

Grove Road Surgery Newsletter

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Editors Comments

(Stephen Fowler, Practice Manager)



As I pen my column it seems that the summer may have finally arrived, as we have seen more sunny days than rainy ones of late. The Olympics are nearly over, the start of football season is just a few weeks away, did it ever end, and the 4 day diamond jubilee celebrations is a fading memory. Here at the surgery, we have had a change of registrar, Dr Ribbons has won an award and we have a few other changes to inform you of.

Phlebotomy Clinics

In trying to make ourselves self sufficient in terms of blood tests, we want to carry out all, or as many as possible in-house. This means you do not have to go to the hospital lab. From the 28th August we will be offering a lot more appointments for blood tests. Be advised that these are bookings for a 10 minute slot for blood taking only. We will not be able to do anything else for you in that restricted time, so if you need to be weighed or have your blood pressure taken etc. you will need to book another and separate appointment. If you do ask ' whilst I am here can you just do.. ' I am sorry but you will be told NO as this will impinge on another patients appointment slot but more importantly may mean we miss the hospital lab courier collection services as a result.

Dr Fay Dianati departs



On the 31st July we said goodbye to our registrar, Dr Fay Dianati, who is going back to the DGH to work in the gynae department for 4 months. Some of you may well see her there. Dr Fay found her time here extremely beneficial and wanted me to thank everyone for making her so welcome and making her experience here a positive one.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)



The patient group continue to meet with the surgery regularly and recently wrote to the Secretary of State for Health on their concerns about the Governments changes to the NHS. A rather disappointing response has been received to that letter, both of which are on the PPG notice board on the stairway between ground and first floor. They are both also available on the surgery website, in the PPG info section. If you would like to be actively involved with the patient group or just want to communicate with them, please write to the PPG c/o Grove Road Surgery or send them an email from the surgery website PPG info section.

Dr Martin Derry arrives



1st August saw us welcome our new registrar, Dr Martin Derry. Martin is an ex geography teacher who has come into medicine later in life. Martin is in his final year of GP training and from August 2013 he will be looking to join a local practice as a GP. As he is in his final year, Martin will be with us until next August and will also be here Monday – Friday each week, as he has completed all hospital and community placements, leaving him to focus on his GP finals next spring. He lives in Eastbourne, is married with a young daughter. His hobbies are sports and music. I know you will make Martin very welcome.

Childhood Immunisations



At present Nurse Michele holds children and baby immunisation clinics on a Tuesday afternoon between 1:30 and 3:30pm. In recent months this has proved to be difficult to continue on this day and at this time. Therefore, from September, Nurse Kim will be holding this clinic on Thursday mornings from 9:30 – 11:30.

Dr Ribbons wins an Award



Dr Ribbons has been voted by the 4th and 5th year medical students from Brighton Medical School who attend the surgery, as the best community teacher. This is a prestigious award and one that Dr Ribbons and the practice are extremely proud of. The photograph was taken at the university as part of the students passing out ceremony. This photograph can also be seen on the surgery website. Several students that we have had at the surgery over the last 2 years, walked away with many of the top prizes and honours. We of course share a little of that with them. The local papers have been alerted and hopefully will run a feature on this as well. Dr Ribbons attended with his wife, so it was a very proud family moment as well. Well done !

A&E attendance



Our practice manager recently attended a PCT meeting, where it was shown that in the last year, the hospital has invoiced the practice for over £13,000 for patients who arrived at A&E but left without treatment. Across all 22 practices in our PCT, the total sum was £264,000. Over a quarter of a million pounds has been paid to the local hospital for treatment that patients have not waited to receive. This is clearly a sum of money that local practices need to spend on patient care and not frittered away in this manner. We are concerned about haemorrhaging patient funds and want to better understand why patients go to A&E and for what conditions an ambulance is used. This data helps plan for the future and will also indicate whether there's a

need for patient education on medical complaints / conditions. The practice and your patient group have composed a short questionnaire and accompanying letter, which will be sent out to patients who attend A&E, when either the surgery is open, or the Walk in Centre at Eastbourne Station is open. We are also looking at overnight and weekend attendances, when the out-of-hours doctor service from South east health is also available. It is important that our patients recognise that this is not being conducted in a disciplinary way, but more us gathering information to help understand and plan for the future. From the reports we receive from A&E, it is quite evident that patients attend with conditions that do not appear to be of an Accident and Emergency type nature. No-one would see a broken limb, severe bleeding or chest pain as anything other than appropriate for A&E, but someone who has had an earache for 3 days, a cough for a week or has a rash, these are not really A&E type cases. It is unclear if patients are aware that the Out of Hours service / Walk in Centre provide GP type services, as well as a minor injuries service. If patients are aware, did they consider using these services or did they decide the condition would have been best dealt with by A&E. The questionnaires being sent out will gather much of this information and help us to gauge what needs to happen next. Despite the perception that the NHS is free, it will come as a shock to many, when they learn that attendance at A&E and the ambulance that took them there, has attracted a charge to their practice. As your surgery, it is really frustrating for us, when patients attend A&E, and leave before being seen or attend with what is in effect, a trivial matter by Accident and Emergency standards. In both cases the practice has to pay for this, but when care could have been provided at the surgery, Walk in Centre or Out of Hours service

for free, it is money we no longer have to spend on patients care. We are acutely aware that the danger of articles such as this will deter attendance at A&E, but this is the last thing we wish to do, we simply ask patients to consider whether A&E is the right place to go for medical attention.

Half day Closure



On the afternoon of Thursday 20th September the surgery will be closed to allow staff to attend the next training event organised by the PCT. This event enables all local doctors, nurses and admin staff to get together in one location for a medical training which includes workshops. South East Health, the out-of-hours doctor service, will be providing medical cover exactly as they do now for evenings and weekends. We will close from 12 noon on that day and we apologise for any disruption this causes to you.

Doctors Footnote

We are immensely proud of Dr Ribbons winning his award. This is indeed recognition of the hard work he puts in not only with the practice but with the medical students also. You, the patients, also play a major part in him gaining this achievement.

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