

PPS Newsletter Spring 2024

It may be wet and cold but it's Spring time here in the UK and we will soon be moving our clocks forward an hour as we welcome longer daylight hours. If you are an early riser like me, sipping a cup of tea while watching the sunrise can be very special.

So, as we emerge from the days of greater dark than light, which for some can be extremely depressing, even for those of the most cheerful disposition, for others it will have been a very lonely time. Regardless of all the modern technology, such as 'Zoom' or 'Facetime', personal contact is so important and beneficial to a person's wellbeing

For those who use the services provided by the Practice I hope you find them efficient; being able to 'partner' with the other Dunstable practices has meant that they have been able to provide a same-day minor illness service operating out of the Dunstable Grove Health Hub, five days per week. This together with several other changes to the appointment system has enabled them to adhere to the government's requirement of increasing same-day appointments and providing patients with a routine appointment within 2 weeks. In the last twelve months West Street Surgery has increased the number of available appointments by 37%, offering over 90,000 appointments, with 35% of those appointments available same day.

The Practice website 'Front Page' provides an excellent directory of services, and how to access them. It also gives information regarding the Practice staff, i.e. doctors, nursing staff, pharmacists, and reception/admin staff. The surgery, following a vigorous process, has recently been awarded training practice status and as such GP registrars will be joining the Practice Team to complete their final stage of GP training.

The website also highlights the Central Beds weekly Healthwatch e-newsletter, which details all that is going on in the area. Recently it showed the results of their survey to gather views regarding the proposal to consult with your local Pharmacist before consulting other services, i.e. your GP or NHS 111 in the newly launched Pharmacy First initiative.

Another section of the Healthwatch e-news related to the Patient Safety Committee focus on 'Martha's Rule'. Martha's rule will enable the patient or

families to request access to a rapid review from an independent critical care team in the event that they want to seek a second opinion, [NHS to introduce Martha's rule for hospital patients - our response | Healthwatch](#).

The Healthwatch 'Just Ask' forum is again coming to Dunstable on Friday 19th April and will be situated outside ASDA from 9am to 1.30pm. Information will be available in relation to local social care, health, housing and additional services, plus local voluntary groups.

Many of you will, I am sure, have received through your letter box a communication from NHS England to take part in a new research programme called 'Our Future Health'. Taking part includes answering some questions online about yourself, providing a blood sample and having your blood pressure and cholesterol measured. The contact for further information is via email to 'support@ourfuturehealth.org.uk or call 0808 501 5634.

If you have been in the practice over the past few months you will, I am sure have noticed that they continue to upgrade the building. All clinical rooms have now been renovated and the decorators are busy every evening painting the rest of the interior.

The surgery is working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Practice; new flooring in the entrance foyer, signs and staff training have been completed and they await details of a site visit.

Back to the lighter evenings, you may bump into members of the Patient Participation Group tidying the shrubs and weeding etc around the surgery premises.

Chris Dilnot.

Chairman.