

# UNITY HEALTH PATIENT NEWSLETTER



## Special Points of Interest:

- *Flu clinic dates*
- *Improved access to GP appointments—8.00 am to 8.00 pm*
- *Community hubs providing more care closer to home*
- *Unity Health staff changes*

October 2018

[www.unity-health.co.uk](http://www.unity-health.co.uk)

## JOIN YOUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

PPG, what is that I hear you say? General Practices have a responsibility as part of their contract to involve patients in relevant issues relating to the practice and to respond appropriately to patients' views and experiences.

PPGs are about implementing real, positive change in their communities. Patients have long valued the relationship with their local GP and General Practice. However, the dynamics of this relationship have changed over recent years. Patients today rightly want more say in their own healthcare, they are better informed and expect to be treated as whole people, not just as a condition or ailment.

One easy way you can get involved and help shape and improve the service you get is by joining your local PPG at your GP surgery. Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are groups of patients who get together to represent the patient voice in their GP practice.

The role of a PPG is to foster improved communication be-

tween a practice and its patients. By doing so, PPGs can help improve services and the quality of care provided by the practice. As all PPGs are volunteer-led, every group is unique. Some groups hold regular meetings to discuss patient concerns. Some host pop-in cafes to encourage community involvement while others host talks on a range of health and well-being issues. While every PPG is different, each has at its core a single goal. This is to ensure that the voice of the patient is heard to make sure that the services provided match the needs of patients.

Unity Health has an established PPG which has representatives from all five sites, Princes Risborough, Thame, Chinnor, Long Crendon and Brill. It meets with doctors and practice staff at least four times a year, and more frequently when required. It also represents patients in partnership with Buckinghamshire Health Trust (BHT), Clinical Commissioning Groups and at regional and national level Patient Participation meetings.

There is no better time to volunteer and join your PPG. It is cur-

rently being asked to help shape the future Buckinghamshire Out of Hospital Care Strategy over the next two years. See the newsletter article on Community Hubs from BHT. If you are interested **please** contact the Managing Partner, Lesley Munro-Faure, on 01844 344281



**DAVID BARROW,  
PPG CHAIR**

## FLU CLINICS

One of the manufacturers of the flu vaccine, Sanofi, had a manufacturing problem with their vaccine which means deliveries nationally have been delayed. This is why the flu clinics are slightly later this year. Information on the flu clinics is below and is also available on the website ([www.unity-health.co.uk](http://www.unity-health.co.uk))

### BRILL

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October 09:00 to 11.30  
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November 14.00 to 16:30

### CHINNOR

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 14:00 to 16:30  
Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 09.00 to 11:30

### THAME

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October 09:00 to 11.30  
Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 17:30 to 19:30

### RISBOROUGH

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 09:00 to 11.30  
Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 16:00 to 18:30

### LONG CRENDON

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> November 09:00 to 11.30 - **PRE-BOOKED APPTS ONLY**



Please try to attend the surgery rather than a pharmacy so we can also ensure other seasonal immunisations are up to date.

Please try to walk or share lifts to the clinics as parking is limited at all sites.

**JUST TURN UP FOR ONE OF THE CLINCS ABOVE—NO NEED TO BOOK, EXCEPT AT LONG CRENDON WHICH IS PRE-BOOKABLE ONLY**

**FLU VACCINATIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO ANYONE AGED 65 OR OVER, OR**

**WITH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

- Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- COPD
- Stroke/TIA
- Asthma (only if requiring repeated/continuous use of inhaled/systemic steroids)
- Kidney Disease
- Immunosuppressed/Splenectomy
- Chronic liver disease
- BMI of 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher
- Pregnant

*Children with one of these conditions or with a date of birth between 1/9/14 and 31/8/16 are also eligible – we will arrange separate clinics for these children.*

## IMPROVED ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE '8-8' WORKING



When you ring for an appointment, you may be offered one of these new 'Improved Access' video consultations.

Please do try them and let us know what you think of them

There has been a lot in the press over many months about the Government commitment to make it easier for patients to make an appointment by extending the times during which patients can access appointments with primary care.

The original plan was that this would be put in place from 1st April 2019 but over the summer this was moved to 1st October 2018 which has given us very short time-scales to implement this.

Unity Health already has 'extended hours' appointments with our own GPs and nurses outside our normal working hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday evenings and alternate Saturday mornings.

The 'Improved Access' appointments are additional to the 'extended hours' and work a bit differently. Our current contract makes us responsible for patient care from 8am to 6:30pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). This new contract is to cover additional hours between 6:30 and 8pm on weekdays and all day on Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

The local GP Federation, FedBucks will run the service for the whole of Buckinghamshire on Saturday pm, all day Sunday and Bank Holidays (plus Saturday am when the following Monday is a Bank Holiday). This then leaves us with weekdays 6:30 to 8:00pm and Saturday am to provide. One of the differences with the Improved Access appointments is that we have to provide these hours as a locality not as an individual practice; all patients within our locality will be able to access these appointments. Our locality also includes Haddenham, Waddesdon and Cross Keys patients.

One of the other Government initiatives is to promote new methods for accessing appointments including the use of technology. To try to meet this requirement as well as offering the 'Improved Access' hours, we have been working across our locality on a solution where we will offer most of these additional hours using video consultations which will be provided by a GP working remotely but with access to the full patient record. Given our experience with telephone triage it was felt we were well-placed to trial this with our patients so we will be a pilot across Bucks for this new type of service. Enabling patients to access different types of consultations and promoting the use of technology is another government/NHS aim so we will be at the forefront of this. More information about this new service is available via the Unity Health website ([www.unity-health.co.uk](http://www.unity-health.co.uk))

## Changes to our clinical team at Unity Health

### GP Team

Two of the GPs we have trained have decided to stay with us once they completed their training and became full-qualified independent GPs; Dr Thomas Broughton and Dr Katrina Walker. Dr Broughton is based mainly in Thame and Dr Walker split between Long Crendon and Thame. We have three new trainees Dr Kirsty Steggles, Dr Martin Kenton and Dr Keran Vijayarajan; they are fully qualified Drs who stay with us for a year to complete their training as a GP.

Hopefully many of you will have met our new partner, Dr Mark Widgery who joined at the end of April and is based in Long Crendon

Dr Olivia Jones went on maternity leave at the end of July; we have recruited a replacement to cover her until the end of July 2019; Dr Laura Burmkisher who will be based in Thame.

### Nurse Team:

We have recruited a new Nurse Practitioner, Dean Whiting to join our existing team; Dean specialises in urgent care; you may well be offered an appointment with one of this team when you call the surgery.

A number of our receptionists have been trained to take on additional roles as phlebotomists which enables them to provide additional resource to take bloods; Wendy Brown, Heather-Jane Douglas and Louise Woodcock.

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## COMMUNITY HUBS — PROVIDING MORE CARE CLOSER TO HOME

An innovative community hubs pilot project launched by Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust has recently reached its one year milestone earlier this year, with evidence showing some initial successes in bringing more care closer to people's homes and making better use of local sites to cater to local people's healthcare needs.

The hubs were set up in Marlow and Thame in April 2017, following extensive engagement with patients, GPs, staff, other health and social care organisations, voluntary organisations and local communities in 2016. The hubs have since been providing local people with a community assessment and treatment services, which include a frailty assessment service where geriatricians, nurses, therapists and GPs provide expert assessment, undertake tests and agree a treatment plan to help frail older people stay at home and avoid an A&E visit or hospital admission. The hubs also offer additional diagnostic facilities such as one-stop blood tests and x-rays, an extended range of outpatient clinics as well as support from voluntary organisations such as Carers Bucks and Prevention Matters.

During the pilots in Marlow and Thame, over 300% more people were using the community assessment and treatment service compared to the previous inpatient beds. Outpatient activity increased almost 50% in Thame and over 35% in Marlow. Furthermore, more local people are able to access these services than previously.

Local people like 90-year-old Jean, who was referred to the community assessment and treatment service at the Thame hub. Jean saw a doctor, a physio and an occupational therapist, who met her in her own home and helped make small improvements to help Jean to continue to live independently. Jean said: "I was getting very dodderly... I want to stay at home... and I'm happy doing my own thing. [The community assessment and treatment service] has given me a great deal of confidence that I was beginning to lack completely and I think it has helped me hugely in all sorts of things and all sorts of ways."

Buckinghamshire's County Councils Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC) has given its support to a two year development phase reporting to HASC every six months. More still needs to be done to increase GP referrals and offer even more services closer to home. Next steps include continuing to develop the hubs at Marlow and Thame before rolling out the capability across the county. Thanks to the Thame League of Friends, a new ultrasound machine will be in place later this year, subject to funding for the additional estates work required. The Trust will also be working closely with other health care providers across the county to deliver even more care closer to home.

