

NORTHGATE MEDICAL PRACTICE AND CHARTHAM SURGERY



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019

1 Northgate, Canterbury Kent CT1 1WL

TEL: 01227 208556 FAX: 0870 890 2435

www.northgatemedicalpractice.com

email : ccccg.northgatemedicalpractice@nhs.net

NORTHGATE SURGERY

Monday: 8:00am – 6:30pm
Tuesday: 8:00am – 8:00pm
Wednesday: 8:00 – 8:00pm
Thursday: 8:00am – 8:00pm
Friday: 8:00am – 8:00pm

CHARTHAM SURGERY

Monday: 8.00 am – 6.30 pm
Tuesday: 8.00 am – 6.30 pm
Wednesday: 8.00 am – 7.30 pm
Thursday: 8.00 am – 6.30 pm
Friday: 8.00 am – 6.30 pm

BLEAN SURGERY

Monday 8:00am – 12:30pm
Wednesday 8:00am – 12:30pm
Thursday 8:00am – 12:30pm
Friday 8:00am – 12:30pm

CANCELLING AN APPOINTMENT

You can **email us** , **reply to the text message** we send to you or **call 01227 208556** and choose option 2 to leave a cancellation message: time-saving tip – you can press 2 as soon as your call is answered and it will transfer you to the cancellation line after a brief pause.

STOP PRESS!

Five cases of measles have been found recently in Canterbury. Measles is highly infectious and can have serious consequences. You and your family can be protected against measles by the MMR vaccine which requires two doses. If you are not sure about your status check with your GP. You can read more about this at www.kentonline.co.uk/canterbury/news

Primary Care Network (PCN)

Another new set of initials to get used to! Northgate Medical Practice is now part of a Primary Care Network: previously - as we reported in the Newsletter for Autumn 2017 – this was called the Community Hub Operating Centre (CHOC). The principle is the same though, a group of general practices working together with a range of local providers to provide coordinated health and social care. Our PCN includes Northgate Medical Practice with its Blean and Chartham surgeries, Sturry Surgery, Canterbury Health Centre and the Old School Surgery, and combined provides a range of services:

- health care professionals
- pharmacists
- physiotherapists
- community nurses
- geriatricians
- podiatrist/chiropractors
- geriatricians
- social workers
- dementia workers
- social prescribing

but also has a focus on giving patients a tailored health care plan based on individual needs.

Mental Health Provision.

There has been a lot of attention given to mental health in the press recently and our local Clinical Care Commissioning Group (CCCG) has produced a PowerPoint presentation outlining local provision and asking the PPG to respond with suggestions for improvement. We stressed the need for better provision and in particular shorter

waiting times, but at the same time suggested ways in which the experience of patients might be improved by raising awareness of the needs of patients with mental problems throughout the practice.

Urgent Care Clinic

The replacement for the Drop-In Clinic has been in operation since May and seems to have been very successful in achieving its aims. The problem with the Drop-in system was that patients were often kept waiting for a long time in a crowded waiting room before seeing a healthcare professional. With the new system, on arrival at reception you will be given a timed appointment which means you know when your appointment will be and can plan what to do in the meantime. It is noticeable that mornings are calmer at NMP!

Social Prescribing: Red Zebra

If you are reading this as a patient of NMP you will probably have noticed that dotted around the waiting area are posters for every condition under the sun, and several referring to Red Zebra. Red Zebra is a charity, and helps you access those things that your GP might think will help with your problem but which are not treatments the NHS can provide. This 'social prescribing' is a way to help people make positive changes in their lives and within their communities by linking them to voluntary and community groups and other non-clinical services.

The benefits of this approach include helping people to make changes to improve health and wellbeing. They provide a range of services that enable people to be involved and active in their communities, whether it's through volunteering, joining resident-led groups or accessing a huge range of community groups and activities.

You do not need to be referred by your GP. You can contact Red Zebra yourself on 01227 272781 or go to www.redzebra.org.uk

Community Desk

I visited NMP last Tuesday and discovered the Community Desk. This operates every Tues-

day, and on this occasion was manned by Age UK. We have highlighted before in this Newsletter the many services that this organisation offers to people over 55. On this occasion the desk was manned by Beverley Edwards who runs the charity's Personalised Independence Programme (PIP). This aims to improve all sorts of aspects of life for the older generation, by putting individuals in touch with groups and services, equipment, adaptations and lifelines. Other organisations will be contributing to this Community Desk service under the umbrella of the Red Zebra organisation.

Online Access to Appointments and Repeat Prescriptions.

Technology is forever coming up with new ways of doing things, and that includes interacting with your Medical Practice . Going to the surgery in person is of course still possible. The telephone is still an option – the first technological advance in appointment making – but please note you cannot order a repeat prescription by phone. Many of us are used to going onto the NMP website for repeat prescriptions and checking appointments. What is relatively new is the way that nationwide systems for dealing with our medical needs have sprung up. We have promoted the Patient Access system (website: <https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk/>) for some time and it is still an option. That has now been joined by the **NHS App**: go to your app store and download the app, then follow the instructions

For both of these you will need to register. To do this you will need some registration information from a document which you can get by coming to reception with some ID – driving licence, passport etc - and asking for it. You then enter the details to get your user ID and create your password.

NHS Screening Policy.

Screening is a way of identifying apparently healthy people who may have an increased risk of a particular condition. The NHS offers a range of screening tests to different sections

of the population. The aim is to offer screening to the people who are most likely to benefit from it. For example some screening tests are only offered to new-born babies, while others such as breast screening and abdominal aortic aneurysm screening are only offered to older people.

The following screenings are currently offered:

- Screening in pregnancy
- Screening for new-born babies
- Diabetic eye screening
- Cervical screening is offered to women aged 25 to 64 to check the health of cells in the cervix. It is offered every 3 years for those aged 26 to 49, and every 5 years from the ages of 50 to 64.
- Breast screening
- Bowel cancer screening
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening

Before having any screening test, it's worth finding out about the test itself and what would happen next if you found out you have a higher risk of a particular condition. Deciding whether or not to have a screening test is a personal choice and one which only you can make. When you are invited for screening, you will receive an information leaflet about the screening test.

You can discuss any aspect of the screening test with your health professional and decide whether or not it's right for you.

Different types of screening have different benefits and risks. Some of these are:

- Screening can detect a problem early, before you have any symptoms.
- Finding out about a problem early can mean that treatment is more effective.
- Finding out you have a health problem or an increased risk of a health problem can help people make better informed decisions about their health.
- Screening can reduce the risk of developing a condition or its complications.
- Screening can save lives.

Holiday Vaccinations

If you're planning to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some of the serious diseases found in other parts of the world. Vaccinations are available to protect you against infections such as typhoid and hepatitis A. Please note that while vaccination against these two diseases is free there is a charge for others.

If possible, see your GP at least 8 weeks before you're due to travel. Some vaccines need to be given well in advance to allow your body to develop immunity, and some vaccines involve a number of doses spread over several weeks or months.

You may be more at risk of some diseases, for example, if you're:

- travelling in rural areas
- backpacking
- staying in hostels or camping
- on a long trip rather than a package holiday

If you have a pre-existing health problem, this may make you more at risk of infection or complications from a travel-related illness. You can find out which vaccinations are necessary or recommended for the areas you'll be visiting on these websites:

- [Travel Health Pro](#)
- [NHS Fit for Travel](#)

Shingles

A vaccine to prevent shingles, a common, painful skin disease is available on the NHS to people in their 70s. The shingles vaccine is given as a single injection into the upper arm. Unlike the flu jab, you'll only need to have the vaccination once and you can have it at any time of the year. It is expected to reduce your risk of getting shingles. If you do go on to have the disease, your symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter. **Shingles** can be very painful and uncomfortable. Some people are left with pain lasting for years after the initial rash has healed. Shingles is also fatal for around 1 in 1,000 over-70s who develop it.

You're eligible for the shingles vaccine if you are aged 70 or 78 years old. In addition, anyone who was previously eligible (born on or after September 2 1942) but missed out on their shingles vaccination remains eligible until their 80th birthday. Currently if you are aged 77 or 76 and born before September 6 1942 you are not eligible for the vaccine.

Meningitis

Are you a teenager? Are you about to start at college or university? Have you had vaccination against meningitis? It is likely that you had it in school in year 9 or 10, but if not you are advised to get yourself vaccinated. You do not need to be told how devastating meningitis and blood poisoning (septicaemia) can be, and cases caused by a highly virulent strain of Men W bacteria have been rising since 2009.

Older teenagers and new university students are at higher risk of infection because many of them mix closely with lots of new people, some of whom may unknowingly carry the meningococcal bacteria at the back of their noses and throats. Contact the Medical Centre to arrange an appointment.

Practice News

The practice now has a Paramedic Car: Mike Earl can now go about his work in a bright orange car thanks to the generosity of Barretts Citroen Canterbury. He has also been joined by a second paramedic, Leanne Earl.

Patients Participation Group

The Patients Participation Group consists of patients at the Northgate Medical Practice who regularly give up some of their time to discuss matters of concern to patients both at the Practice and more widely in the NHS. The role of the PPG is to promote good communication between the practice and the patients. It meets four times a year. If there are any matters of general importance to the running of the Practice you would like the PPG to raise, you can contact the Chair, Stephen Thomas, on 01227 451974.