

Sunnyside Surgery Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2011

Sunnyside sets up new Patient Participation Group

In January 2011 Sunnyside set up its own Patient Participation Group ((PPG) in line with the guidelines from the PPG national association (www.napp.org.uk). In this newsletter we hear from one PPG member, Alan Cadogan.



“A note appeared in one Sunnyside Surgery newsletter about the formation of a Patient Participation Group. Some of us expressed an interest and were invited to join and

attend the first meeting in January.

I certainly didn't know quite what to expect but found the Group consisted of eight patients, representatives of the doctors and surgery staff. We soon decided that the aim of the Group would be to make suggestions to improve 'information and services to patients and achieve the highest possible quality of patient care'.

In order to give patients a voice, contribute to Practice policy and provide feedback, the first activity the group decided to work on was to produce and trial a questionnaire to be circulated to a sample of patients in the autumn of this year. Our monthly meetings have been friendly discussions and a new notice board in the

waiting area gives details of membership of the PPG and information on how all patients can become involved.”

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Staff News...

- Dr Kenyon has returned from maternity leave following the birth of her son.
- Dr Alam, will be leaving the practice at the end of October to join the New Court Surgery in WSM. We wish him every success for his future career.
- Dr Ruth Evans, who covered Dr Kenyon's maternity leave, has been appointed as a salaried doctor and will be working Wednesday and Friday.
- Other new members to the practice team are Helen Bryant (Health Care Assistant), Jill Carlton (Medical Secretary), Sharon Shaddick (Prescriptions Clerk) and Kay Thomas (Lead Administrator).

A Day in the Life of Dr Liz Patrick



One of the best things about being a GP is the variety – you never know who you are going to see or what is going to happen next. There is no such thing as a normal day as each day is different so here is a generic day.

Morning

I get to the practice just before 8am to start my surgery at 8.00 or 8.30am. Patients are allocated a 10 minute appointment but as they often come with multiple problems time-keeping is one of the essential but most challenging skills to have. It's easier when you know your patients and luckily for me I tend to as I have been a partner at Sunnyside for 25 years. My surgery finishes at 11.00-11.30am.

Late Morning

After I have seen my last patient, it's time to deal with the paperwork – dictating letters, reviewing results and outcomes from consultant referrals – all done electronically now (is that why I need the

glasses!). Then if I'm the 'on-call' doctor it's sorting out visit requests and reviewing the triage list which involves seeing additional patients or giving telephone advice. Then on to liaising with staff, the practice manager, the PCT pharmacist (as I am prescribing lead for the practice) and (occasionally!) talking to the other partners. I usually have to fit in eating my lunch whilst doing all this.

Home visits start around 1.00pm and are shared out among the doctors with each of us making 2-3 per day. Each visit takes 20-30 minutes so time is pressurised again.

Afternoon

Surgery starts around 2.30pm following a similar pattern to morning surgeries but with catch up time in the middle for paperwork. The last patient is usually seen between 5.30-6.00 or this can be later depending on the number of triage patients to be seen if I am the on-call doctor.

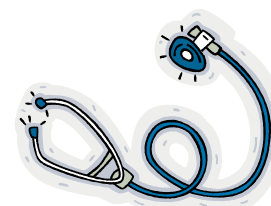
Some afternoons I am not in surgery but attending business meetings. 'Commissioning' is the government's new plan for the health service. Clinicians (especially GPs) are being given control of the budgets for purchasing patient services as the Primary Care

Trusts (PCTs) are being phased out. In North Somerset, a commissioning group has been set up with all practices involved. I attend the meetings with Debbie Gadd (our practice manager) as it's essential that Sunnyside is represented. There are approximately 50 of us in the group (a mix of GPs, practice managers and PCT staff) and meetings usually last from 2.00-5.30pm.

Evening

After surgery or a commissioning meeting, I will continue with paperwork to 'clear the decks' for the next day. This means I am usually home around 7.00pm unless we have a partners' meeting after surgery when it will be nearer 10.00pm. Luckily my husband usually cooks the supper!

As you can see, there is no free time in the day of a modern GP so it helps to keep fit. On my days off I will be doing more paperwork or ongoing learning activities but I do manage to fit in a weekly



round of golf!

Prescription costs

The current prescription charge is £7.40.

If you are not entitled to free prescriptions and you think you will have to pay for four or more prescriptions in three months, or fifteen or more items in twelve months, you may find it cheaper to buy a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC).

- From 1st April 2010 a three monthly PPC is **£29.10**. This saves you money if you need four or more items in three months.
- A 12 month certificate is **£104.00** and saves money if 15 or more items are needed in 12 months.

A 12-month PPC is available by 10 monthly direct debit installment payments. The prescription prepayment certificates allow anyone to obtain all the prescriptions they need for £2 per week.

You can only use the PPC for your own NHS prescriptions. The PPC will start from the date of your application or phone call unless you request a different start date.

You can [order a PPC online](#), by phoning 0845 850 0030 or by filling in an FP95 form. An FP95 form is available from some pharmacies and GP surgeries.

*“ If you have
unwanted
medicines, please
return them to your
pharmacy or the
surgery - see page
5 to find out more ”*



Free prescriptions for cancer patients

Prescription charges for cancer patients were abolished on April 1st 2009.

Patients being treated for cancer, including the effects of cancer or the effects of cancer treatment, can apply for a medical exemption (MedEx) certificate.

If you have cancer ask your doctor for an application form. This will need to be countersigned by your GP, hospital or service doctor (or, at your GP's discretion, a member of the practice who has access to your medical records).

Arrangements for all other NHS charges remain unchanged.

Repeat Prescriptions

The practice handles around 100 requests for repeat prescriptions each day. These may be for one single item or for multiple requests. To ensure clinical accuracy and the best use of NHS funds, the prescription requests need to be verified by your GP.

To allow sufficient time for this process to be undertaken, your prescription will be ready for collection, by yourself or a nominated pharmacy, a minimum of 48hrs (not including weekends) after receipt at the surgery. Please contact reception for further information.

Caring for Carers



A carer is someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who are unable to manage without this help due to illness, disability, mental ill-health or a substance misuse problem.

Is this you?

Do you have access to all the information and support you need?

At Sunnyside, we have a Carer's Champion who can help to connect you to the services and support that are available locally and to help you find out which services and benefits you may be entitled to. You can speak to our Carer's Champion, Jane, either at the surgery, or by phoning the surgery if it's difficult for you to come in. Jane usually works on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays.

In addition to this, a representative from the national charity Crossroads Care comes to the surgery to help answer your queries on the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month from 9am -12pm and the last Tuesday each month from 1pm-3pm at our Diabetes Clinic.

...Patient Confidentiality...

If you attend the surgery to see any of the Doctors or Nurses, reception staff will not let any other persons know where you are unless you have given the reception staff permission to do so. We do not give out any of your personal or medical details to anyone who contacts the surgery. We may give hospitals your contact number, but only after we have verified their authenticity.

If you would like to give permission for a family member to speak to the Doctors or Nurses regarding any of your medical care and treatment then please notify us in writing. This information can then be stored on your records.

Please note that when a minor reaches the age of 16 they will also have to give consent for anyone else, including a family member, to discuss their medical care and treatment.



Your questions answered

What should I do with unwanted Prescription Medicines?



It costs the local Primary Care Trust thousands of pounds each year to dispose of unused/unwanted drugs and the Department of Health estimates that as much as 10% of all drugs prescribed are wasted.

However we can make good use of your unused/unwanted medication (including vitamins, creams and ointments) by arranging for them to be sent to sub-Saharan Africa where vital medical supplies are always so very urgently needed. (This is done at no cost to the Surgery as the charity we forward them on to for distribution pays the carriage fee.)

However, we can **ONLY** accept medication which is **complete** e.g. no blister packs with used medication, part used ointments, drops, etc. and which still has **15 months' shelf life** - the expiry date is usually stamped on the packaging. These can be handed in at reception.

Any other unused/unwanted medication which does not fall into this category can be handed in at any Pharmacy where it will be disposed of.

I can't get to my appointment what should I do?

Missed appointments, also known as 'Did not attend' (DNA) appointments, are a serious problem for the NHS, not least because they increase wait times and prevent other patients from receiving health care sooner than they could.

We appreciate that there may be a time when you are unable to attend an appointment due to unforeseen circumstances. If this happens, please contact us as soon as possible so that we have the opportunity to offer the appointment to another patient.

Call the surgery on
01275 873588

Can I get a Flu Jab?

Our annual flu clinics will be starting in late September – further information will be sent to you by letter if you fall into one of the following categories:

- ★ Aged 65 years or over.
- ★ Aged 6 months or older and in an at risk group, ie suffer from:
chronic respiratory disease (that requires continuous or repeated use of inhaled or systemic steroids); chronic heart, kidney or liver disease; diabetes; chronic neurological disease.
- ★ Aged six months or older with immunosuppression.
- ★ Pregnant women.
- ★ Those in receipt of a carer's allowance or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.

Surgery Notices



New Opening Times

From 5th September 2011, the practice will be extending its opening hours. Our reception and phone lines will be open from:

8.00am – 6.30pm
Monday to Friday

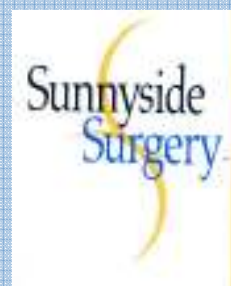
(Please note: we will continue to close on the first Thursday of each month from 1.00-3.00pm for staff training)

You can book appointments up to 3 weeks in advance as well as on the day, subject to availability.

A limited number of pre-bookable appointments are available on some Saturday mornings and several of our GPs offer early morning appointments. Priority for these appointments will be given to those patients in full-time employment.

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Tel: 01275 873588
www.sunnysidesurgery.co.uk



**For urgent medical advice outside of these hours,
contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
For GP out of hours service, telephone 0845 121 0235**

If you would like to receive future newsletters and practice updates by email, please let us know by emailing: reception@gp-L81102.nhs.uk