clinics at the Surgery throughout October.

If you have the following conditions please phone us to check whether you are eligible:- chronic respiratory disease, chronic heart disease, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease, diabetes, immunosuppression. It is also recommended that pregnant women, people living in long-stay residential care homes and carers receive the flu jab.

So make a note on your calendar to phone us in September to organise your appointment at a flu clinic!



VIEWS FROM OUR DISPENSARY

'Over the Counter'

Many patients will be aware that we now have a small selection of 'Over the Counter' medicines available to purchase from the dispensary. The range is fairly small at the moment, but what we do have should provide some relief for everyday or minor ailments. The doctors or nurses may even suggest that you buy an item from dispensary because it would be less expensive than the current prescription charge. We will be looking to slowly expand the range depending on patient feedback and we wonder whether anyone knows of a suitable small display cabinet that may be looking for a new home.....

Please look at our new website where we have listed some tips for using our Dispensary Service!

www.great-staughton-surgery.co.uk

Our dispensers take a 15 minute statutory break each morning between 10.15 and 10.30 so if you can plan your trip to pick up prescriptions outside that period it would be a great help.

Repeat Prescriptions

The rules and regulations covering the issuing of repeat prescriptions are clear – the request should be made in writing to reduce the risk of mistakes. You can do this by...

- ☐ Bring your repeat requests into the surgery and place them in the box provided just inside the main entrance and not to the dispensary.
- ☐ If you have mislaid the repeat prescription form that came with your last medication, just write your name, address and date of birth together with the medication required on a slip of paper.
- ☐ You can fax your prescription to us at:
01480 862893
- ☐ Or post it to Great Staughton Surgery, 57 The Highway, Great Staughton, PE19 5DA.
- ☐ You can also order repeats online by registering to use our online system (just ask at reception for the details or visit the website).

You should allow 48 hours for your repeat prescription to be available for collection, excluding weekends and Bank Holidays. This time is needed to make sure we have the item in stock, or to order it if not, and to make sure a doctor has agreed to the issue. There are also procedures in place to make sure errors do not occur and these take time – medication safety is our primary concern.

Collecting prescriptions for friends and relatives

Please make sure you know whether the patient pays for their prescriptions, and if not, the reason e.g. over 60, exemption, pre-payment card etc. If you can bring the exemption or prepayment card with you that is even better. It is important that the correct box is ticked on the back of the prescription. Thank you.



HELP OUR NURSES TO HELP YOU



Nurse and Healthcare Assistant Appointments

If you want to see a nurse, please give the receptionists as much information as possible about why you want to see her. This helps us to book the appointment with the appropriate nurse and in an appropriate time slot. All the staff at the surgery have signed confidentiality agreements so none of your details will be at risk. Of course, if you wish the matter to remain confidential, then we will honour this and book a general appointment with the nurse of your choice.

Tracey, Sasha and Claire

DR DAVID ROBERTS

Times, they are a-changing:

Will the NHS be privatised?

Fears have been whipped up in the press and by politicians about this. Frankly the chances of the NHS being privatised wholesale are zero – it would be a huge political risk and there is no appetite among local GPs. In fact technically, your GP service is already private – we work as small businesses and contract our services to the NHS. In addition, a number of services provided to NHS patients already come from private providers or charities. For instance hearing assessments done locally are through a service networked between local hospitals and SpecSavers. Our aim as GP commissioners is to get the best service for patients. There are some areas where current NHS services are letting patients down. We are working hard with these providers to improve the services, but sometimes the threat of losing a contract to another provider is the ultimate tool to bring about improvements. So we intend to work towards ensuring that we prevent services from deteriorating, indeed our aim is to see improvements in services and more efficient use of resources.

The NHS is hugely wasteful. We spend ridiculous amounts of money on duplication of tests and appointments, and on admissions to hospital that could be avoided if better care and support for patients was available in the community (where most patients would prefer to be looked after). Also the move is towards “integrated” services – as patients we don’t see (and don’t want to see) the joins in the service we receive, and most people are amazed that we don’t share information with each other. What people want is “seamless care” with quick access to the safe and effective services that we need.



How does this affect the surgery?

In the practice we are working to ensure that patients can get access to our services when they need them. Our telephone appointments can help you get attention here where you might have been tempted to go to A&E at the hospital. A&E attends cost the NHS between £58 and £112 a shot, so please only use this resource for things that can’t be seen by a GP, such as major illness or injury.

Another area we are working on is to improve our diagnosis and management of Dementia. We expect to have a new service available soon which will provide greater support for patients with memory problems and their carers. To do all this we need the support of the teams around us, both within the surgery and in the wider NHS.

So what is “Integrated Care”?

The big challenge ahead for the NHS is to manage the increasing demands as people get older. When we are young, we “throw off” illnesses very quickly and usually make a full recovery. In fact, mostly without medical help. One philosopher once said that “the art of medicine is to amuse the patient while nature takes its course”. However, as we get older, we “collect” diseases, and need to live with them and reduce their impact on our lives as much as possible. Self-management is vital – we all need to take responsibility for our physical and mental health by eating healthily, taking regular exercise and maintaining healthy mental attitudes.

But as we age, increasing illness, and eventually frailty means that we have more of a challenge to keep well. As GPs we are spending increasing amounts of time helping older people to reduce the impact of their illnesses such as Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Heart Disease, etc. We are working to produce care plans for our most vulnerable patients, to record what their needs and wishes are (for instance if they want to be looked after at home), and find ways to communicate this effectively with other NHS staff who have to provide some of the care they need. This “Integration” is more challenging than you would expect, but we are working hard to make this happen more effectively than it has before.

We are spending more time and effort on looking after chronic diseases and part of this will involve spending more and more time communicating with hospital colleagues and others to try to make sure care is seamless and integrated. We are also working to improve our care of patients at the end of their lives, to enable them to die at home if they wish with the support of their family.

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Chairman's Report – 2012

We have had another successful year, building our reserves to nearly £7,500. Our usual fundraising events of raffles and concert helped greatly and we have also received particularly generous donations. Thank you to all those who have been so kind. We have also arranged the Macmillan Coffee morning at the school and Flu Jab clinic in the Village Hall as direct fundraising for Macmillan Nurses and the Air Ambulance.

I would like to thank all our Committee Members and supporters who have enabled us to achieve all that we have. A particular vote of thanks goes to Edward Van Win for all his hard work in creating the original website for the Surgery and giving us a launch pad for the recent upgrade.

Some members attended the Patient Congresses for Cambridgeshire, set up to help get feedback from patients to help with the restructuring of the NHS and also to inform the PPG of progress and initiatives. Some issues remain contentious but changes are progressing. We still seek new members to help with our work in both fundraising and interaction with the NHS, and we particularly need extra support from people living in Great Staughton.

Finally our usual special thanks to the doctors and all the members of the surgery for the excellent service they provide, standing high in all the surveys that are carried out and at the vanguard of new initiatives. We are indeed lucky and grateful for this level of service.

Sam Clay, Chairman

BEDFORD BRASS BAND CONCERT

Gt. Staughton's Patient Participation Group (PPG) is proud to present Bedford Brass Band in concert at St. Andrew's Church, Gt Staughton on **Friday 13th July 2012 - starting at 7.30pm until 9.30pm.** This 'ticket only' event is free to Surgery patients, just ask at Reception - **tickets will be available from 21st May from the Surgery.**



Surgery Equipment Ideas

The proceeds from book and honey sales, and our Easter and Christmas raffles contribute towards buying equipment to benefit our patients. Previously we have purchased blood pressure machines to loan to patients, as well as a baby changing table (pictured with our latest lost property item **Teddy**) and new blinds in the Nurses room.



Do you have any ideas or suggestions for equipment which would benefit our patients?

Vacancy for Chairman

Sam Clay is sadly retiring in May 2012, after joining the Patient Participation Group in 2003, becoming Chairman in 2005. We would like to take this opportunity to thank him for all his hard work and to wish him well for the future.

Patient Group are looking for new Members

Do you have some spare time? Would you like to join our Patient Group, as we're looking for new members? Our next meeting is arranged for **3pm, Wednesday 23 May** at the Surgery. Please call **Loraine (01480 860770)** or email **greatstaughton@nhs.net** for more information, we'd love to hear from you!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The PPG is looking for ways in which it can be actively involved in helping our elderly or housebound patients....

Would YOU feel able to spare an hour or so from time to time?



We might, for example, ask volunteers to pick up prescriptions or do a bit of shopping for other residents of your village who need some help. If you are interested please phone Loraine at the surgery and she will give your name to the PPG.

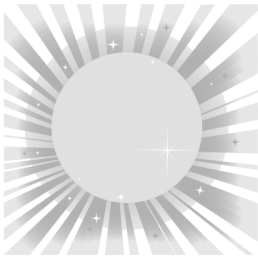
HEALTH ADVICE

ADVICE FROM DR STEPHANIE JOHNSON ABOUT VITAMIN D

"Vitamin D has several important functions. For example, it helps regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These substances are needed to keep bones and teeth healthy. If you do not get enough vitamin D, you might be more at risk of some of the harmful effects of too much vitamin A and a lack of vitamin D can also lead to rickets and osteomalacia."

Taking 25 micrograms (0.025mg) a day of vitamin D supplements is the MAXIMUM recommended by the Department of Health
PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR LOCAL PHARMACIST
FOR THE APPROPRIATE VITAMIN SUPPLEMENT FOR YOU

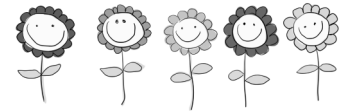
Good sources of vitamin D - Most of our vitamin D comes from sunlight on our skin. The vitamin forms under the skin in reaction to sunlight. The best source is summer sunlight. However, if you are out in the sun, take care not to turn red or get burnt. Vitamin D is also found in a small number of foods. Good food sources are: oily fish, such as salmon and sardines, eggs, fortified fat spreads, fortified breakfast cereals, powdered milk.



How much vitamin D do I need? - You do not need vitamin D in your diet every day. This is because any of the vitamins your body does not need immediately is stored for future use. Most people should be able to get all the vitamin D they need by eating a healthy balanced diet and by getting some sun.

The Department of Health recommends that the following people take daily vitamin D supplements:

- all children aged six months to five years old
- all pregnant and breastfeeding women
- all people aged 65 and over
- people who are not exposed to much sun, such as people who cover up their skin for cultural reasons or those who are housebound or confined indoors for long periods
- people with darker skins such as people of African-Caribbean and South Asian origin



MAINTAINING POSITIVE THOUGHTS

- We can all have negative thoughts. Whether we choose to believe them or not will impact on how we feel about ourselves. Choose your thoughts well.
- Negative thoughts can be a learned belief and therefore they can be unlearned.
- Challenge any negative thoughts as soon as they appear and replace them with a positive thought.
- Make a list of positive statements about yourself that you can repeat to yourself on a regular basis e.g. 10-20 times a day! Does that sound too much?
- If it does sound too much, think about how many times you talk negatively about yourself – it is likely to be much more than 20 times a day.
- It may feel alien at first to repeat positive statements about yourself, however persistence is important. It is possible with conscious effort to change our thoughts.

MANAGING LOW MOOD

- Talk about how you are feeling to someone who you are comfortable to share your thoughts with e.g. a friend or a relative.
- When other people say hurtful things to you, try not to take it personally. Maybe they are projecting their feelings on to you?
- Keep a positive diary and every day list 5 positive things about your day – it can be as little as being aware of the sun shining. Note – no negative things can go in the diary!
- Keep active physically by exercising daily even if it's only a short walk. Just getting out in the fresh air can be beneficial.
- Keep active mentally as this will help distract you from your negative thoughts. Keep a list of things that you can occupy your day with.
- Eat regular nutritionally balanced meals as this can help maintain your mood.
- Try to socialise even if it's just for a few hours a week.
- Do things that you enjoy daily, such as a hobby.
- Take time to relax every day and listen to music that elevates your mood.

INFORMATION FOR CARERS

AN INVITATION TO ALL CARERS

At Great Staughton Surgery we want to offer extra support to all of our patients who help to look after a relative, friend or neighbour who is ill or disabled. We hope as many of you as possible can come along to a special event we are organising for all our carers.

WEDNESDAY 30TH MAY * 1.00 – 3.00 PM *** AT THE SURGERY
LIGHT LUNCH PROVIDED**

“SUPPORTING CHOICES AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE”

James Codling from Cambridgeshire County Council will talk about how we can all help to safeguard our elderly friends and relations who are no longer as independent as they would like. He will include information on the Mental Capacity Act and Lasting Powers of Attorney.

James is happy to answer any questions you might have and we look forward to welcoming you for this informal and informative session.

Please call Ros at the Surgery to let us know you are coming.

(Remember, we are not talking about paid carers but people who give up their time to do what they can for a loved one.)

NEW WEBSITE

Have you seen our wonderful new website <http://www.great-staughton-surgery.co.uk>

We've revamped and extended our online services so you can update your personal information (add mobile numbers and email addresses), order repeat prescriptions, send us a message and make appointments with your Doctor or Nurse out of normal working hours.

On the front page, we have useful links such as: www.nhschoices.co.uk & www.patient.co.uk, for you to use along with introductions to all the staff and associated services we offer. As the site is so new, we would welcome your feedback on which services would be useful to have on our website, and what you would like to see there in future.

Please send us your suggestions, by email: greatstaughton@nhs.net or follow the link from the contact details on the surgery website.

WHAT CAN THE INTERNET DO FOR YOU?

Would you like to come here to the surgery to learn more about what access to the internet can do for you?

If so, call Ros at the Surgery and we will organise sessions for 4-5 people on a Wednesday afternoon. You will be shown how to get onto the Internet and guided through our own Website as well as others that may be of use.

The website www.getonlineathome.org also has useful information for people wishing to use the internet for the first time.



HERE TO HELP

As well as the doctors and nurses who see patients at our surgery there are other visiting professionals who perform vital services for our community of patients. Here are some examples:

- **Macmillan Nurses** - For many people affected by cancer, Macmillan nurses are a valued and trusted source of expert information, advice and support - free of charge. You'll need to be referred by your GP, your hospital consultant, a district nurse or a hospital ward sister. Don't hesitate to ask them if there are Macmillan nurses available in your area.
- **District Nurses** - The District Nurses who look after our patients are based in Buckden but travel throughout our area, including into Bedfordshire. They take blood for testing, change dressings and perform many other nursing requirements for people who are too ill to come into the surgery. But it is always recommended that patients come into the surgery if it is at all possible.
- **Gateway Workers** - A Gateway Worker is a senior mental health practitioner - usually a mental health nurse, social worker, occupational therapist or clinical psychologist - who is experienced in the assessment and treatment of mental health problems. Your GP may refer you to the Gateway Worker for further advice on any treatment options that might be of help to you. Currently this service is for people aged 18-65 but we hope to make it possible for older people to be seen in the future.
- **Counsellor** - Our doctors or the Gateway Worker may refer you to Paula Williams, our Counsellor, who sees patients here at the surgery. Counselling can be useful for a wide range of people and problems, and is available to patients of all ages.
- **Midwife** - The midwife looks after our pregnant patients holds a clinic at Gt Staughton surgery every other Thursday. She liaises with our doctors to make sure you are looked after appropriately throughout your pregnancy to the birth of your baby.
- **Health Visitor** - Our Health Visitor holds clinics at Gt. Staughton Surgery most Tuesday mornings from 11.30 am to 12 noon - no appointment is necessary. She will also visit you in your home to check on the progress of your new baby and is a great source of support to new mums and dads.
- **Dietician** - A dietician holds a clinic here at Gt. Staughton Surgery every couple of months. Our doctors can refer you to her for expert advice on your dietary problems
- **Diabetic Specialist Nurse** - You will be referred to this specialist nurse if your diabetes needs extra management and she will see you here at the surgery.
- **Hearing Help Sessions** - Volunteers from the Campaign for Tackling Acquired Deafness come four times a year to help patients with their hearing aids including fitting new batteries. The upcoming dates are:- 31 July and 30th October 2012.
- **The Richmond Fellowship** - Volunteers support and encourage people with mental health problems so they have the knowledge and confidence to develop their own personal choices, and build on the skills necessary to manage their mental health problems. Talk to your doctor if you think they may be able to help you.
- **Chiropodist** - Sue Walker has a regular private clinic on Friday afternoons, please ask at Reception for more information and appointment charges.

AND FINALLY

A fond farewell

Many of you will be aware that Barbara Wallis (Practice Manager) will be retiring in June after 26 years of working at Great Staughton Surgery!

In 1986, as a young mum with two small boys, a friend suggested that Dr England needed a typist for two hours a day, and so she started working, using a portable typewriter in a cubbyhole under his stairs! This unusual arrangement continued for two years until the present surgery was built

When Dr Roberts and Dr Johnson arrived in 1994 Barbara was asked to become Great Staughton's first Practice Manager, and she went back to college one day a week to study for her diploma in Practice Management.

In the years since, Barbara has achieved much: she introduced the computer system to the practice, started up the Patient Participation Group and also pioneered the Highwayman Car Service; but a full list of all she has done for the surgery would fill the page!

Now her two small boys are two big men and have provided Barbara and Graham with two lovely granddaughters! Barbara is looking forward to spending more time with them and enjoying her garden this summer. She is also an active member of the WI and will be able to explore other pursuits as well.

Great Staughton Surgery will miss her; it is true to say that she has quietly and skilfully organised the smooth running of the surgery and will be a very hard act to follow!

Mary Lu

Patient Survey 2012

Thank you to all those patients who joined the virtual Survey group! A total of 133 patients completed the survey, aged from 11 to 97!

We are really pleased that the majority of our patients felt they received a good service, and this comment reflects most of the responses: **"I'm new to the Surgery and I'm very impressed by the warm and kind greeting I receive here on every visit and over the phone. I feel very lucky to be part of Great Staughton Surgery."**

However, we have taken note of suggestions and feedback received, and are taking steps to address each item raised. Here are some examples of comments below:

"Patients asked to be kept informed when **appointments run late**, patients asked if Reception would let them know on arrival. This has been noted and all Reception staff will keep patients informed when there are delays in future.

Patients asked for another **female Doctor on afternoons and evenings**. We have another salaried female Doctor, Dr Evans running a surgery on Tuesday afternoons, and Dr Johnson is included within the monthly Saturday morning surgery rota, in turn with Dr Roberts and Dr Heinz.

Patients requested **more use of email!** With the launch of our new website, we are promoting the use of online services available to patients with computers access. Patients can register to access our EMIS system, and can then book appointments, update personal information such as addresses and phone numbers, order repeat medication and send messages directly to the Surgery.

For more information, please ask at Reception or use the website link to contact the Surgery.

For a copy of the Survey results, please ask at the Surgery Reception or check our new website where the Survey Action Plan is available to download.

If you're passing through Belgium this year why not visit the town where Dr Heinz Van Raemdonck studied to become a doctor? The University of Leuven, which has been a centre of learning for almost six centuries, is located in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern part of Belgium and ranks among the top ten European universities. Its numerous old colleges and residence halls give Leuven the stylish face of a university town; in many ways similar to Cambridge.



COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER
IN LARGE PRINT
ARE AVAILABLE....
JUST ASK AT RECEPTION.

*Yesterday is HISTORY,
Tomorrow is a MYSTERY
Today is a GIFT
That's why we call it
THE PRESENT*