

# Newsletter January 2015



## Surgery News

### Staffing

Dr Anita van Rooyen will be leaving at the end of February as she wants to spend more time in South Africa. We are very sorry to see her go and I am sure our patients will miss her.

We are fortunate enough to have Dr Eleanor Thorpe and Dr Pallav Verma join us as part-time partners. This will mean that we have more capacity in our appointment system to cope with the increasing population.

Bernice Putt has left to join a practice nearer to her and we wish her well in her new job. We are still in regular touch and she was very sorry to leave us but it was more practical.

We have recruited Marie Sanderson who joins Alison as our Health Care Assistant. Marie runs Health Care Clinics on a Thursday afternoon for any patient aged between 40 and 74 who are not already on our chronic disease register. Simply ask at reception for details.

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## Health Information

### Flu Uptake

We have once again run well attended Flu Clinics starting at the end of September. We have reached over 70% of the at risk groups which is a big achievement, but are still just short of our 75% target. We would like to remind anyone from the target groups below that having a flu jab gives great protection from flu, which can be a very serious illness.

Age 65+

Diabetes

Chronic heart, lung, kidney, liver or neurological diseases

Impaired immune system

Removed spleen or problem with the spleen

Pregnant women are also advised to have a flu vaccination as are children aged 2, 3 and 4





## Patient Participation Group

Article by Di Profaska

### **Welcome to St Agnes Patient Participation Group**

Firstly what is a Patient Participation group (PPG) you might ask? PPG's are not new; the first one was set up way back in 1972 in Oxford. Despite this 36 year duration they are still not very well known and most of us don't know what they are or what they do.

St Agnes PPG was founded in June 2011 and there are currently 8 active members and we are always looking for more to join us of any age. All you have to be is a patient registered at the surgery and have an interest in good patient care. We held our most recent meeting on the 15/1/15 and welcomed our youngest recruit yet.

St Agnes PPG is made up of a group of volunteer patients, the Practice Manager Liz Thierens and Dr Chris Whitworth. We meet every 4 months and discuss the services that the surgery offers and current changes happening within Primary care.

Our PPG aims to be a route for patients (that's all of us) to advise and inform the Practice on what matters most to patient's and to help identify solutions to any concerns or problems that might arise. As volunteers we hope to work with the wider patient interest and not just our own personal concerns when we serve on the PPG. Any goals or aspirations that we might have need to be realistic and achievable because we are all volunteers. We work in partnership with the Practice and other significant partners such as NHS Kernow and hope overtime as we develop the St Agnes PPG to achieve a closer link for all of our healthcare needs

As a group we hope to keep the surgery up to date and informed as we can from a patient perspective. St Agnes PPG can also carry out research into the views of those who use the Practice, including any patients who might have carers. We recently carried out a survey, results of which can be found in this newsletter. We hope to carry out more of these to help ensure that we all receive the standard of care that we all deserve.

St Agnes Surgery GPs strive to provide the best service to the community and want to hear what we have to say so that year on year they can improve the Practice/Patient experience.

At our most recent meeting held on the 15/1/15 we discussed the role we might play in organising Health Promotion events such as setting up a 'Evening Welcome Group' which will hopefully explore topics such as Diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Asthma, Travel Vaccination, The Role of the Practice Nurse, Sexual Health, and many varied Mental health related issues such as dealing with Stress in all ages, especially the Young Adult, Eating Disorders, Violence in Relationships to name but a few. Please contact Liz Thierens Practice Manager or a member of the PPG by emailing [stagnesppg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stagnesppg@hotmail.co.uk) if you have any other topics you feel would be beneficial to explore in our community related to health. These evenings hope to be an opportunity for us to communicate as a collective patient body and learn more about health issues that affect us. Part of this process can also be learning about what the Practice provide in order for us to take charge of managing our own health care needs.

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If you would like share any thoughts we would love to hear from you and are particularly keen to recruit the younger members of our community to make sure as many as possible patient groups are represented.

For contact details:

Name	Phone Number	Email
Fay Solway	01872 572655	<a href="mailto:casco247@btinternet.com">casco247@btinternet.com</a>
Geoff Robinson	01872 552581	<a href="mailto:geoffrey.c.robinson@btinternet.com">geoffrey.c.robinson@btinternet.com</a>
Di Profaska	01872 553184	<a href="mailto:diprofaska@hotmail.co.uk">diprofaska@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Liz Thorley	01872 552975	<a href="mailto:lizzy@thorley2.plus.com">lizzy@thorley2.plus.com</a>
Jennie Leigh	01872 552458	<a href="mailto:polbreen@sky.com">polbreen@sky.com</a>
Mary Gofton	07929597706	<a href="mailto:mountmay@hotmail.com">mountmay@hotmail.com</a>

## Questionnaires



The Patient Participation Group kindly volunteered to help us dip our toe into a new way of gaining information without our patients having to fill in a long-winded questionnaire. It was the forerunner of the Friends and Family Test which is now a Government requirement for General Practice.

It consisted of two simple questions:

1. Would you recommend this practice to Friends and Family
2. What Can we Improve on.

We are absolutely delighted to say that of the 170 patients questioned, 170 would recommend us to Friends and Family. 99 Patients found the service to be excellent and could not think of anything that could be improved. There were various very helpful comments, the main one being about accessibility on the phone to make an appointment. We do understand this is an issue and would encourage those patients who do not need an appointment the same day not to phone first thing in the morning and we do have appointments available via our website, only 50% of which are being taken up on-line. We do of course make any unused appointments available on the day for the reception staff to allocate.

One other important issue is that patients are not able to park when they have their appointments due to our car park being used as a shoppers' car park. PLEASE ONLY USE THE CAR PARK WHEN YOU HAVE AN APPOINTMENT IN THE SURGERY SO OUR PATIENTS ARE ABLE TO PARK.

The Friends and Family Test will be an ongoing questionnaire, the results to be published monthly.

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### Opening Times

Not all patients are aware of our early morning clinics:

#### **Morning Clinics**

Monday to Friday  
8.30 am - 11.00 am

#### **Afternoon Clinics**

Monday to Friday  
3.30 pm - 5.20 pm

On some days of the week appointments are available from 2.00 pm-4.00 pm

#### Extended Opening Hours:

St. Agnes Surgery offers extra appointments for people who are unable to attend the surgery during ordinary opening hours. These appointments can be pre-booked up to 8 weeks in advance of the day required.

Wednesdays  
7.30 am - 8.00 am  
Fridays  
7.30 am - 8.00 am

## Dispensary



Can we please remind our dispensing patients

You must remember to bring in proof of non-payment of prescriptions every time you need medication or visit the doctor.

When requesting your repeat medication, can you please just tick the ones you need that month. There is still a huge waste of medication in the NHS with patients stock-piling. Returned medicines cannot be re-used even if they have never been opened.

We do not take prescriptions over the phone, it is open to misinterpretation, errors and takes up a lot of time. Please drop in the repeat counterfoil, mail it to us, or use the facility on the website.

## Bits and Bobs

#### **Carers**

If you are a carer or have a carer, please inform the surgery. There is a Carers Support Service that can help and advise.

#### **Medicals**

It would be most helpful if patients who need regular medicals could make an appointment when they get the reminder letter. There is a waiting list as we need to have doctor availability. Please also note that medicals are not covered by the NHS and it is a private service.

#### **Missed Appointments**

There is an ongoing demand on our appointments yet there are still a significant number of wasted appointments because patients do not turn up and do not let us know in time to slot in someone else. From 1.1.2014 to 31.12.2014 there were 903 missed doctors' appointments, which translate into 17 extra appointments a week that would have been available. The nurses had a similar number of DNAs (Did Not Attend) numbering 919. Some of these appointments are longer than 10 minutes so please just give us a ring if you cannot attend for whatever reason.



## Services

St Agnes Surgery offers a wide range of services to our patients:

Asthma Reviews  
Diabetic Reviews  
Learning Disability Reviews  
Child Health checks  
Immunisations  
Travel Clinic  
Maternity Care  
Contraceptive Care including coil fitting and Implanon  
Smears  
Minor surgery  
Minor injury  
Ear microscopy (see explanation below)  
Nasendoscopy (see explanation below)

The use of an ear microscope gives the best visualization of the ear canal and the ear drum. Apart from examining the ear canal and the ear drum, the microscope can also help removing any ear wax, foreign body or infective material like pus.

A nasendoscopy is the examination of the nose and upper airways by the use of a small flexible tube (endoscope) that allows a doctor to examine the lining of these areas. The examination examines the nose (nasal cavity), the back of the nasal cavity, the back of the mouth and tongue and upper part of the voice box.



## **Minor Injuries**

It is worth while emphasizing the minor injury service we offer. We will deal with any minor injuries we are able to, which saves a trip to the Minor Injuries Unit. Obviously there will be times when time constraints or available clinical personnel will not permit this, but we will deal with a wide range of injuries:

- Cuts, lacerations, abrasions
- Simple local infections
- Cellulitis
- Animal and human bites
- Insect bites and stings
- Removal of foreign bodies
- Soft tissue injuries
- Minor Head Injuries
- Burns
- Bruises due to trauma
- Eye injuries

Please do not go to the Accident and Emergency Department for this type of injury. If the practice cannot deal with it there are dedicated Minor Injury Units at various locations, the nearest being:

**Camborne and Redruth Community Hospital** (01209 881650) - 8am to 10pm every day

**Falmouth Hospital** (01326 434739) - 8am to 8pm every day

**Newquay Hospital** (01637 893623) - 8am to 10pm every day and open 24-hours on Fridays and Saturdays during July and August

**Out of Hours please ring Serco (on the surgery number) in the first instance.**