

**PPG Update**

**Introduction to our Chairperson of our PPG:**

Dear fellow Patients,

My name is Noreen and I am chair of the recently formed Newmarket Road surgery Patient Participation Group (NRS PPG). Our group consists of volunteers who are patients at the surgery and the surgery itself is represented by Rosemary Moore the Practice Manager and Dr Steve Copson. The group was formed just before the merger between Newmarket Road and St Stephens Gate surgeries. This has of course meant changes from what we have all known in the past, however I think that the changes can be regarded as beneficial to both us as patients and of course the much overworked staff.

With the merger come many benefits including the option of being seen at either practice, extended opening hours which I am sure will be greatly appreciated by many. Also there is now the option to book a telephone consultation, during the extended opening hours. Appointments are now available with nurse practitioners who are able to prescribe and of course availability to other specialist services.

A member of our PPG has produced a leaflet explaining many of the new services along with a map showing the location of St Stephens Gate practice, this can be found in the surgery or on the web site.

As a group we have a vision statement of working for the benefit of patients and the surgery. The patient being at the heart of what we do. We want to get a sense of patients' needs, concerns and suggestions which we can then feed back to the surgery, although we may not always be able to make specific changes we would aim to assist when and where possible.

We would also look to the patient population for help and assistance from time to time, as we, as patients would all hopefully benefit. If you have attended the surgery recently you may have seen our Noticeboard in the ground floor waiting area. We will be posting information there, and on the surgery website about activities, promotions, and in time fundraising events etc.

Please see the PPG page on the surgery website or, on the Noticeboard in reception for details on how to contact the PPG.

We are still looking for more members, with a bit of spare time, who are willing to do something very worthwhile for the surgery. We are particularly interested in anyone aged 17-50 to make the group more representative of the patient population and ensure younger patients have a voice.

**Practice Updates**

**Introduction by Rosemary Moore Practice Manager**

Dear Patients

It cannot have escaped the notice of many of you that as a surgery we are in a period of change, having taken the decision to merger with St Stephens Gate Medical Practice. This, after months of background work, finally became a reality on 30 September 2017. This was not a decision that any of the doctors at Newmarket Road Surgery took lightly, and followed months of soul searching. However, I am sure that many of you will have been aware of the significant strain that both Dr Copson and Dr Bosworth have been under, as they have strived to look after and be responsible for the health of approximately 6000 patients. This was unsustainable in the long term. We lost 2 GP partners within the space of a year (one though early retirement due to ill health, and one normal retirement) and so went from 4 GPs down to 2. The decision was therefore made to join up with St Stephens Gate, a medical practice that is geographically very close and one we have also worked with in the past on various projects. The clinicians all knew each other fairly well, and the feeling was that for stability and continuity planning this was the best move to ensure the longevity of Newmarket Road Surgery, albeit in a different form.

I am acutely aware that for many of you this will represent a significant change to what you have been used to. I myself have worked at Newmarket Road Surgery for 25 years so have had to adapt to new methods and practices. Change can feel both challenging and invigorating and I have experienced both emotions over the last few months! We all hope that in time you will come to understand and realise the potential benefits that merging with a larger practice can bring, not least of which is a greater diversity of clinical services, many of which Noreen has outlined in her column adjacent to this. As time goes by we hope to have the opportunity to take on new projects and incentives now that we have a far wider breadth of clinicians from various specialities. This should allow us to keep abreast of changes as they occur within the NHS and provide a good robust clinical service to all our patients.

Do contact myself or Noreen, if you would like further clarification or explanation.

If you would like to receive a copy of future Newsletters via email please give your email address to

Reception at the Surgery

## Staying Healthy!

### Get Enough Vitamin D

Lack of sunshine in winter can mean you don't get enough vitamin D, which can make you feel tired. The main source of vitamin D is sunlight but you can also get it from oily fish (such as salmon, tuna, mackerel and sardines), eggs, red meat, liver, margarine some cereals. However, it's difficult to get enough vita, and min D from food alone. The Department of Health recommends that all adults take a daily vitamin D supplement from October to March. People at higher risk of vitamin D deficiency may be advised to take a supplement all year round. Speak to your GP or pharmacist for advice.

### Restock your Medicine Cabinet

Keep a range of everyday medicines at home in case you get ill, such as your usual painkillers, cough medicine, lozenges and sore throat sprays. Ask your pharmacist for advice if you're unwell. Some pharmacies operate a minor ailment scheme, which may enable you to get medicine for some minor illnesses. These are free of charge if you don't normally pay for prescriptions. Ask your pharmacy if they offer a home delivery service for your repeat prescriptions too. This can be especially helpful in cold weather.

## Keeping your Home Warm

### Check the Thermostat

Being cold isn't just uncomfortable – it can also be very bad for your health. Low temperatures increase the risk of flu as well as a heart attack, stroke or hypothermia. Your living room should be around 21°C (70°F) and other rooms should be at least 18°C (64°F).

### Check your Boiler

Get your boiler serviced annually to make sure it doesn't break down when you need it most. To find a gas engineer, contact the Gas Safe Register (0800 408 5500, [gassaferegister.co.uk](http://gassaferegister.co.uk)). If you rent, check if your landlord has arranged this.

### Keep Warm at Night

A hot water bottle or electric blanket can warm up your bed. Never use both together, as this can be dangerous. Check whether you can keep your blanket on all night or should switch it off before you get into bed. Get your blanket checked every three years by an expert. Ask about this at the shop where you bought it or contact your local council's trading standards department – they may even run free testing days. Keep your bedroom window closed at night when it's cold – low temperatures can raise your blood pressure and put you at risk of a stroke or heart attack.

### Simple tips to keep your Home Warm

Draw your curtains before it gets dark to keep the heat in, and consider getting thermal or heavy ones to keep your room warmer. Don't block your radiators with furniture – keep them clear so heat can circulate. Put draught excluders round doors and windows.

Contact the Energy Saving Advice Service for more tips: either call (0300 123 1234, or visit the website:- [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)).

## Helping us to help you

Can you help us? Your Patient Participation group needs your help! Are you an Accountant? Were you once an Accountant? Have you previously been involved in setting up a charitable account? Would you be prepared to help us? We need someone who has knowledge of setting up a charitable account for any fundraising that is undertaken on behalf of the PPG and someone who would either take on the role of Treasurer or assist one of our current members in this role