

THE SANDRINGHAM PRACTICE

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NEWSLETTER - MAY 2012

Hi everyone,

The blossom is on the trees, the football season is nearly done, it is still light when I leave work so it must be springtime and we are overdue a Practice Newsletter.

So what is the news?

STAFF CHANGES

Karen Pearson, who worked with us as a Phlebotomist/Investigation Technician and Operating Assistant for 11 years, duly left us at the end of March. She has asked me to pass on her grateful thanks to everyone who wished her well, sent cards, gave presents etc, and obviously she will be missed here at the Practice, however no-one is irreplaceable and we are very pleased to have Marie Allport join the Practice team in that role. Marie has plenty of experience having worked at St Vincent's Practice in town and St John's Practice at Balby. We are looking forward to working with her over the years to come, and we hope you will all benefit from her clinical expertise as well as her warm, friendly smile and personality.

Not another one leaving, I hear you say. Well, Anne Trott who has been one of our Practice Nurses for well over 20 years is leaving us at the end of May, she is actually retiring and obviously we wish her a long and happy retirement. Apart from her doing general nursing duties she of course has made the Diabetic Clinic her own and I am sure our diabetic population has benefited from her experience in that field. She has also been heavily involved with the Baby Clinic, gently administering childhood vaccinations over many years and has always offered a calm and sensible reassurance to patients and colleagues alike. I think Anne and I are the last ones standing from a Practice Training weekend that we had at Woolley Hall back in 1993 when half the Practice staff came up with allsorts of ideas to benefit our daily work, only to find out when we got back that the other half of the Practice staff thought we had been on a "jolly", and didn't want to know about, or implement any of our suggestions. Perhaps they were just jealous. Anyway we naturally have scouted around for nursing expertise to replace Anne and we look forward to a new member of staff joining in May, Jackie Hewitson and more of her once she has joined the Practice.

COMPUTER SYSTEMS

We are changing our computer system from what is called EMIS LV to EMIS Web. This change takes place on 1st May, and when you are seeing a Clinician you will note that the computer screen is completely different to what we have been using for the last umpteen years. We have had some degree of training on this, but the system will mean that we have all got to get up to speed with working it, and that includes Doctors and Nurses on the clinical side, but perhaps more importantly staff on the appointment side. We are reassured that another adjacent practice has just changed to the same system and said the changeover worked like a dream, so we can but hope that everything will work out nicely for us, and we are positive that the system will shortly become routine and that it will work quicker, and as they say, better in an all singing and all dancing way. I would like to thank Dr Mazai and Dr Love for leading on the clinical side, our Practice Manager Richard Langthorp and Assistant Manager Vicki Warren on the managerial side, and most significantly Leighanne McSkelly for all her hard work in getting the new system up and running.

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

A plea from the Practice Manager. We have been very pleased with the response for this group from our older patients, but we would like members for the entire participation group, from young people, people who go to work and from our ethnic minority groups. If you would like to join in, please either contact the Practice Manager through Reception or leave your name, address and email so that we can get back to you. The group is designed to help the Practice in some on its decision making for the benefits of patients and for the smooth running of the Practice.

APPOINTMENTS

There are ongoing problems with the Practice providing enough appointments for the overwhelming demand that our patients have to be seen. The Doctors are very concerned that patients with an identified problem are having great difficulties in follow-up appointments in particular. This is compounded by the fact that Dr Strachan has had to take time off for the next few months following shoulder surgery for a problem with which she has been struggling for quite some time. We of course wish her well in her recuperation.

We have decided to employ on a regular basis Nurses who have the title FIRST CONTACT PRACTITIONERS. Some of you will already have met the Nurses concerned and indeed they are highly skilled. Whenever possible we will be making appointments for patients who ring up with a new problem, with an appointment to see the First Contact Practitioner for initial triaging and assessment. This will particularly apply to patients who feel they need seeing on the same day that they ring. Indeed we are training up one of our Nurses to become a First Contact Practitioner as we feel that we have to make use of such skilled practitioners where we can. The Nurses will of course liaise closely with the Doctors regarding their duties and will always ask the Duty Doctor to see a patient when it is necessary. This overall transition will take a little while but will be continuing through the summer.

CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT

For those patients who have what we term a chronic disease, ie one of, or several of, diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke, asthma, COPD, hypertension, ie all those who need ongoing management, the Doctors feel it is extremely important that they have an annual check which will generally be in the month of their birth. These patients will receive an invite to attend usually for blood samples first, followed by an appointment with a particular practitioner. Invite is probably a poor term, it is felt by the Doctors that these assessments are extremely important. In the last year some patients have not attended when they have been taking medications which require regular blood testing, and therefore put themselves in jeopardy as regarding their ongoing health. Please ensure that you do attend when invited.

AND FINALLY

Stay active and let's hope for an enjoyable spring and summer.

DR K B SYKES