



Healthy Times

The Newsletter for the White Horse Medical Practice

Autumn 2014



A warm welcome from your Surgery

Welcome to the Autumn edition of your Surgery's newsletter. We hope you find it interesting and useful. If you have any ideas of topics that you would like more information on then please contact a Patient Group member via www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk or at the Health Centre.

Merger

Our main news item is that we are in very early talks regarding a possible merger with the Fern Hill Practice. Dr. Holdsworth wants to retire in April 2015 and needs to plan what will happen to her Practice. She has not been able to recruit a partner so has started talking to the Partners at the White Horse Medical Practice about a possible merger. These talks are in the very early stages and there are many issues to resolve, not least with the NHS and our landlords.

We will let you know about developments as and when there is any news. There is no guarantee that the merger will go ahead – it may or may not happen, but it could be a great opportunity to improve the services offered to patients in Faringdon and the surrounding villages. Check out our website for the latest news www.whmp.co.uk. We would be pleased to hear your views on this possible development for the town and hope that you will support us in the challenges that no doubt lie ahead.

Health Summit

There will be a chance to learn more at our Health Summit on September 23rd so why not come along. The Summit will be majoring on carer issues and you'll find more info about it in this newsletter or check out www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk

Dr Gavin Bartholomew; Dr Anna Douglas; Dr Simon Cartwright.

Nearly 5,000 patients seen every month

Over the last three months our doctors have seen over 7,000 patients and our nurses and other staff an amazing 7,300. But, between us, we can do even better as our doctors and nurses lost valuable appointments when patients didn't turn up or forgot to cancel. See below for how you can get text reminders.

Online Appointments and Repeat prescriptions

Our new online booking system is now proving really useful to both patients and carers. You can check when your doctor or specialist is available to pick a time to suit you best. See our website for details on how to register or ask at Reception. www.whmp.co.uk

Don't miss your appointment!

Please give us your mobile number and email address so we can send you a helpful reminder text a day before your appointment. You can do it on our website or just phone Reception. 01367 242388 www.whmp.co.uk

Lunchtime phone calls

We're delighted that we can now take phone calls to Reception during the 1-2 pm lunch break, but our Dispensary cannot take calls for that hour.

Child immunisation & MMR boosters

Children from 2 months old to 14 years need to be immunised against a wide range of diseases. These include: Influenza type B and Meningitis C (Hib/MenC), Pneumococcal disease, Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Please talk to your Health Visitor or contact the surgery. For more information on children's immunisations visit www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/vaccination-schedule-age-checklist.aspx

If you were born between 1/1/84 and 31/12/92 it is likely that you haven't had an MMR booster immunisation. If you haven't we recommend that you make an appointment with the practice nurse to have this done. There is no charge for this service.

Going to the best place for treatment

Please use A&E only for life-threatening conditions. Going to the right place will save you time and means serious cases can be treated quickly. Think before you go to A&E – can anyone else help?

For minor ailments, mild sprains and grazes	Have a first aid kit. Seek advice from a pharmacist. The pharmacy in London St, Faringdon is open 7am-11pm Mon–Sat and 9am-1pm on Sundays. Boots is open 9am to 6.30pm, Mon-Fri, and to 5pm on Saturday.
Feeling ill, feverish children, rashes. Persistent symptoms	GP Surgery. If closed choose either : Out of Hours Service 0845 345 8995 or NHS 111 for advice
For minor injuries, minor burns and scalds, eye injuries, broken bones, severe sprains, minor head injuries	NHS Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) Open 7 days a week. No appointment needed. 10am to 11pm Abingdon MIU, Marcham Rd. OX14 1AG 01865 425161 Witney MIU, Welch Way. OX28 6JJ 01608 648262
For Life threatening conditions Choose 999 or A&E	John Radcliffe , Headington, Oxford. OX3 9DU Great Western , Swindon, SN3 6BB
For non-medical issues	Patients often ask their doctor for help with non-medical issues. We'd love to be able to do this but it's really best if you speak to the experts at the DWP or Council. The CAB can be very helpful too. Try them on 03454 04 05 06.

36 special clinics or services available

Check out our website www.whmp.co.uk or ask at Reception about the 16 specialist clinics, ranging from Asthma to Travel jabs, and the 20+ things like certificates and medicals we can provide. Here are just two examples:

Home start help for families

Home-Start helps families with young children deal with whatever life throws at them. They support parents as they learn to cope, improve their confidence and build better lives for their children. The benefits of their support include improved health and well-being and better family relationships.

Hearing Tests?

If you are referred for a hearing test you can go to any Specsavers business (Oxford, Abingdon, Witney, Wantage, Swindon) for your test. This is an NHS service and all hearing aids and batteries are free.

Recycling medicines for third world countries

We are now collecting unwanted medications to be recycled for third world countries. They have to have at least 15 months before their expiry date and we cannot take out of date items.

Simply drop them in at our dispensary. We've just had a lovely 'Thank You' from Sister Banda in Zambia who said "I just want to thank you for the great job you are working for the poor people of Zambia. We really appreciate your donations as at now we only depend on your kind contributions you are doing to us."

Award to Patient Group Member

One of our Patient Group Members, Marcus Laphorn, has received an award from the Oxford University Hospitals NHS



Trust, in recognition of the work he has undertaken whilst serving as Chairman of the Oxford Churchill Hospital's Cancer Patient and Carer Panel. After Marcus's partner was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008, she received such excellent treatment that he volunteered to become a Member of the OUH Trust

Cancer Panel. Marcus was presented with his award by Geoff Salt, Deputy Chairman of the OUH Trust.

NHS is world's best healthcare system

It came as a very pleasant surprise to read earlier this year that our much-maligned NHS is actually the best in the world. This was the conclusion of the Commonwealth Fund, a Washington-based foundation which is respected around the world for its analysis of the performance of different countries' health systems. They analysed performance data from 11 countries and concluded "The United Kingdom ranks first overall, scoring highest on quality, access and efficiency," They particularly praised the £2,008 cost per person per year of the NHS – which is half the US figure. Well done us!

Research at the White Horse Medical Practice

The White Horse Medical Practice has recently been granted special research status by the National Institute for Health Research. This has enabled the practice to undertake more studies in conjunction with Oxford University and many of our patients are currently involved.

Over the last two and a half years the practice has taken part in 17 research studies. One of the first of these was to investigate patients with diabetes who were starting on new medication. The aim of this recently published study was to find out how quickly sugar levels stabilised following the change of medication. The study showed that they stabilise 8 weeks after a change of medication, thus speeding up the rate at which patients' sugar levels can be brought under control. The practice is very grateful for all the patients who took part in this study.

One of our ongoing studies known as BUMP is looking at the feasibility of pregnant women monitoring their own blood pressure at home to see if this can help to pick up early signs of pre-eclampsia or pregnancy induced hypertension.

The EXPERT study has recruited many of the practice's smokers. These volunteers have agreed to use an online

advice and support website to see if it will help them quit smoking. There are two different types of website that are being compared in the trial: one just contains information and advice, the other consists of these plus patient testimonials. It will be very interesting to see which sort of website is most effective in helping smokers quit. Thank you to all those patients who are taking part in this and our other studies.

Other studies are looking at bipolar disorder, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, mood changes in diabetes, Parkinson's disease and pneumonia in children.

One of our biggest studies to date is the OxREN study which is recruiting over 300 patients for a five year follow-up to try and find out if there are any predictors of chronic kidney disease. Healthy volunteers are having a huge range of baseline tests conducted. There has been a great deal of interest in this study and the Oxford University team are working their way through the patient responses. Please be patient if you have expressed your interest but haven't yet had a response from them. It will be several years before we hear the results of the OxREN study but we await the details with great anticipation.

If you are interested in taking part in any of our research studies please contact Dr Simon Cartwright. 01367 242388

Health Summit — Carers special

Our Patient Group invite the Surgery's patients to their Annual Health Summit on Tuesday 23rd September from 6.30pm - 8pm at the Surgery. There will be opportunities to ask general questions about the practice and a GP will be present to join in the discussions.

We are delighted that Catherine Blaxhall from Carers Oxfordshire is our Guest speaker and she will talk about their work supporting carers. She told us "Often, carers see themselves as someone who's simply looking after a loved one or friend. But if the person you care for couldn't cope without you and you don't get paid then you are a 'carer' and you are eligible for support."

Carers Oxfordshire is a free service for adult carers caring for adults, here are some of the reasons to contact them;

- Free Quarterly Newsletter
- Emergency Carers Support Service
- Free Carers Discount scheme
- Information and advice; one to one support from specialist carers outreach workers.
- Information about benefits and grants that you could be entitled to
- Support Groups where you can meet other carers and share experiences
- Training opportunities in manual handling, first aid and to give you 'Confidence 2 Care'

If you would like to register with Carers Oxfordshire to have access to this information, advice and support service please call 0845 050 7666, email carersoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk or visit www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

NAPP report

Our Patient Group is an active participant in their national organisation and a delegate went to the N.A.P.P. annual conference in June where the theme was 'Quality in Primary Care'.

Book sales for charity raise £440

Your generously donated books made £440 for charity in the last year. The money from books sold in the waiting room has been donated to a cleft palate charity in India, Cerebra (for brain injured children), the Poppy Appeal, 'Fight for Sight', the local air ambulance and Kidney Research UK. All at the Surgery thank you for your generous support.

Are you at extra risk from flu?

The risk of serious complications from flu is higher for patients with underlying conditions such as:

Asthma: because asthmatics have sensitive airways, flu can cause further inflammation of the airways and lungs, triggering asthma attacks and worsening symptoms. It can lead to pneumonia and is the most common medical condition in patients hospitalised with the flu;

Cardiovascular disease: patients with CVD or who have had a stroke are at risk of developing serious complications from flu. Flu is associated with an increase in heart attacks and stroke;

Kidney disease: having kidney disease puts patients at increased risk of picking up an infection. Having flu increases the risk of other infections, particularly pneumococcal infection, and leads to an increased chance of hospitalisation;

Liver disease: if patients have had a transplant or are waiting for one they are at increased risk of complications if they get flu. Flu can make cirrhosis of the liver worse while waiting for a transplant and it increases the risk of rejection and drug resistance after a transplant. Liver disease restricts the treatment you can receive if you get flu and so prevention is essential;

Weakened immune system: this may be as a result of a stroke, multiple sclerosis or following cancer treatment but this makes you more prone to picking up infections and developing serious complications;

Diabetes: diabetes can get worse if you get flu. This can lead to hospitalisation. The illness can raise blood sugar levels and the immune system is less able to fight infection. Diet can be affected when you are ill and this can cause sugar levels to rise and fall.

Flu vaccine is the easiest and most effective way of preventing the flu. It doesn't guarantee that you won't get it, but it reduces your risk of getting it and of developing serious, life threatening complications.

FLU VACCINE IS EFFECTIVE AND FREE – Please book now on 01367 242388. Clinics start on 11th October.

Maternity Provision for Faringdon

During 2012 The National Federation of Women's Institutes conducted research that showed serious shortfalls in maternity provision across the UK. Key findings from their report included:

- * There is a shortfall of 5,000 midwives in England and Wales.
- * 79% of NHS Trusts did not have the recommended number of midwives.

Our Patient Group is campaigning for Oxfordshire to have an adequate number of midwives to cope with the rapidly growing population – projected to increase by a third over the next few years. Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group thought our report was most useful and our Patient Group is now working with their Lead Commissioner for Maternity Services. You can read their report on the Patient Group website www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk

£600 Grants for Carers

Are you a carer? Have you registered?

It is very important that you register with your doctor as a carer. This will make sure that you are offered the services that are best for both of you. It will also mean that Faringdon people who are carers may have a better chance of getting one of the special grants from Oxfordshire County Council. Those who care for someone for more than 20 hours a week can apply for a grant.

- * £600 towards a break from your caring role or
- * £300 for use as you, the carer, chooses.

The £600 grant requires referral from your doctor. You can apply for the £300 grant through the advice section on:- www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

White Horse Medical Practice

Faringdon Medical Centre, Volunteer Way, Faringdon SN7 7YU

01367 242388 www.whmp.co.uk

PPG The Patient Practice Group works with the Surgery to improve local health services and patients' knowledge of them. If you would like more info on anything in this newsletter or to join the Group, please contact us, either through www.whitehorsepracticeppg.org.uk or by asking at the Health Centre.