

Barnabas Bulletin

Newsletter of the Barnabas Medical Centre

Issue 7, September 2014

Services for Older People

By Dr Mohini Parmar

Social isolation and loneliness is recognised as an important factor in the well being of older people. Health related issues, bereavement and life events could all add to make older people feel both socially isolated and lonely. We are all living longer and as we become older are likely to develop long term illnesses. An admission to hospital, a fall, reduced mobility and bereavement can all lead to a loss of confidence leading on to social isolation.

We are beginning to understand the effects of social isolation on health and well-being. Councils and the voluntary sector are working together to offer support and services to help alleviate this problem.

Restore Plus is one such service, which is a partnership, delivered by Age UK and Volunteer Link Scheme.

The project aims to tackle social isolation in the London Borough of Ealing by helping users regain their confidence and mental well-being, live independently and increase their mobility. Every person will receive an individual assessment and action plan to suit them personally.

Age UK deliver this service using volunteers. They will visit individuals for up-to eight weeks. The team is led by a co-ordinator who trains, supports and matches the volunteers to users. The volunteers commit to visiting for two hours per week for eight weeks and sometimes for up to twelve weeks.

How is a referral made? Making a referral is as simple as contacting the Restore Plus Coordinator at Age UK Ealing, 135 Uxbridge Road, London, W13 9AU
Phone: 020 8567 8017
Email: restoreplus.coordinator@ageukealing.org.uk

Regenerate-RISE (Reaching the Isolated Elderly) is based at St Barnabas Church in Raglan Way, Northolt and provides a service three days a week – Monday, Wednesday and Friday. For a small charge they provide lunch and transport to the church hall for anyone who is unable to use public transport, this can be on their own minibus, an Ealing Community Transport bus or by taxi. They have activities including bingo, art, quizzes, informative talks, chair-based exercises, pampering sessions and entertainment and also take clients on an outings to a local pub, garden center or place of interest.

For further information, please telephone Chris Berry on 020 8422 5595 or email chrisberry@regenerate-rise.co.uk.



**Central Middlesex Hospital
& Hammersmith Hospital
A&E Departments
close on 10 September**
**Both hospitals will continue
to have an Urgent Care Facility**
In an emergency call 999



Sparkling New Computer System

We are pleased to report that we now have our new computer system installed and running, after a rather stressful and disrupted couple of months.

We really do appreciate your patience and understanding during the migration, which took far longer than any of us had expected. Thank you!

Installing new computer systems is not a trivial task especially when it has to be done while continuing to run a busy and critical service such as the Practice. And as with all new things it is something we have to get used to working with, and we are still learning how to get the most out of the new system.

Consequently none of this was work undertaken lightly; it had to be done. But now it is over and everything should be back up to speed.

What, though, we hear you ask, is in it for you, our patients?

The answer is, in fact, quite a lot – although maybe not very visibly. Just having the new system makes the Practice more robust and better able to handle the ever increasing stresses we put on the system.

We have migrated from the EMIS system to the latest version of SystmOne (yes, it really is spelled that way). This is the system which is being used by (or is compatible with) the majority of GP practices and healthcare services in Ealing and neighbouring boroughs, which means that not only will communication

between healthcare providers become easier, but it will permit clinical records to be shared (with your permission, as always) with, for instance, out of hours services.

The new system also means that in the near future we will be offering you the facility to book appointments online – something which you have been requesting for some time and which the government has committed us to do. It should also eventually enable us to send your prescriptions to the chemist electronically.

We have not yet worked out exactly when we will introduce online appointment booking, but the plan is that it should be later this year. Unfortunately it does mean that those who have already signed up to request their repeat prescriptions online will need to re-register on our website (no, not with the Practice, you remain our patient; just with the website) – this is an inevitable effect of the new computer system. So please watch out for an announcement!

Once again, thank you to everyone for your patience over the last couple of months. g

Notice – GP Changes

As from the 1st September Dr Parmar will be reducing her surgery time at the practice.

Dr Parmar will be in the surgery on Monday and Tuesday only.

Dr Arti Maini who works at the surgery will be a long term sessional GP at the Practice.

Dr Dhinsa who has been with us for many years will continue to work with us.

We ask you to please bear with us during this transition. g

September PPG Meeting

The next meeting of the PPG will be on

Tuesday 16 September

at 1400 hrs

in St Barnabas Church Hall

The meeting will be discussing PPG activities and priorities for the coming year or so.

All our patients, carers for our patients and Practice staff are welcome to attend.

If you would like more information about the PPG or the meeting, please contact PPG Chairman, Keith Marshall, on 020 8864 7993 or barnabas.ppg@gmail.com. g

Back to School

Going back to school always seems to be traumatic, so here are a couple of healthcare things to keep in mind.

Please ensure the school is aware if your child has any long-term conditions like asthma or diabetes. If they know, and your child feels unwell at school, they can ensure your child is treated and supported appropriately.

Children are brilliant at transmitting head lice, so do keep an eye out. If you spot any head lice or nits, please act promptly to eradicate them – you can get advice on doing this from your local chemist or from the Medical Centre. And also please tell your child's school so other parents can be alerted and these little pests aren't just passed back and forth between the children. There is no stigma attached to head lice – they can happen to anyone – so there is no reason not to tell the school. ^g

Off to University?

Whether you are off to university for the first time this autumn, or are returning to continue studies, please look after your health.

Starting university can be stressful; it may be the first time you've lived away from home.

So if at any time you feel anxious or depressed please talk to your doctor.

Before you leave for university, please ensure you have checked the following:

- Repeat Medications
- NHS No. for registering with a new GP
- You have up to date vaccinations for
 - MMR
 - Tetanus
 - Hepatitis B, where required
 - Meningitis
- Any individual vaccination requirements

We wish all our students the very best in their future endeavours. ^g

Missed Appointments

We continue to monitor the number of appointments which are missed – patients who just don't bother to turn up – because like most of the NHS this is something which wastes everyone's time and which we really need to reduce.

So far this year the number of missed appointments are:

January	101	May	105
February	98	June	87
March	93	July	125
April	86	August	126

That is five appointments most working days. While occasional missed appointments are inevitable, these figures are far, far too high.

So what, you might think? But patients who do not keep appointments have two major effects. First, they are wasting the time of the doctor or nurse; and second they are blocking an appointment which could have been used by another patient who may urgently need it.

This is why we usually write to people who fail to keep their appointment and don't tell us.

If you no longer need, or cannot keep, your appointment then please tell us!

A quick phone call is all it takes.

Over 65? Have you had a Pneumococcal vaccination?

Pneumococcal infection can be especially serious as one gets older. So if you are over 65 and have not been vaccinated, or you don't know, please contact the Medical Centre. ^g

Flu Vaccination

We expect to receive supplies of this year's flu vaccine in late September or early October.

If you are eligible for flu vaccination (over 65, pregnant or with a long term condition) we will be contacting you to invite to come into the Medical Centre to be vaccinated. ^g

DoctorView

The regular column by our doctors

Reducing Salt in Our Diet

By Dr David Knight

Why?

There is now strong evidence that high levels of salt in our diet is associated with an increased risk of strokes and death from heart disease.

There is very good evidence that reducing salt intake reduces blood pressure.

We should all aim to reduce our salt intake to less than 6g a day (many of us have far more than this) and ideally to less than 3g a day.

NICE, the organisation that advises on medical treatments and health, estimates that reducing salt intake by 3g a day would prevent 10,000 premature deaths and 10,000 heart attacks a year. This would exceed the benefits of smoking cessation programmes, weight loss interventions and statins.

If you take medication for high blood pressure reducing salt levels and therefore blood pressure levels may reduce the amount of medication you need to take.

How?

Much of our salt is hidden in processed foods and only 20% added to food. Bread, breakfast cereals and table sauces tend to be high in salt.

To avoid hidden salt start looking at labels:

- Low salt: less than 300mg per 100g food – eat mostly these
- Medium salt: 0.3-1.5g per 100g food – eat only occasionally
- High salt: over 1.5g per 100g food – avoid these foods.

Confusingly some food labels use sodium levels instead of salt levels. 1g sodium = 2.5g salt, so avoid foods with sodium levels more than 0.6g/100g food.

This all may sound a bit complicated. However any reduction is worthwhile. Start reading labels and using foods low in salt. Cut down and stop adding salt to food. This may taste strange to begin with but you will soon get used to it.

These links give more advice on how to achieve lower salt consumption:

<http://www.bloodpressureuk.org/microsites/salt/Home/Howtoeatlesssalt>
<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/salt.aspx>

Barnabas Medical Centre

Girton Road
Northolt, UB5 4SR

(020 8864 4437

www.barnabasmedicalcentre.co.uk

Surgery Times

Monday to Friday
0830 to 1800

(Closed Mon & Fri 1300-1400)

Out of Hours

For urgent healthcare outside surgery times please call 111

Repeat Prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions must be requested in writing or online and will normally be available for collection after 2 working days

Doctors

Dr MG Parmar
Dr DG Knight
Dr HS Kooner
Dr HK Bhatoa
Dr M Dhinsa

Practice Nurses

Henny Shanta
Anna Wan
Purnima Gurung

Heath Care Assistant

Niki Onoufriou

Practice Manager

Matthew Edwards

Patient Participation Group

Chairman: Keith Marshall
020 8864 7993

barnabas.ppg@gmail.com

*This newsletter is a joint production of Barnabas Medical Centre and the Barnabas Patient Participation Group.
© Barnabas Medical Centre, 2014.*

**A large print version
of this newsletter is
available from
Reception**