

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the third Newsletter of the Patient Participation Group (PPG).
This issue contains information about



- Practice website
- Appointments : Text reminders
- GP Crisis in Folkestone area
- Surgery staff
- GPs in the Practice
- Local Health and Social Care changing
- Kent Healthwatch
- The Samaritans
- The PPG and how to contact us

We hope you find this helpful and are interested to become involved in our work.

PRACTICE WEBSITE

www.elhamsurgery.co.uk

Please look at the Practice website. It provides information about the Hawkinge Health Centre and Elham Surgery such as:



- Surgery appointment times
- Dates when the surgeries are closed, such as Easter and bank holidays
- How to book an appointment
- How to register with the Practice
- How to request medication
- How to request a home visit
- Names of GPs, nursing team and all staff

Also, there is a lot of information which could be helpful to you on health-related matters, such as:

- Specific items relating to children, teenagers, men, women and seniors
- Dietary advice
- Foot health
- Conditions such as heart disease, cancer, ...

Please do have a look. The Practice would love to hear what you think. Did you find the website helpful? Is there anything you want added?

APPOINTMENTS : TEXT REMINDERS

The NHS wastes a huge amount of its time and money through patients not attending their pre-booked appointments. Moreover, these appointments could have been used by other patients. This applies to appointments in the surgery as well as in our hospitals.



To help patients to remember their appointments in the surgery the Practice has introduced a system of using the text messaging service. Please let the surgery know your mobile number so that you can receive these reminders on *your* phone. Also, it is very important the surgery has your up to date contact details, including home telephone and mobile numbers, address and email address if you have one.

GP CRISIS IN FOLKESTONE AREA



GP Practices in the Folkestone area have been unable to recruit doctors to their surgeries, resulting in a shortage of the equivalent of 15 full time doctors. There are many reasons for this situation, such as many GPs have, or are approaching, retirement age, new doctors are not attracted to the area because of less funding in the surgeries compared with neighbouring areas. Together with the growing elderly population with more complex needs and more residents with the new housing developments this means the area faces a crisis in GP services.

Now, one Practice, Folkestone East Practice has decided to end its surgery services from 1 November 2017. This is a worrying time for the 4,800 patients registered with the Practice as they do not know where they will be able to see a doctor or get their health needs met. If a new GP provider is not found they may have to be transferred to the remaining Practices in the area, including Hawkinge and Elham Valley Practice.

We will try and keep you up to date with what happens – look out for our next Newsletter. In the meantime, if you do have any concerns around this issue please do call the surgery and speak with a member of staff.

SURGERY STAFF



First, we must say a fond farewell to Sheila Young who had been with the Practice for 21 years. She has decided that the time has come to retire and we wish her well in what she now decides to do with her “spare” time!!!

Our Practice Nurse, Emma Drake, has gone on maternity leave and we look forward to welcoming her back in due course.



Welcome to the new receptionists, Tracy Harrison, Debbie Ballard and Betina Dart. They are doing extremely well but please bear with them if they are unsure of anything when you speak to them. The role of receptionist and the knowledge needed is vast.

GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

The names of the GPs in the Practice are as follows:

Dr Qasim Mahmood - Partner

Dr Gavin Oochit – Partner

Dr Peter LeFeuvre – Salaried GP

Dr Theodora Nelson – Salaried GP



If you want to see a preferred doctor please make this clear to the receptionist if you telephone for an appointment. Please note that this may mean a longer wait to see the doctor of your choice.

Also note that the Practice has become a Training Practice and the first doctor trainee has been with the practice since August. Dr Mahmood is mentoring newly trained doctors (one at a time) who are deciding whether to enter general practice or a hospital environment (a specialism).

Dr Stewart retired from the practice in January.

The Practice is still actively looking for a salaried GP but the lack of GPs generally is still an issue, especially with the Folkestone area being short of approximately 15 GPs currently – see the earlier item on GP Crisis in Folkestone area.

LOCAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CHANGING

We all want health and social care services to meet our needs now and in the future. The NHS in Kent alongside Kent County Council and Medway Council do their best to offer safe, compassionate and high-quality care (health and social). But they face challenges that mean that they need to change the way they work to improve care and get better value for the money they have available.



Our population is growing, more people are living longer and many with long-term conditions. Demands on our services are increasing and changing. The local NHS and Social Care Managers have published “Kent and Medway: our case for change” which describes the current situation and why change is necessary. Discussions are on the whole range of services from Accident & Emergency, local care in the community, primary care (that we receive in our surgeries) to stroke services and social care services such as care of the elderly in their own home or a residential setting. It is also about the supporting systems such as staffing levels, IT systems and buildings. They want you to get involved to help shape and influence good health and social care in your area.

Some of the services being looked at immediately and ready for your views are local care, East Kent urgent and emergency care, elective orthopaedics and Kent and Medway wide stroke services. If you have any experiences or want to



The Hawkinge & Elham Valley Practice
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)
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express your views then do please contact your PPG member, Brenda O'Neill via the surgery who will be happy to hear from you. Or you can email the PPG using the address given at the end of this Newsletter. Or you can contact Kent Healthwatch – see next item. Or you can go direct to the project via the following website, using the “contact us” tab:

<http://kentandmedway.nhs.uk/>

KENT HEALTHWATCH

0808 8010102

healthwatchkent.co.uk

Kent Healthwatch is an independent body set up to champion the views of patients and social care users cross Kent. They work to help local people



get the best local health and social care services, improving them for today or shaping them for the future. They would like to hear from you if you have any views on local services. They also provide an information service about local health and social care services.



THE SAMARITANS

The Samaritans are there at the end of a telephone to help people when they need them the most, at any time of day or night. People talk to the Samaritans for as long as they like, as many times as they like. They are not rushed or pushed out of the door and there are no assessments or waiting lists.



The Samaritans respect the person's confidentiality and do not pass on what people tell them, not even the names of someone that calls them. For some it is the only place they can turn to without fear of repercussions. For others that might worry about burdening friends or family the Samaritans offers a safe place to turn.

To contact the Samaritans:

Free phone number: 116123

Email jo:samaritans.org

Write a letter: Freepost RSRB-KKBY-CYJK, PO Box 9090, Stirling, FK8 2SA

Talk face to face: 9 Cambridge Gardens, Folkestone, CT20 1DB

ABOUT THE PPG

hawkingeelhamppg@outlook.com

The PPG has been set up to encourage patients registered with the Practice to be better informed and put forward views and ideas on local healthcare services. Those views and ideas will help to inform the Partners and staff of the Practice to plan and develop the services they provide or commission. To contact the PPG ask a member of staff or email us.

The PPG would particularly like to hear from you if you have any experiences of the areas being discussed as part of the local health and social care changes – see the earlier item – local care, East Kent urgent and emergency care, elective orthopaedics and Kent and Medway wide stroke services.

Telephone Numbers:
Surgery times:

Hawkinge: 03000 425555
08.30 to 18.30 (Mon – Fri)
08.30 to 12.30 (Sat, pre-bookable)

Elham: 01303 840213
08.30 to 13.00 (Mon – Fri)

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