



The Argyle Surgery Patient Newsletter Summer 2012

Welcome to our summer newsletter. It has been a busy few months at the surgery and we are keen to keep our patients up to date and involved with the services we provide.

Staff changes

We have a new receptionist joining us, Miss Shona May Elliott and a new administrator Miss Shelley Saunders. Dr Jenna Lau and Dr Farzin Nickzad have both completed their time with us and are continuing their training elsewhere. Both staff and patients alike enjoyed having them with us and we wish them the best for their futures. We are delighted that Dr Anna Down has chosen to stay with us and we welcome three new GP registrars to The Surgery, Dr Janaki Goru, Dr Candice Lim and Dr Pritti Vaghani.

Changes at The Argyle Surgery

I am sure you have all noticed the changes and building work that has been going on at the Surgery as we strive to make improvements. We have refurbished the patient bathroom so that it has better disabled access and is easier to use. We have also installed an alarm in the bathroom in case of emergency.

We have replaced all the flooring throughout as well as replacing the secondary glazing in the waiting room and several of the consultation rooms. The floor had been wearing in places and we were concerned for health and safety and the secondary glazing was not working as efficiently as it could have been. We had especially noted comments from patients about draughts in the waiting room during the colder months. We have replaced all the chairs in the waiting room and consultation rooms. We have also upgraded the appointment self check in screen to a newer model.

We have been working very hard to make these changes with the least amount of disturbance to patients and we are very grateful for your support and patience during these renovations. We still have lots of plans but we would also like to hear any comments or suggestions you may have about future projects.

'Shaping a Healthier Future'

'Shaping a healthier future' is a programme aspiring to improve NHS services for the two million people who live in North West London. This plan for the future of healthcare in North West London is being taken forward by eight clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), which are made up of GPs, representing NW London's eight primary care trusts (PCTs). They have worked with hospital doctors, nurse leaders, providers of community care, volunteer groups and charities to develop the proposals and to consider the ways health

services are being improved elsewhere in London and around the world.

They believe that the way our health services are delivered needs to change now to ensure that the highest quality care is provided in the future.

NHS staff are totally committed to this high quality care, but need to have the right workforce, skills and surroundings to deliver this for patients.

The NW London NHS have therefore developed a vision for how they want health services to be developed and improved in NW London and you can find more detail about the proposals, how they could affect you and how you can learn more from their website at www.healthiernorthwestlondon.nhs.uk or by reading the consultation booklet available in our waiting room or from reception. Within this booklet is a survey as they are very interested in your response and feedback to their proposals. This survey can be completed (it is also available online) and returned to them by **8th October 2012**.

The 'Shaping A Healthier Future' Roadshow is going to be in Harrow on Saturday 25th August at North Harrow Methodist Church, Pinner Road, Harrow, HA2 6EQ between 10am and 4pm if you would like to ask any questions or have your say. Further dates and locations of the Roadshow are available on their website.

Carers

If you are a Carer or there is someone who cares for you please make sure that we are aware of this. We can provide advice and support for those with Carers and those caring for others as well as put you in touch with different services that could make a big difference. Young Carers are especially vulnerable and we need to know if you are under 18 and looking after a relative who has a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem.

If you would like confidential advice or help you can make an appointment with a GP or Call Carers Direct on **0808 802 0202**. Lots of advice and contact information can also be found on NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk

Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccinations

Flu is a highly infectious illness that spreads rapidly through the coughs and sneezes of people who are carrying the virus. Flu symptoms can hit quite suddenly and severely. They usually include fever, chills, headaches and aching muscles. You can often get a cough and sore throat. Because flu is caused by a virus and not bacteria, antibiotics won't treat it.

Anyone can get flu, but it can be more serious for certain people, such as:

- people aged 65 or over

- people who have a serious medical condition
- pregnant women

If you are in one of these groups, you're more vulnerable to the effects of flu (even if you're fit and healthy) and could develop a more serious illness, such as bronchitis and pneumonia.

The best time of the year to get a flu vaccination is in the autumn from September to early November. It's free if you are at risk and it's effective against the latest flu virus strains.

Even if you've already had a flu jab in previous years, you need another one this year. The flu jab may only protect you for a year. This is because the viruses that cause flu are always changing.

Please ask your GP about the flu jab if you're 65 or over, or if you have any of the following problems (however old you are):

- a serious heart complaint
- a chest complaint for breathing difficulties including, asthma, bronchitis and emphysema.
- serious kidney disease
- diabetes
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment such as steroid medication or cancer treatment
- if you have a problem with your spleen or you have had your spleen removed
- if you have ever had a stroke

If you think you may need a flu vaccination, check with your GP, practice nurse or your local pharmacist. If a nurse visits you regularly, ask about getting your flu vaccination. Flu vaccinations will be available from surgery from the end of September.

Can I get a flu jab privately?

Yes, you can pay for the flu vaccination privately if you're unable to have it on the NHS. It is available from some pharmacies.

Pregnant Women

Pregnant women at any stage of pregnancy should have the flu jab. That's because pregnant women are more prone to complications from flu that can cause serious illness for both mother and baby.

The pneumococcal Vaccination

When you see your GP for a flu jab, ask whether you also need the 'pneumo jab' against some forms of pneumococcal infection. It's available free on the NHS to everyone aged 65 or over, and for younger people with some serious medical conditions.

NHS Health Checks

We are still providing NHS Health Checks for adults between the ages of 40 and 74. This check aims to help you lower your risk of four common but often preventable diseases; heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and kidney disease. At an NHS Health Check, you'll be given personalised advice that will help you to maintain or improve your health, and lower your risk of developing these problems.

If you would like a health check please speak to reception and book an appt with a healthcare assistant or a nurse who will be happy to do this for you. You can also do some of the tests, like the questionnaire height, weight, and blood pressure on the Surgery Pod at the Surgery without needing an appointment.

Nurse Clinics

It may not always be necessary to see a doctor as you could see one of our nurses who are available for a wide number of services:

- Family planning advice
- Immunisations (including travel)
- Ear syringing
- Dressings
- BP checks
- Travel advice
- Stitch removal
- Cervical smears

They are available for consultation directly, by appointment, without referral from a doctor.

Having completed the Nurse Practitioner Prescribing Course, Susan White is also able to assess, examine, diagnose, prescribe and offer advice for a variety of conditions.

There are appointments available with a nurse every day, they can also be booked on our 24hr telephone booking service but please be careful that you book with an appropriate clinician for the problem. If you book with a nurse by accident we cannot guarantee you will be seen by a doctor at the same time.

Patient Participation Group

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has volunteered to join our Patient Participation Group (PPG). It has become a large and vibrant group and we are enjoying the ability to consult with patients directly. Our April report to the PPG is available on our website www.argylesurgery.nhs.uk. If anyone is interested in joining the PPG please ask at reception or email us and we would be delighted to include you.

In continuation from our previous surveys we have prepared and sent out another consultation to our PPG members. We are looking for feedback around our methods of communication.

Previously we have relied heavily upon letters and telephone calls but we would like to find out how patients feel about email and text messaging and what kind of information is acceptable to be sent this way. We are bound by confidentiality and data protection and ensure that all patient information is protected but would you be interested in a text message for appointment reminders or a mailout letting you know our Christmas opening times?

We are also interested if you feel our building is in need of any attention. We have been slowly making improvements for the past year and would like to know if you feel anything else could be done.

This newsletter was written by the team at the surgery. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the newsletter, please email argyle.surgery@nhs.net