

NEWSLETTER

Issue 34

December 2015

PPG Committee Members

Sue Stanbridge (Chairman); Mary Chamberlain (Vice Chairman); Margaret Hagger (Secretary); Joanne Adam (Treasurer); Pippa Doran; Ruth Ellis; Mike Everest; Elizabeth Malik; Stephen Parris, & Fiona Pring.

We wish all the Kingswood staff and patients a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year!



Christmas Raffle - Tickets still available till 10th December

There's still time for you to buy a ticket (or five...!) in the PPG Christmas Raffle. Prizes include a Christmas Hamper, a turkey, a £60 Cote Restaurant Voucher plus many others. The Raffle is one of the main ways in which the PPG raises money to buy equipment and other items for the surgery to enhance the services that are available. The raffle will be drawn at 4.00 p.m. on Thursday 10th December and tickets, priced at £1 a strip of five, are available from the Surgery.



Patient Participation Group AGM

This year's PPG AGM was a great success, with almost 50 people attending and every seat taken in what was a very crowded waiting room! Sue Stanbridge, Chairman of the PPG, welcomed everyone and speculated that they would need to find a bigger venue for next year's meeting; however she also reflected that it was good to be able to hold the meeting in the newly extended and refurbished surgery premises. Thanks were extended to all who had been involved with the project and especially to the staff who had to work in very difficult conditions during the building works.

Sue gave an overview some of the highlights of the past year, which included the successful building project; Health Promotion Events, an increase in frequency of the newsletter to bi-monthly and the introduction of the 'Friends and Family Test', replacing the Patient Survey. The PPG, the surgery and Voluntary Action in West Kent (now Imago) initiated a Diabetic Peer Support Group pilot. A very successful Health Promotion event – 'New Year, New You' – was held in Sherwood and Fiona Pring, Committee member, led six Healthy Living sessions.

Various fundraising initiatives had achieved £1,530 in the financial year to 31st March 2015 and thanks were extended to all who had contributed. PPG funds were used to purchase an examination couch for the Health Care Assistants' Room; 8 pulse oximeters for the



assessment of children and one handheld foot meter for babies. Funds were also raised from a sponsored walk towards the target that will allow the purchase of an audio loop for the surgery.

The Committee meets bi-monthly and works in partnership with the surgery. Its key aims are to promote the role and understanding of the PPG and create more understanding of the value of true patient participation. The Chair and Vice Chair attend regular meetings with other PPG Chairs and this has proved useful in sharing thoughts and ideas.

Following the formal part of the meeting, Dr Bob Bowes gave a very informative talk entitled 'Kingswood and the Five Year Forward View', looking ahead to 2020. The talk is summarised on Page 2 of the newsletter.

Kingswood and the 'Five Year Forward View'

Following the PPG AGM, Dr Bob Bowes gave a very informative talk entitled 'Kingswood and the Five Year Forward View', looking ahead to 2020. He identified some of Kingswood's strengths, valuing the strong partnership and collective approach to decision making; the patient-centred approach and the effective PPG. However, he also recognised that there are challenges in keeping up with demand and reflected that perhaps more could be done in exploring new models of care and using IT effectively.



Dr Bowes told us that demand on the NHS is rising by around 5% each year, with the majority of that additional demand coming from increasing medical technology and different practices, although some comes from demographic changes in the population. Although NHS funds are relatively well preserved, as other services are cut (e.g. in social care), those NHS funds have to be used to provide a wider range of services, introducing pressure into the system.

He went on to explain that the Chief Executive of the NHS, Simon Stevens, has published his Five Year Forward View, which includes the development of MCPs – Multi-speciality Community Providers – to enable General Practices to operate on the scale required to deliver a wider range of services, including those provided by nurses, therapists, pharmacists, social workers and psychologists. The aim is to deliver holistic care closer to home. However, a lot of development needs to happen for these organisations to become competent and Dr Bowes wondered if it will happen in time to deliver a financially viable NHS.



As Dr Bowes concluded his talk he speculated on what the future might look like, envisaging greater use of technology and better



communications with the hospital becoming a centre of clinical expertise, supporting community staff including GPs in delivering more services. He thought it likely that GPs could work in bigger teams across practices, including other professionals such as social workers, nurses and therapists. However, all of this will depend upon more staff, perhaps with different and new roles such as paramedics or physicians' assistants.

In summary, Dr Bowes described Kingswood Surgery as a 'microcosm of the wider system', having to respond to the increasing demands of the day to day whilst needing to find capacity to address the many strategic challenges.

Books and DVDs for sale

Now that the Surgery building works have been completed there are two bookshelves in the surgery full of books and DVDs for sale - 50p per book and £1 per DVD. All proceeds go towards the purchase of items and equipment for the surgery, so please do browse and buy!



Show someone they're loved this Christmas



The John Lewis Christmas TV advert is a timely reminder that there will be many people who will be on their own at Christmas. If you have a neighbour who you know may be in that position, please do call in to see if they are OK - or maybe consider inviting them to join you at some time over the holiday period.

Christmas and New Year Surgery Opening Times

Monday 21st Dec	Tuesday 22nd Dec	Wednesday 23rd Dec	Thursday 24th Dec CHRISTMAS EVE	Friday 25th Dec CHRISTMAS DAY	Saturday 26th Dec BOXING DAY	Sunday 27th Dec
SURGERY OPEN AS NORMAL				SURGERY CLOSED but future appointments can be booked online		
Monday 28th Dec BANK HOLIDAY	Tuesday 29th Dec	Wednesday 30th Dec	Thursday 31st Dec NEW YEAR'S EVE	Friday 1st Jan 2016 NEW YEAR'S DAY	Saturday 2nd Jan	Sunday 3rd Jan
SURGERY CLOSED	SURGERY OPEN AS NORMAL			SURGERY CLOSED but future appointments can be booked online		

WHEN THE SURGERY IS CLOSED, FOR URGENT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE CALL NHS 111
IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, CALL 999 OR GO TO A & E

Don't forget to order your repeat medication in good time before the Christmas holiday period. Local pharmacies will be open on a rota basis during the holidays, full details will be available on the West Kent CCG Website. Remember that your pharmacist can give you advice and treatment on a whole range of minor ailments.

In Praise of the NHS - It works!

One of Kingswood's patients recently shared their experience of the NHS and we thought it was worth repeating here. If you can tell a similar story of how the NHS has worked well for you, do please let us know and we hope to publish some more anonymised experiences in future editions.

"My 78 year old husband was diagnosed with a problem in the arteries which lie behind the knees. The Consultant advised that without urgent surgery there was a risk of blood clots and possible subsequent loss of a leg!

"Preoperative tests were performed efficiently at The Tunbridge Wells Hospital, but the actual arterial bypass surgery took place at St Thomas' Hospital in London. The care and attention there was superb, and kindness received from all members of the truly cosmopolitan staff (some 90 different nationalities work within the St Thomas' group!).

"Discharge home was two days later by hospital car transport. The only problem was, it was the last day of the school year, the traffic in London was at a standstill, and it was extremely hot.

So arrival at home at 21.30 was followed by his total collapse and I called an ambulance using the 999 emergency service.

"Swift and efficient treatment by the paramedics made it possible for him to remain at home, and a special Practitioner was called to attend to the wound dressing.

"The next day was a Saturday, and the Surgery was closed, but a call to 111 produced a kind and capable Community Nursing Sister, who assured us she would visit daily over the next week if necessary.

"So after many years of fortunately good health, when it was needed we have experienced the NHS at its best. The combined efforts of Kingswood Surgery, Tunbridge Wells and St Thomas' hospitals, the 999 Emergency Ambulance Service, the 111 Advice Line and the Community Nurses have joined together to ensure my husband's recovery. So thank you NHS..... we are truly fortunate to have such a wonderful service and still remaining 'free at the point of contact'."



Antibiotics won't help - but simple steps can beat the norovirus bug



Remember that antibiotics are ineffective against norovirus – but simple hygiene can help. Norovirus is the most common cause of gastroenteritis in England and Wales. It can affect people of any age and is more prevalent during colder months. The symptoms begin around 12 to 72 hours after the patient picks up the infection and can usually last for 12 to 60 hours, but sometimes longer.

Dr Bob Bowes, said: “Every year, up to one million people in the UK catch norovirus. And even though it’s often called the ‘winter vomiting bug’, you can catch the virus at any time of the year. If you develop norovirus symptoms, it’s best to be extra careful with hygiene, and avoid visiting friends or relatives. It’s also especially important not to attend or visit hospitals or care homes if you have symptoms. It can be quite unpleasant to experience, but it’s not usually dangerous and most people make a full recovery within a couple of days without having to see their GP. Please remember that antibiotics do not work against viruses.”

Most people start with feeling nauseous, often followed by actually being physically sick. Many patients will also get watery diarrhoea. Some people will have a raised temperature, headaches and aching limbs or flu like symptoms. Most people make a full recovery within one to two days, but some people – usually the very young or elderly – may become dehydrated and require medical treatment.

How can norovirus be prevented?

- Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water - particularly after going to the toilet, before preparing or eating food, and after changing a baby's nappy. (Alcohol gels are not effective against this particular virus).
- Do not use dirty cutlery.
- Do not allow raw food to come into contact with cooked food.
- Ensure all food is thoroughly cooked, especially meat and shellfish.
- Avoid contact with anyone suffering from the virus for two to three days after they are completely free of symptoms.

Coming Soon - Healthy Lifestyles Advice Sessions

Now that the surgery has been extended there is space available for some additional services to be offered. We already have a Physiotherapist based at the surgery for two days a week and in the New Year we will be launching a new Healthy Lifestyles Session on the first Wednesday afternoon of every month. Patients seeking advice on a range of subjects such as obesity or stopping smoking can book an appointment with a trained advisor from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. Look out for more details soon.



Eat, Drink & Be Merry!

As we prepare for Christmas, Fiona Pring, our very own dietician, gives us some seasonal advice on food & drink.

Start the day with a healthy breakfast such as scrambled eggs on wholemeal toast, or porridge with seasonal fruits.

Make sure you cook your turkey thoroughly – food poisoning is no fun! And avoid eating the skin – this is higher in fat than the lean meat beneath. Skim off the fat from meat juices so the gravy you make is lower in fat.

Pile your plate with seasonal vegetables – it’s great for you & low in calories.

Don’t deny yourself treats such as a mince pie or a slice of gateau – it is Christmas after all! Just try not to have them after every meal. Why not try some exotic fruit instead?

Limit alcohol – have a soft drink between alcoholic drinks and try to avoid fizzy, sugary drinks as mixers.