

# Autumn Newsletter

## Understanding GP Prescribing by Dr Pippa Wilson

GPs are allocated an annual drug budget by NHS England. From this the majority of the medication prescribed by your GP must be paid for. For 2014-15 our Commissioning Group for Horsham & Mid Sussex (CCG) prescribing budget was £32.3m. An increase from last year of 4.3%. However, nationally the cost of medicines are predicted to rise by 5-7% this year. How do we pay for this gap? The prescription charge was introduced in 1952 in order to generate a contribution to the ever increasing costs of drugs. It has been abolished in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Recent figures suggest that only around 12% of prescriptions are paid for. Prescription charges do not reflect the cost of the medicine in any way, patients are often puzzled to hear that this can be more or less than what the drug costs the NHS. Last month Jeremy Hunt introduced pricing labelling to medicine that costs more than £20.00.

### Here are a few examples, what do you think of their costs?!

- Paracetamol SugarFree oral suspension 500mg in 5ml is **£20.00** for 150ml
- Paracetamol suppositories 250mg are **£27.60** for 10.
- Blood glucose testing strips up to **£16.20** for 50 strips.
- Vitamin C 500mg tablets are **£26.82** for 28 - cheaply available over the counter.
- Omeprazole 20mg dispersible gastro-resistant tablets 28 for **£11.60**, (20mg capsules are 28 for **£1.17**)

The cost of medicines changes all the time. It is centrally negotiated by the Department of Health and published in the Drug Tariff but the price can change on a monthly basis. Things that influence the costs of drugs are the manufacturer pricing, whether it is the generic version of the drug that has come 'off patent', the formulation - whether it is capsule, liquid, effervescent or tablet, demand and availability. It is frustrating that changing a tablet into a capsule for exactly the same drug can make a huge difference to cost. Currently the prescriptions cost is £8.25 per item, but prepayment certificates can be bought for 3 months (around £30) and 12 month periods (just over £100) which covers the costs of all prescriptions during that time and are a helpful option for people on more than one repeat medication.

It is estimated that over £300M is wasted in unused medicine each year. Please see this website for more information about what this means to you and me and our NHS: <http://www.medicinewaste.com> Please do not order medicines that you do not need, and don't allow the pharmacist to do so in your name. Once the medicine is dispensed it cannot be used by another patient due to concerns over possible contamination, and has to be discarded, but is still charged to the NHS. Last year Cuckfield & The Vale were the third most expensive prescribers in our region, this year we are eighth, this has to be due to some degree to on-going prescribing reviews / switches that you must have been involved in. Many thanks for your contribution and cooperation to achieve these savings and for your on-going accommodation of these changes. I hope that this article has helped you understand why we need to keep doing this.



## Flu Clinic Drop-in Dates 2015

Please be aware that we will have the following flu clinics from 8:30am to 10:30am in October:

- Saturday 3rd October - Cuckfield
- Saturday 10th October - The Vale
- Saturday 17th October - Cuckfield

**Drop in any time, but please note that first thing is usually our busiest time.**



## Flu Clinics for Children

We will be offering a Fluenz Nasal Spray for those children who need to be vaccinated for flu.

### Your child is eligible for Fluenz if:

- They are 2, 3 or 4 years old
- Or are in year one or two at school

Please bring your child along to any of the flu clinic drop-in dates or book an appointment with a Nurse.





## You are invited to join us for the Macmillan Coffee Morning

Our PPG will be hosting a coffee morning alongside our staff on:

**When:** Friday 25th September

**Time:** 9:30am to 11:30am

**Where:** Cuckfield Surgery

All welcome, please come and join us for coffee and cake, all donations for the coffee and cake will go to Macmillan.



## Would you like to work with us to improve Cuckfield Medical Practice & The Vale Surgery?

**Our patient participation group (PPG) would love to hear your views!**

Please email us on [cuckfieldpatients@gmail.com](mailto:cuckfieldpatients@gmail.com) or follow us on Twitter [@CuckfieldPPG](https://twitter.com/CuckfieldPPG). We are interested in hearing from a wide range of patients or carers who have used local services and are keen to be involved in making a difference to NHS services in the future. We would particularly like to hear from groups who are under-represented, such as young people, parents of young children and also the under 40's. Your input is important!

## Are you using EPS?

On the 4th August 2015 we moved over to EPS - Electronic Prescribing Service. This means we now send prescriptions electronically to a Pharmacy of your choice and we have a tracker, which tells us exactly where your prescription is and who it is with. If you work up in London, you could nominate a pharmacy near your work or train station to collect your medication (or you know you always collect your medication from the same Pharmacy, so you may want it to go there). Please notify either your Pharmacy, or us, of your choice and we will make sure that is done for you. For more information on EPS please go to our website: <http://www.cuckfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk/Prescriptions.php>



## Parking at Cuckfield Surgery

**We acknowledge that at times it can be difficult to park at our Cuckfield surgery, particularly at school drop off and pick up times.**

For the first 2 weeks of the children being back at school, our PPG have kindly agreed to be in our car park for 30 mins in the morning and afternoon to ensure those parking are doing so for the correct reason. Thank you for your patience in this matter. Please let us know if you have any issues with parking.



## Online Services



**Would you like to book appointments and request medication from the comfort of your own home or while at work?**

Cuckfield & The Vale use SystmOnline to enable our patients to use a PC or Smartphone app to book, check and cancel appointments, request medication and change your address / contact details and much more.

For more information please ask at reception or go to:

[http://www.cuckfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk/Online\\_Services.php](http://www.cuckfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk/Online_Services.php)



## Practice Manager Message - Welcome to our Trainee Doctors

Our Practice is accredited as a training Practice for those doctors intending to become general practitioners. We are very proud to be part of this scheme as it we see it as education, training and development as a core part of our everyday work. This means that the practice and doctors have had to achieve a number of standards which have been assessed by the GP Deanery for Kent, Surrey and Sussex, acting on behalf of the national organisation (the Postgraduate Medical Education Board).

Those doctors training to become GPs are called GP Registrars and each GP Registrar is appointed a GP from the Practice as their trainer. The GP registrar is a fully qualified doctor who has already gained a lot of experience of hospital medicine. If you are seeing one of our GP Registrars you can expect to receive the quality of service you would from your own GP. If you have any concerns please mention this to a member of staff.

We are very pleased to have Dr Eleanor Coleman and Dr Zahira Mohamed with us currently, both on four month placements.

*Jess Yaxley*