

SPRING NEWSLETTER



After a long and cold winter we are all ready to welcome a warmer spring. This is one of the most beautiful times of year in our area as trees start to produce leaves, flowers bloom and local gardens are filled with wonderful colours and fragrances. For the practice it is a busy time of year with many deadlines and also new and exciting changes which we are keen to share with you.

Staff News

We say goodbye to our GP Registrar Dr Daphne Coutroubis who is taking a break to have her baby and will be returning to us in the New Year and we welcome Dr Zaakira Mahomed who will be joining the practice on Wednesday 3rd April.

Introducing the New "Commissioning" System

GP Commissioning, otherwise known as Practice Based Commissioning, is a revolutionary new proposal which the UK coalition government introduced in the 2010 Health White Paper and is due to take over from the Primary Care Trusts from April 2013. It outlines the government's vision to streamline the health sector in the UK over the next few years.

It aims to improve the quality of service delivery through empowering GPs to be more involved in the management process of the NHS. It also aims to bring patients into the centre of service delivery by making them the focus of all that the NHS does.

GPs will form practice groups or consortia which will commission health services and be held directly responsible for managing budgets for those health services. They will receive budgetary allocations from a new NHS Commissioning Board that is both autonomous and accountable. This board will be responsible for managing and allocating about £80 billion of the Health sector budget. The consortia will, in turn devolve the funds to the various practices under them

Cuckfield Practice belongs to the Horsham and Midsussex Clinical Commissioning Group which brings together the two localities of Horsham and Mid Sussex, and covers 23 practices. Our practice GP commissioning representative is Dr Angie Gurner.

Some examples of positive developments that have already been made include the introduction of a Community Urology Service and a Community Specialist Eye Service. These services aim to be more accessible and promise to offer excellent patient care locally. We will be regularly updating our website with all the new changes so do check online on <http://www.cuckfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk> and you can also find information on our practice notice boards of other new changes. Additionally, there is a website dedicated to the West Sussex Commissioning Group which you can access directly via the email address <http://www.westsussex.nhs.uk/clinicalcommissioning>.

Easter/Bank Holidays Opening Hours



Mar 29th CLOSED

Apr 1st CLOSED

May 6th CLOSED

May 27th CLOSED

May 15th CLOSED PM*

*Practice Training Afternoon



Norovirus 'The doctors' dilemma'

Dr Rob Harvey

Norovirus, commonly known as the 'Winter Vomiting Bug' has had increased media coverage recently. This is because this season's strain 'Sydney 2012' is much more virulent than has been encountered for several decades. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) recently reported a 63% increase in cases this year over last and the epidemic is predicted to peak early in 2013. To date this equates to 1.13 million cases in England and Wales this season and over 600 hospital wards have been closed to admissions to date. Although debilitating for most of the population Norovirus infection leads to a complete recovery within a few days but to individuals who are frail or elderly it can have serious and fatal consequences.

To reduce the risk of spread HPA recommends: **"If you think you may have the illness then it is important to stay away from hospitals, GP surgeries and care homes to avoid spreading it to people who may have underlying health conditions and already be vulnerable. Maintaining good hand hygiene is also important to help prevent it spreading."**

Norovirus can be transmitted by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects, by contact with an infected person, or by the consumption of contaminated food or water. Symptoms of Norovirus include a sudden onset of vomiting and/or diarrhoea. Some people may have a temperature, headache and stomach cramps. The illness usually resolves in one or two days and there are no long-term effects.

This advice creates a practical dilemma for GPs and nurses. If a case is suspected a surgery appointment or home visit request would increase the risk of onward infection. Diagnosing problems over the phone is not failsafe. A GP's reluctance to visit a patient at home with suspected Norovirus can be misinterpreted by patients as not perceiving their illness as serious and lead to misunderstanding. If, as predicted in the next few months cases increase please understand if there is an initial reluctance for face-to-face consultations. Use common sense; if you feel symptoms are worsening or are not typical seek advice from the surgery or the out of hours service

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1317137641348

A day in the life of a receptionist

By Diane Lehwald

There is a stereotype of GP receptionists as dragons behind a desk — unsmiling individuals **with** a curt manner and an apparent determination to be anything but helpful. But, in fact, we do not intend to intimidate or belittle patients. We are here to assist you and even speak to the Doctor or the Nurse on your behalf if needed.

Working as a medical receptionist (or in any medical office administration role) can be very rewarding. Working alongside the professionals is great. I can see how much care they give the patients and it is a lovely feeling being part of it, supporting & helping them with the Administration side. Apart from running the front desk, answering phone calls and triaging calls for on-the-day queries and requests for appointments and home

visits I also have other roles. I run the chronic diseases register (e.g. Diabetes) and send letters and blood test requests to patients. I am also responsible for closing down patients' notes when they leave our practice.

I am regularly updated and trained in Child and Adult Protection and also competent at performing Lifesaving Resuscitation. I also volunteer for additional training, for example I recently attended an Action for Deafness event which I really enjoyed and found very educational.

The flip side to the job is dealing with a parent who would like their child seen as an emergency that day and offering them various appointment times but they are unable to make it as it is inconvenient!!!

Has your New Year's Resolution been to LOSE WEIGHT?



Do you want to lose weight and make some positive changes to your lifestyle? There is help and support available to you in West Sussex. You can self-refer to either of the following programs:

"Why Weight" Service: join groups run by Weight Watchers for a period of 10-12 weeks, **FREE** of charge

For more information call **0300 123 0892**

Counterweight Service: 3 month committed attendance to group/one-to-one sessions and cookery lessons.

For more information call 01444 477191 or e-mail info@midsussexwellbeing.org

West Sussex Wellbeing website can be accessed directly on:

<http://www.westsussex.nhs.uk/services-why-weight>

So, what happens next...?

by Dr Pippa Wilson

We feel we provide excellent medical care at Cuckfield Practice, however we do need you to take part to make this work best.

So ...what happens next?

If your doctor has organised tests for you such as x-rays or a blood test, it is helpful for you to know what the result is for your ongoing care plan. I am surprised how often people ask me what their blood results showed many months earlier! Please give us a week to receive and process your results and add our comments, we get around 150 results every day so we appreciate being given time to consider them.

We do try to contact you by letter or telephone when you have abnormal results, but this can sometimes fail especially if we do not have up to date contact details for you. Please make sure you inform the practice whenever your contact details change.

If you have any questions about your results and our comments please try to discuss them with the person who has ordered the test. This is because that clinician will have a plan for your care that another person may not know about. Even a normal result might mean that a referral or a different test should happen next. This also applies when a hospital specialist has ordered a test for you, we aren't routinely informed about their results and may not know what the next step is.

Sometimes blood results come back at different times or there is an error and a test that we ask for just doesn't happen, so it helps if you can keep a record of what has been ordered and make sure you know all of the results.

We also need your help when a hospital referral has been made for you. When we refer to hospital or another clinic then please allow 4 weeks to hear directly from them. If you have not heard within that time then please let us know so we can chase this up for you before the delay continues for too much longer. We do not routinely get informed by other clinics about your appointment so we wouldn't know that a referral had "gone missing", usually only by the time a patient has not turned up... and by then you could have waited a very long time indeed!

Please help our reception staff by asking for your results in the afternoon to avoid the busy mornings on our telephone system.

Thank you for helping our staff to keep helping you!