

PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP (PRG) – BADDOW VILLAGE SURGERY



Newsletter – Edition 7, May 2014

This newsletter is edited on behalf of Baddow Village Surgery PRG. It is not the mouthpiece of the Baddow Village Surgery which is run by the Practice partners. Whilst the two groups work in close co-operation and on a mutual agenda of improvement of patient services, any views expressed are those of the editor and PRG and should not be interpreted as those of the Practice.

Introduction

Welcome to issue 7. The main features in this edition are a report back on the Practice survey: thanks to all those of you who completed it either on-line or on paper. We also announce our patient information evening on Diabetes and outline the new electronic prescribing service starting this month.

We have also have articles on 'DNA' - not DeoxyriboNucleic Acid, but Did Not Attend- plus our usual features on Practice news and a pen portrait of the new Dispensary Manager. We round off with some tongue-in-cheek modern-day proverbs.

Enjoy.

Ken Edwards, Editor

Patient Information Evening

Do you have an interest in **DIABETES** either from direct experience or more generally?

The PRG is hosting an open information meeting at Great Baddow Parish Hall (back room), Maldon Road, CM2 7DW on the evening of Tuesday 20th May 2014 starting at 7.00pm. There is ample free car parking in the Vineyards car park opposite.

There will be presentations from

- a local Diabetes UK Champion and
 - a Broomfield Hospital Diabetes Centre Dietician
- followed by a Question and Answer Session

It's free and there will be refreshments (not too much and not too much sugar)

We look forward to seeing many of you there.

Practice News - Sharps Boxes

From 1st April, prescription sharps boxes will be available from the Practice and not from Chelmsford City Council. The new boxes are smaller and you will require 2 or 3 to cover the period between collections. The Council will continue to collect them.

Results of the Practice Survey

Some 305 patients took part in this year's Practice survey with two-thirds filling in paper forms and one-third going on-line. There is a trend towards on-line completion. Apart from the youngest members, the profile of results fits pretty well with those for the overall practice.

Although this year the PRG simplified the form and asked some new questions, the results generally showed few differences from the last two years. This was good news as many of the results continued to be over 90% positive. So the overwhelming majority of us,

- were able to book an appointment at a time that suited us, seeing the person we wanted,
- were satisfied with how we were treated at Reception,
- felt listened to, understood what was said and were involved in our health decisions,
- remained happy that the surgery opening hours were suitable.

One result which improved was 'On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to recommend the surgery to friends and family?' Taking those scoring the top marks of 8-10 together - saw an improvement from 77% to 84%.

The 'new' questions did yield some useful insights and provide a useful baseline for future surveys. For example over a quarter of us said we had attended the surgery more than 10 times in the past year with a similar percentage visiting between 1 and 4 times. 82% of us considered themselves to be in good health although just under half of us reported having a long standing illness, disability or infirmity. It would seem that many of us are positive about our health whilst accepting we may have an illness of some kind.

So a very strong base, but where can further improvements be made? Taking all the responses together the key areas of concern seem to centre on the Appointment system where 11 of us were critical. Also 7 of us commented about waiting times. These are not new issues, but ones both the PRG and the Practice would like to see improved.

At our last PRG meeting we looked at how the Appointment system works and have suggested some possible improvements. The Practice will look at the system at their next away-day. The survey tells us that 93% of us who responded are registered to book appointments online and 64% of us do so. However, this not be as high for the overall patient population

On waiting times, 39% of us said they were not delayed; a further 36% experienced a 15-minute delay; 25% had 16-30 minutes' delay and 8% (or 23 of us) experienced longer waits. The PRG believes that most patients understand that delays occur and would want the right amount of time to be given, to each patient by the GP or other Practice health care professional. However, we do like to know if we are likely to be seen later than the appointment time. Our efforts have been to encourage that flow of information to the patient and this is an area we will continue to look at with a view to improvements.

The Surgery has put together an action plan and this plus the survey results are available on the website www.baddovillagesurgery.co.uk. Copies are also available on request through Reception from the Practice Manager, Ami Balbi.

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Electronic prescribing (EPS)

Around 1.5 million prescriptions are issued every working day in England and this is expected to rise at 5% a year. Some 70% of these are repeat prescriptions. The NHS is therefore moving to what is seen as a more efficient and consistently accurate electronic system with a concurrent reduction in the paperwork associated with the present system.

Baddow Village Surgery will be introducing Electronic Prescribing on 12th May. This service will mean that your GP will be able to send your prescription electronically to the pharmacy you choose to get your medication from – without the need for paper in most cases. The Electronic Prescription Service is reliable, secure and confidential.

If you would like to use Electronic Prescribing you will need to ‘nominate’ a pharmacy to receive your prescriptions electronically. Many of you have already done this, so if your prescriptions already get sent to a particular pharmacy for you, you needn’t do anything else. To nominate or change your pharmacy, you can ask a member of staff in the pharmacy to arrange this, or a member of staff in the surgery dispensary. You can then continue to order your prescriptions in the usual way, but instead of a paper prescription being collected by you or your pharmacy, the prescription will be sent to them electronically.

You should try to ensure that on most occasions you collect your prescriptions from your nominated pharmacy. However, if you don’t wish to use your nominated pharmacy for a particular prescription just make sure you let the surgery know when you request the prescription. For example, if you wish to collect a prescription from the surgery dispensary, or a different pharmacy.

If you would like further information about the service, please ask the staff in the surgery dispensary or contact a pharmacy offering EPS.

DNA – *Not DeoxyriboNucleic Acid – but Did Not Attend*

Figures vary, but there seems to be a consensus that each GP appointment (10 minute slot) costs the NHS around £25. You might want to compare that with a commercial rate of £70 for a 15 minute GP consultation (source - BUPA website).

Recent months figures for the Practice show DNA figures of January - 212, February – 177, March – 245. So, in March appointments with a total time of over two full days (48 hours 15 mins) were missed by the patients that had requested them. More widely the NHS estimates that some 12 million GP appointments are missed every year at a cost of over £162 million. This suggests a net cost of around £13.50 each, perhaps allowing for that ‘lost’ time being put to other good use. The NHS also report that some 6.9 million out-patient appointments at hospitals were missed each year at a cost of nearly £750m, giving an average cost of £108.

However we look at things, a missed appointment is unlikely to have benefited either the GP or the potential patient. There will always be those occasions where we are unable to attend a booked appointment. To the extent that we can avoid this or give as early notice as possible we should do so – it is in all our interests!

Practice staff pen portrait – Caroline Thomas, Dispensary Manager



I am originally from Birmingham, moving to Chelmsford in 1998 to be located near my husband's new place of work.

It was a normal transition to our new life down south. We joined Essex County Cricket, spending many weekends at the ground. Our two sons attended the local junior school before moving to King Edwards Grammar School. They are now both at University studying Pharmacy. My husband is a Pharmacist, so pharmacy is definitely a big part of who I am.

Before taking the post, I worked as a Pharmacy Technician at Boots the Chemist in High Chelmer: my role required me to study to the highest level - Senior Pharmacy Technician. In that position I was the key person involved in patients' safety. I am registered with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. Winning two awards last year; Best Pharmacy Technician for the South of England and a key member for the best 'team' within the whole of Boots The Chemist 2013.

I live in Great Baddow, therefore it just seemed the most natural progression to take on my new role at the Surgery, where I have been keen to implement 'best pharmacy' practices. I am very proud that we will be one of the first Doctor's Surgery's within Chelmsford to embrace 'Electronic Prescribing' (see next page). Instead of a paper prescription, if you prefer, your prescription can be emailed to your preferred Pharmacy. It will reduce the loss of prescriptions, the cost of paper, the time involved in managing each individual prescription.

I love my new role with a passion, it is very interesting busy and diverse. My team have been a wonderful support and are keen to raise the standards within the Dispensary with me. In my spare time I support Remus Horse Sanctuary by offering my Holistic knowledge for free, I have been helping their animals for over 8 years. I teach holistic classes, write articles about animal behaviour for two American Websites and have just embarked on writing a book.

Some Modern Proverbs

- Where there's smoke, there must be someone smoking. *(But of course they should stop!)*
- Gloves make a poor present for a man with no hands.
- You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but there's nothing to stop you making a lovely pork pie. *(Attributed to the late Humphrey Littleton.)*
- It's always darkest just after the lights go off.
- In the city of the bald, the barbers are beggars.
- A person with false teeth may still speak the truth.

That's all for now folks!