

BEECH HOUSE SURGERY

Newsletter

December 2020

WELCOME

This time last year we were producing the Christmas 2019 newsletter and wishing you all a Happy New Year. Little did any of us know at that time what we were all to face in 2020 from Covid-19 and two lockdowns! Much of this newsletter is to inform you how all the staff at the Practice have had to adapt and change their working practices.

CHANGES:

- The Practice has moved to a three zone configuration:-
 - A **Green** zone for the administrative staff who all wear masks and observe the 2 metre distancing. No clinicians are allowed to enter this zone.
 - An **Amber** zone for Clinicians and Patients.
 - A **Red** zone at the end of each afternoon clinic, using Room 6 and a dedicated toilet for any patients with COVID symptoms.
- If you are required to attend the surgery for a face to face consultation then you are asked to wait in the Car Park and phone Reception to tell them that you are here. When the Clinician is ready to see you they will phone and ask you to wear a mask and proceed to the Waiting room door and sanitise your hands from the dispenser there. The Clinician will meet you and escort you to the appropriate consulting room. At the end of the consultation, when you are ready to leave, they will escort you to the fire exit door for you to leave the premises. As winter approaches the Waiting Room will be open for those that do not have a car but please note the maximum capacity is 5. If you do not have a car or mobile phone you can press the Reception intercom to notify them that you are here.
- **How will my Clinician look if I have a face to face consultation?** They all will be wearing scrubs, a mask, face visor and a disposable apron and gloves.
- The use of PPE and wipe down routines after every patient has naturally increased the time it takes to see a patient. This limits the number of patients that can be seen each day. Many consultations are by telephone, video call or e-consult if you have access to the surgery website. This will continue to be the case until “normality” can return.
- A new service for FCP (First Contact Physio) was initiated where patients can be referred directly to a physiotherapist without seeing a GP first.
- The Practice has a new part time Pharmacy Technician starting in December to help with medication reviews.

During the first lockdown:

- The Practice phoned all our Shielded/Self-isolating patients to ensure that they had access to any services which may be beneficial.
- Unfortunately up to ten members of staff were unable to work at one time or another with symptoms or self-isolating but all the staff pulled together to work extra hours instead including weekends and Bank Holidays.
- A team of volunteers were mobilised to deliver to virtually all our 1600 dispensing patients. These were mainly relatives and friends of staff and all have been thanked for their excellent community spirit.
- The Practice incurred significant cost in ensuring that the premises and patient care were as Covid-19 prepared as possible. This included purchasing of additional PPE supplies, protective screens, room layout and additional equipment including exterior lighting.
- The three independent Practices in Knaresborough all worked together during lockdown to support each other.

HEALTH NEWS:

- The surgery volunteered to be the hub for Extended Access in Harrogate and Knaresborough when Mowbray Square was set up as a Red Site. Patients from all over the region have been able to book an appointment through their own practices at our surgery. They have seen GPs, Nurses Health Care Assistants provided by the Yorkshire Health Network. The uptake has been very high and the service is continuing.
- We are slowly bringing back services such as Coil checks, phlebotomy, minor injections e.g. steroid. Unfortunately some services such as ear syringing cannot take place due to the nature of the procedure but the practice can “signpost” you to an alternative provider e.g. Opticians and Hearing clinics.
- The practice has been able to complete Flu clinics and manage patient flow in the safest manner possible. The number of clinics have been extended but the number of clinicians had to be reduced at anyone time to ensure social distancing. The first clinic for the Over 65s took place on 26 September and many others followed. Additional stocks were procured to try and meet increased demand. The under 65s with pre-existing health conditions; clinics have now taken place along with the child programme.
- *A Flu clinic for the new 50 to 64 age group cohort has been set up for Saturday the 12th December pending receipt of vaccines. Communication is imminent to this cohort of patients from the Practice. Please look at the website for more details.*
- *The Practice Business Manager is currently leading the Covid-19 Vaccination Programme Project Team for the region. We hope to have some positive news as to when and how vaccinations will commence in the next week or so.*
- The first flu clinic was such a success that Di Randle from the Reception team was inspired to write a poem, please see the last page “The 2020 Flu Clinic”.



OVER THE COUNTER MEDICINES:

As of the 1 October 2020 the Clinical Commissioning Group have advised GP's that they should not prescribe medications for conditions where medication is easily available from pharmacies or supermarkets. Over the counter medication such as the painkillers Paracetamol and Ibuprofen and Hayfever medications Loratadine and Cetirizine cost the NHS around four times as much as the over the counter pack when you factor in the GP consultation time and dispensing fee.

A Paracetamol pack size 16 costs from as little as 19p but the cost to the NHS if this was a prescription would be around £3.50

Hayfever tablets can be bought for £3 for 30 days treatment, to prescribe the same would cost the NHS roughly £8

Indigestion liquid costs the NHS approximately £12 and the retail price for a branded version can be bought for £7.49

If the GP element was factored in these prices would be over £25 per item.

The high street and supermarkets offer a great range of products and usually have their own brand which is cheaper. If you are a patient that requires a large number of a certain medication to relieve long standing symptoms then these can be prescribed at the discretion of the GP.

GP SURVEY:

This took place before lockdown with 250 patients randomly selected to answer questions about their recent experience of visiting the practice, mostly in the last quarter of 2019.

The survey showed that waiting times for patients in the practice had reduced and there was a more positive experience of telephone consultations that were happening at specific times. The Practice recognise that there is still room for improvement and is looking further at patient satisfaction. The Practice plans to do a more specific "clinician" survey once the pressures of Covid-19 have subsided. The PPG fully supports this approach and will work with the Management accordingly.

THANK YOU!

The Partners and staff would like to thank everyone who has supported the Practice through this difficult time. They have received lovely baking, chocolates, moral and physical support, and equipment etc. They cannot name individual people for data protection purposes but have thanked individuals directly.

HARROGATE SCRUBBERS:

The pictures below show our clinicians wearing scrubs made by "Harrogate Scrubbers". Each clinician was provided with three sets of scrubs including a wash bag for each set. As a thank you the PPG made a donation of £150 and to allow the "Scrubbers" to continue with their good work.



FUTURE CONTENT

Please let us know of any particular topic that you would like to see featured in our next Newsletter.

The 2020 Flu Clinic



Poem by Mrs Diane Randle

An adventure to behold!
There's lots and lots of planning
And things that need to be told

So who is up for volunteering?
You've only one session to do
4 hours of your Saturday
And yes, you get paid too

We arrive in time for
instructions

From our efficient and
organised leader

Who is absolutely frozen to the
core

And quite frankly, needs to sit
on a heater

So then the people arrive
To start with there's quite a few

All masked up and ready
For the years vac for the flu

I check their name and tick
them off

And pretend to look the bizz
I have some questions to ask
them

I know I'll get in a tizz

We've got to wear our face
masks

Which make you feel as warm
as toast

The only trouble with them?
It makes you breath smell gross

'Has your cough been self-
isolated?'

Have you tested positive for
taste or smell?

Do you have a temperature?'

Oh no! I was doing so well!!

Now the questions become
easy

As I get into the flow

But the hand sanitiser?

What problems you did not
know!

They stand and try to press it
Pushing it and making it wobble

Their faces going re with
frustration

As they seem to have so much
trouble

The thing is automatic'

But then they don't seem to
hear you
And proceed to get in a panic

At last my bit is over

And it's time for them to
trot....

Down the 'dark sides'
corridor

To the last available spot

The time went very quickly

Despite the lack of
excitement

Still, working with a lovely
team of people

Gives the job lots more
enjoyment

And now the shift is over

We've managed to have a
laugh

Than you John for those
lovely iced cakes

They sure helped us through
the task!