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NEWSLETTER FOR PATIENTS

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Hi folks, when the last newsletter was published in December it was the festive season. Thank you to all of you who sent cards and presents to the practice, it was very much appreciated as were your warm thoughts. Since then of course it has been a very cold couple of months and still is and we well know that poor weather has a somewhat dispiriting effect on morale. However by the law of nature spring is just around the corner and with that we hope some welcome sunshine.

STAFF NEWS

Some of you were well aware that district nurse Sister Bev Cunningham was being moved away from our area by her bosses, incidentally that was not us. We are really pleased to say that Bev has joined us as a practice nurse initially part-time but we are eventually increasing her hours later. We are delighted with this appointment in the practice as Bev is highly respected both as a person and for her clinical skills and we know she has enjoyed working with us as one of the district nursing team in the past. She has to learn the different systems with which a practice nurse is involved and different types of clinical care but we are sure she will be very good for the practice.

Dr Simone Otoibhi left us at the start of February as her spell with us was up and the GP training rota has moved her on to another practice. There has been a gap since then but we are really pleased that Dr Anna Kirkham will be rejoining us at the end of March following her maternity leave. While she is here to develop her skills as a future fully-fledged general practitioner she is also an excellent clinician and we certainly look forward to her return.

DISTRICT NURSING SERVICES

We have some issues over changes that are being made to the district nursing service. For as long as I can remember the district nurses who have worked with us have had their office within the practice. It has been decided by their bosses that the system needs streamlining and our district nurses are being moved along with the district nurses from Armthorpe down to Cantley where they will be based. As a practice we are not happy with this but unfortunately it is out of our control. There obviously will still be a district nursing service but it is a time of change and people do find change a somewhat difficult time for adjustment. We are assured that the service will still provide our practice with a specific team to work with our patients and we hope that we will see the district nurses here in the practice on a daily basis although this has not been guaranteed. We have always liked the informal discussions that we have held with them over patient care and we are concerned that by being based in Cantley we will lose that ability for the informal chat about how everyone is getting on. We have had letters of concern from patients who have directly been involved with the district nurses in recent times and we thank them for those letters. If you have concerns in the future it would be very important for you to let us know.

MOBILE PHONE NUMBERS

We are often in need of contacting patients not only to give them laboratory results but also to remind about appointments etc, so please keep your phone numbers up to date with the

practice and please, please can we have your mobile phone numbers, we obviously aim to keep confidentiality to a maximum and it is often easier to contact people by mobile phone so lets be having them!

CHANGING WORK PATTERNS

For the foreseeable future I, Dr Sykes have reduced clinical commitment, this is because the practice is heavily involved in practice based commissioning, looking at ways of improving bringing clinical services to the people of Doncaster and of course in our case our own patients. It does take a lot of behind scenes work. I have personally been quite upset recently over the aggressiveness of some patients who cannot get an appointment to see me, to the extent that last week I seriously considered resigning as a partner in the practice. The partners would like to point out that there are several extremely able clinicians in the practice, that the practice nurses are able to see several types of illness and that in the last year we have taken on extra clinicians. We all endeavour to work to an extremely high standard and I am sure that whoever you see in the practice will always try and communicate and deliver the best possible care for you.

BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN

Children are wonderful people and bring a lot of joy to many people. Occasionally we have children who are on the rampage in the waiting room and who upset other older people who are unwell and find noise levels intolerable. All we would ask is that parents try their best to keep their children under control and perhaps bring a toy or picture book or whatever to occupy their attention whilst waiting. We do try our best to be on time but because we do not know what is coming through the door some appointments take longer than others.

TRAVEL

It is getting to that time of year when people are potentially looking to book holidays. If you are going abroad especially outside the European Community countries please make sure you have your travel vaccines updated. We have questionnaires for you to fill in before you see the practice nurse to make that consultation more productive, I always like to hear about what people have done on holiday when they come to see me, I just hope they are not coming back with some infectious illness that could have been avoided.

SWINE FLU

Talking about infectious illnesses, the National Swine Flu or National Flu line is now closed, it has been an interesting experience managing swine flu, it has been calculated that for every 100 patients who have been given the swine flu medication only 2 have actually had the disease process. For some it has been a devastating illness just like any infection can be. Many people have taken up the option of having a swine flu vaccination. Fortunately it does seem the worst is now over and I think to be honest with the very cold weather we have had germ warfare has been relatively suppressed.

Finally, won't it be good to have some nice warm weather and some sunshine.

All the best.

DR K B SYKES