



The Village Practice Thornton

Winter Newsletter 2018

Happy New Year from all the doctors and staff at The Village Practice!

We have lots of news to share with you and would like to thank our **Patient Participation Group (PPG)** for creating this Winter Newsletter 2018.

If you are not already aware of our enthusiastic and influential PPG and would like to join or just find out a little more about the group, please contact Judith Williams by emailing her at judith.williams20@nhs.net or telephone on 01253 951322 and she will be able to give you more information.

Staffing

- We sadly said goodbye to **Dawn McGrath** when she retired at the end of November. She has been a fantastic nurse and an endlessly cheerful presence at the practice for 16 years. We will miss her lovely giggle. We would like to thank her for her dedicated service and wish her a long and happy retirement.
- We also wish **Edward Thompson** the very best in his new post. He was our first Clinical Pharmacist and has helped us to develop an innovative and popular in-house pharmacy advice service in the past two years.

We recognise that this role is a valuable asset and are delighted to introduce you to our new pharmacist, **Farhana Kosar**, who joined us in November. Farhana has come from a community pharmacy background, has also spent time as a volunteer working overseas and brings a wealth of experience to the post.

We are delighted to have recruited several more excellent new members to our team and would like to introduce them to you:

- **Kay Beaumont, Nurse Practitioner.** Kay is a lively, enthusiastic nurse with a background in emergency medicine. She is able to examine, prescribe and refer, independently, with support from GP partners. She is already very popular with patients and can be booked for same day urgent medical problems.
- **Stephanie Boggis, Practice Nurse.** Stephanie is an experienced GP practice nurse, who previously worked as a district nurse. She specialises in looking after people with long term medical conditions e.g. respiratory disease and fits perfectly into our practice nurse team.



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- **Rachel Potts, Health Care Assistant (HCA).** Rachel is our new HCA and works alongside Maria Meehan to provide appointments for investigations such as blood tests, ECG, blood pressure and weight checks. Rachel has only recently moved out of a hospital post but has already blended brilliantly with our team.
- **Fiona, Receptionist.** Fiona joined our patient services team a few months ago. Her surname is unpronounceable, so – like Madonna – she is known only by her first name!
- **Jeanette Power, Administration.** Jeanette works with us a couple of days a week to help us keep your records in good order. She is an administrative genius who previously worked at a high level within the EMIS computer company. This is the system that we use every day in consultations with you and we are grateful for her expert advice.

Congratulations

The practice would like to congratulate **Maria Meehan**, who has been working very hard over the past 2 years to become an Assistant Practitioner in Health & Social Care – **WELL DONE**

Employee of the Year and most Improved

Its great pleasure to announce that - **Maria Meehan** has been voted the Employee of the Year 2017 and **Fiona Murray** as the most improved member of staff. **WELL DONE TO BOTH OF YOU.**





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Changes to Prescription Ordering

You may already be aware of the changes commencing 08.01.18 affecting the way you order your routine prescriptions. This is part of a regional drive to reduce waste, as it has become apparent that unnecessary items are being issued when ordered via community pharmacies. We want to make sure that you only receive the medication that you need. Our PPG handed out leaflets explaining this change at one of our flu clinics and we are mailing patients who currently use a pharmacy to generate their prescriptions, to provide patients with as much information as possible about these changes.

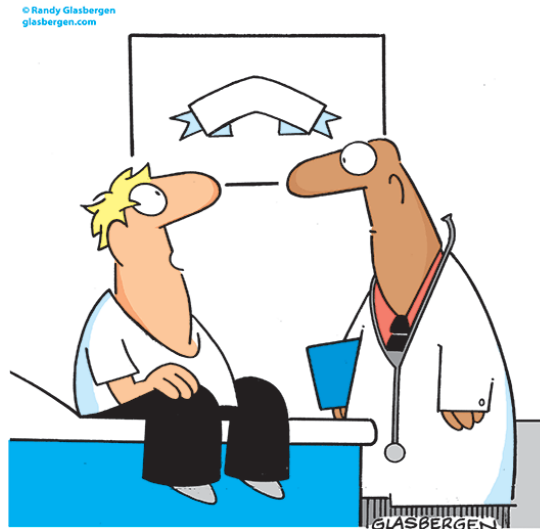
The most important thing to note is that you should now order your prescriptions through our practice.

To make this easier and more efficient, please consider **registering for on-line prescription ordering**. This allows you to use a computer or smartphone to order your prescription at any time of day or night. It also allows other people to order on your behalf – if you give them permission. You can also use this system to request medication which is not on your repeat list, or pass medication enquiries through to our prescribing clerks. If they are unable to deal with your request, they will pass your message on to Farhana, our new pharmacist.

To register for this service, ask our reception team for details and they will gladly explain how to use it. If you have any difficulties in registering, please let us know and we will arrange for a member of staff to help you through the process.



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"I already diagnosed myself on the Internet.
I'm only here for a second opinion."

Appointment Availability

One of the commonest issues mentioned on patient feedback is the availability (or lack) of routine appointments. This is a national struggle due to GP recruitment issues together with problems associated with chronic/long term conditions and our ageing population. Each patient, on average, requests nearly twice as many appointments per person per year than they did 10 years ago, some even 5 times more. Whilst we endeavour to provide access every day to consultations for urgent medical problems, we have great difficulty in matching availability to demand for routine problems.

There is a new additional service that may help with this. We are now able to use appointments at the **Same Day Health Centres** locally for routine medical care, both **in the evenings and at weekends**. Their staff can view your medical records online to provide continuity of care and will let you know what actions they have taken.

Other services on offer include **Pharmacy Plus**, where community pharmacies offer advice on common minor ailments such as coughs, colds, sore throats, thrush etc and provide over the counter medications to alleviate symptoms. For people who don't usually pay for prescriptions, these will be provided free of charge.

When you phone us for an appointment, our receptionists will ask the reason for your request and may 'signpost' you to one of these new services or recommend you see a member of our extended Village Practice team. **Please help them by providing as much information**



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as possible about your symptoms so that you can be given the most appropriate advice.

New Services for Patients with Complex Conditions

There are other services that we can request if you or a family member has one or more long term medical conditions, have needed hospital admissions, or are struggling to stay well:

- The **Extensivist Care Service (ECS)**: This can provide intensive input for patients with the most complex conditions, over a several month period. While you remain a registered patient at The Village Practice, the ECS takes over all clinical contacts, decision-making and prescribing, with the support of a medical Consultant and a team of nurses, pharmacy and well-being practitioners, who offer social support as well as medical care. When your situation has been settled by ECS, they transfer your care back to The Village Practice.
- **Enhanced Primary Care** combines social care advice with input from the Community Matron. They will soon add physiotherapy and other support services to this provision.

