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BON VOYAGE, ALAN

After 8 years, Alan Bolt attended his last PPL Committee meeting last week prior to his departure to join his children in Australia. He also introduced us to the new Practice Manager - on her second day at PMG!

We wish you well in this next stage of your life, Alan - and hope you will send us the occasional update.



PPL SURVEY

First of all, many thanks to all those who responded to our survey, the results of which are interesting and generally very positive.

Of the 75 who sent in their replies, 76% have been registered with the Practice for more than 10 years, with 77% who responded being in the 71+ age group - and no-one under 30.

Answering re making appointments, almost all either phoned or used more than one of the options, with 79% rating the response as fairly good or very good and only 3 people saying that it is rather poor. The concerns we have been hearing about for some time, although much improved, are still a combination of time taken to speak to a receptionist, the length of wait to get a non-urgent appointment and to get to see a specific nurse or doctor, with less than a quarter happy. However, having been seen by a nurse or doctor, 92% were happy with the outcome.

The question about the signage was prompted by our manning of the flu clinics and seeing people - including delivery men and ambulance personnel - not sure where to go. However, only two people commented that it is poor for the visually impaired.

Nearly 90% of all respondents thought that our public meetings are a good idea, and no-one suggested we should be directing our efforts elsewhere. Again, we seem to have right both the way they are run and the number per year.

The comments re the newsletter are also mainly positive in that almost without exception they are deemed to be a good idea, with the only adverse comments being that anything other than black ink is too difficult for some to read.

Our thanks to you all for taking the time and trouble to take part; this will help us with our committee meetings with PMG and with planning our future newsletters and public meetings.



Pulborough Patient Link



pulborough patient link - your voice in local health

BE SAFE AROUND DOGS

The Dogs' Trust has issued a leaflet to help us all 'be safe around dogs', whether our own dog at home or any we meet out and about.

Just like us, dogs come in all shapes, sizes and personalities - and most of us, especially children, would find it difficult to believe that a friendly-looking dog would ever intentionally hurt anyone. It is easy to forget that any dog could bite or snap if worried, scared or hurt.

WATCH WHAT THE DOG IS DOING



A frightened dog (ears back, cowering) An angry dog (growling) A stressed dog (licking lips) An unsure dog (avoidance)

The acronym BE DOG SMART gives tips to remind us all on how to prevent dog bites:

Beware of disturbing dogs that are eating or sleeping Even if for fun, don't ever tease a dog please

Don't approach a dog with no owner around Only stroke a dog when the owner says 'Yes, you can' Get the dog to sniff your hand first, then stroke gently

Strange dog approaching? Stand still, look away, cross your arms

Move calmly and quietly around any dog All that hugging and kissing - you might like it, dogs don't! Remember all dogs have teeth Treat dogs with respect and they will respect you!

Owning and being around dogs has so many wonderful benefits and can be so much fun for all - but please make sure that everyone is dog smart.

You can download a helpful guide: www.bedogsmart.org.uk

PULBOROUGH PATIENT LINK

invites you to a

Public Meeting in

Pulborough Village Hall

at 7pm on

Monday 11 March

when the topic will be

FOCUS ON THE EYES

PRESENTED BY

Mr Sal Rassam MD DO FRCOphth

Consultant Ophthalmic Surgeon Panacea, Worthing

Refreshments and Raffle Draw

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COMMUNITY NETWORK

Chair of the Rural North Chichester Local Community Network Dr Emma Woodcock from Loxwood Medical Practice attended our committee meeting at the end of last year. She talked to us about the hopes the four practices in Rural North Chichester (Petworth, Loxwood, Midhurst and Pulborough) have to work together as a community network with local organisations, both voluntary and commissioned. The group is currently focusing on improving referrals, prescribing and supporting patients with severe frailty.

With the closure of Midhurst Community Hospital, an opportunity has arisen to work with other community organisations in a more integrated way to support patients who may be deteriorating but do not need an acute admission. They are currently working on several different options which could include improving social care, transport and the development of services to support patients with severe frailty and those nearing the end of life. The service would be both reactive to those who are acutely ill and proactive, including social prescribing, rehabilitation, x ray and mental health services. It could be designed as a 'one stop shop' approach looking at the patient's needs, care and support to give the patient a better medical journey.

Like many large organisations, parts of the NHS struggle to communicate with each other. Integrated working hopes to overcome some of these difficulties by improving ways they can communicate across the rural patch. Dr Woodcock and other clinicians have visited integrated Frailty Hubs in Woking and Weymouth to learn more about an integrated model and how to achieve this in our area to improve patient services and the patient journey through the NHS.

The clinicians realise that they need to utilise what they already have in terms of staffing, buildings and a desire to improve the way they work and the patient experience. However, achieving a strong workforce is a challenge. They know that they need to offer more flexible and interesting posts to attract people to the roles. One idea is to train staff so that they are multi-skilled eg. they are able to take blood as well as being a therapist when they visit the severely frail at home. There is a possibility that patients from Henfield/Steyning area and North Chichester could also be served by a Hub in Midhurst, although too large an area could lose the best team effect. An ideal population size is thought to be around 30,000-50,000 patients. In Rural North Chichester there are currently 37,000 patients.

The next stage in the process is to ensure that the public and patients have an opportunity to say what they would like and to



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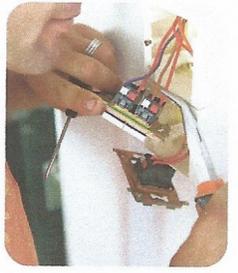
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hear about the models that the clinicians have been learning about. There will be an open public meeting by email invitation for those who apply on the 26th February 3-5 pm at the South Downs Centre Midhurst. Details of how to attend will be sent round soon.

PMG UPDATE

As you will have seen, the new Practice Manager, Liz Eades, started towards the end of January.

We have a new receptionist, Beverley Marshall and are sorry to say goodbye, after 19 years, to Jo Myskow.

GPAHs

Please remember the GP Access Hubs available at PMG. The uptake so far has been slow, but these are bookable through PMG Reception during normal reception hours and are available Wednesdays and Thursdays 2-8pm and Saturdays and Sundays 10-1pm.

At the weekends there is a doctor available on the Saturday, with a nurse on the Sunday. The sort of things the nurse can deal with are dressings and smears so do please take advantage of this extra availability of appointments.

Encircle Training Sessions

A local training event for our four practices in Rural North Chichester (Pulborough, Petworth, Loxwood and Midhurst) is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday 28th February. More dates may be booked if funding becomes available.

Alan Bolt

LIZ EADES - PRACTICE MANAGER

I was delighted to be asked to meet Liz Eades, our new Practice Manager, so that there could be an article in this newsletter about her, just days after her arrival on 21st January.

I was taken upstairs into what is now Liz's office and, although I had prepared some questions, these immediately became irrelevant as she chatted and told me about herself.

Liz was brought up in Hertford and started her career in Selfridges working in the cash office before moving to Mercedes as a bookkeeper. She moved to East Grinstead when she married, and worked for Reed Publishing as a finance supervisor. Liz has worked for the NHS for some 20 years, starting as an evening receptionist at The Ship Surgery in East Grinstead shortly after her second daughter was born. This town is also where Dr Murphy practiced before coming to Pulborough but, although their paths had crossed, he was not at the same surgery.



She progressed to working more daytime hours at the surgery when her girls went to school, looked after the Practice finance for 15 years and has held the position of Practice Manager for the last 6 years. The previous Manager encouraged Liz to apply for this position as her background is very much on the financial side, although she had worked in all areas of the surgery and so is well aware of the pressures in each department. To help with her understanding of practice finance, health and safety and employment law Liz completed a course run by The Institute of Leadership and Management.

Her daughters live at home and it would be difficult to think of more different jobs. Rebecca, 22, works in ladies' fashion at Harrods so designer outfits are part of her daily life, while Emma, 20, is full-time at a yard in Rusper, spending all of her working time in jodhpurs!

The Ship Street Surgery has some 11,000 patients, so somewhat smaller than PMG's approximately 13,500, but the thing that really struck Liz is the difference in the size of the building which is about 3 times larger than she is used to.

Some of the ways in which East Grinstead's patient participation group works with their practice are similar to ours – and some not - so it will be interesting to look at this relationship from a different angle and see how we can work together.

The move to Pulborough has been quite a major decision, having lived and worked in the same place for so many years and where The Ship Surgery was a short walk from home. However, Liz has now achieved her life-long ambition to live by the sea, it being just a 10-minute walk to the beach at East Preston. In Liz's free time she enjoys skiing, the gym and swimming. In August last year Liz's 14 year old Springer Spaniel died, however she has just got a new Cocker Spaniel puppy (Ralph) and is enjoying settling him into his new home.

She is very 'hands-on' and will answer a phone or do whatever is necessary at any particular time. She told me that she enjoys managing change (how the flu clinics are run, for example) and how much she has been looking forward to starting at PMG and to strengthening the links we already have with the three other practices in our group, these being Loxwood, Midhurst and Petworth.

Liz counts herself lucky in that she needs only 4 hours sleep and even while still working in East Grinstead has given much thought to her new challenge. I very much get the impression that she will be accessible to all at PMG, will be a firm but fair manager who much enjoys her occupation, and will encourage all around her with her approach to the job and her enthusiasm. Welcome Liz.

Editor

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