

# PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER



March 2017

## ABBHEY VIEW MEDICAL CENTRE & FONTMELL MAGNA SURGERY

### STAFF NEWS

Three new GPs have joined the Practice - Dr James Kershaw as a GP partner and Dr James Wales and Dr Lucy Bowden as salaried GPs.

We are improving our care of diabetic patients; the nursing team are working with the doctors to streamline the process for uncomplicated patients, to free up time to visit housebound patients for annual reviews.

Our pharmacist Anne Edwards has been working with the local nursing homes to review the medication of their residents, especially those on multiple drugs and with complex health needs. Anne is now dealing with non-urgent medication issues with patients via telephone on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. She will shortly start to see patients for face to face appointments in the afternoons for complex medication reviews.

### DID NOT ATTEND

We still have patients who book appointments with a GP or nurse and fail to turn up. This is a tremendous waste of time and valuable resources. If you don't need an appointment, please make sure you cancel it, so that someone else can use it. The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is currently working on a project to find ways of reducing the number of wasted appointments.

### PROPOSED PRACTICE MERGER

Following initial discussions, The Blackmore Vale Partnership (Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton) and Stalbridge Surgery are formally proposing a merger in order to ensure patients can continue to receive high standards of care in the future.

**Dr Simon Horner, The Blackmore Vale Partnership** said "With the NHS nationally facing increased pressure, a crisis in GP recruitment and budget constraints, it makes sense for both practices to consider working more closely together and enjoying the benefits this will bring including – more choice and flexibility for patients, more effective use of GP time and greater negotiating power with the NHS to ensure the best possible services for our patients."

**Dr Steve Clayton, Stalbridge Surgery** said "We understand that patients and staff may be anxious about the proposed merger, however we see this as a really positive move for both practices. I am pleased that succession of primary health care services will be secured for the 4400 patients of Stalbridge Surgery."

The next stage of the process will involve teams from The Blackmore Vale Partnership and Stalbridge Surgery working closely with Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, patient groups and other partners to ensure the merger is in the best interests of local patients and those working within the healthcare community.

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### THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

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The aim of the group is to work with the practice as a "critical friend", helping us to improve the services and communications for patients.

Our next meeting is at the Abbey View Medical Centre, in Shaftesbury on Wednesday March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7.00pm.

In the meeting, we'll be talking about the latest developments in the Practice and we'd value your views.

If you're interested in learning more about the practice and helping to shape its future, then come along to these friendly and proactive meetings. If you'd like to take part, please contact Vicky Eaton on 01747 856700 or via email at: [Vicky.eaton@blackmorevale.nhs.uk](mailto:Vicky.eaton@blackmorevale.nhs.uk)

## PERSONAL ASSISTANTS' ROLE

You will be well aware of the current pressures in the NHS, the volume of patient contacts per day and the difficulty in recruiting GPs. In our practice, we are also concerned about how we manage the continuity of care for patients, whilst also supporting our clinicians in achieving a realistic workload. As a result we have employed highly experienced and trained staff to work alongside the GPs, as personal assistants. Their role is to support the GPs in all aspects of their work outside the consulting room.

Lucy Collier and Tracy Rowe, ably assisted by Karen Harford and Virginia Taylor can help Abbey View & Fontmell Magna patients with: Fit notes, prescription queries, medicines compliance, copies of test results in the practice and at hospitals, following up hospital appointments, reviewing any letters from outside agencies or patients that require action, general patient queries and questions and insurance reports. This list is not exhaustive as they can help with a myriad of issues, but many of these pieces of work could traditionally have ended up as an appointment with a Doctor.

When you call the surgery on our new phone system, there is an option to press number two which will take you directly to one of the personal assistants. They work as a team and can deal with queries from patients from any of our locations. They are a great resource and are worth contacting first, before you consider making an appointment, if you do not have an urgent clinical issue. The GPs will sometimes ask the personal assistants to call patients directly when they have booked a telephone consultation, this is because the GPs will assess the request first and decide on a course of action which the personal assistants can help with.

## RECEPTION



If you haven't visited Abbey View Surgery recently, then we have a new reception area which makes our reception team more accessible to patients and provides a confidential space for staff and doctors to use when answering calls and dealing with paperwork.

The front desk phones have been relocated to a private office, which means that reception staff will be able to speak to patients and help with queries without having to answer the telephone as well.

## DO I NEED TO SEE THE DOCTOR?

The Practice now has four Nurse Practitioners, all highly trained specialist nurses who can provide treatment and advice for many problems for which you may have seen a doctor in the past.

The Nurse Practitioner can assess and examine you, make a diagnosis and provide advice and treatment including a prescription if required. They can refer you to a hospital doctor or other health care professional and admit you into hospital when necessary and of course, they liaise frequently with your GP about your care.

Nurse Practitioners also manage many long term conditions such as asthma, coronary heart disease, diabetes, eczema, epilepsy, high blood pressure, raised cholesterol levels and respiratory disease. Patients with a long term condition are either seen annually or at their medication review appointment.

When booking an appointment, it really helps if you can tell the receptionist the general nature of the problem so that they can arrange for you to see the most appropriate clinician. If you are in reception and would like some privacy, please just ask!