



Marden Medical Centre Patient Reference Group

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 7

Autumn 2017

Welcome to the seventh newsletter of the Marden Patient Reference Group. This is your newsletter to inform, to help and to liaise with the group.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE IN HARD COPY FORMAT AS WELL AS LARGE PRINT FROM THE SURGERY



FLU IMMUNISATION CLINICS

Our Flu Clinics this year have been a great success. At the Saturday Clinic on 14th October we also immunised children and were delighted to see so many attend for their nasal spray vaccine in fancy dress, clutching their favourite teddies! Balloons were appreciated by all.

It's not too late to have your vaccine, we still have plenty of supplies. You are entitled to a free NHS vaccine if you are:

- aged 65 and over
- pregnant
- are any age with an underlying health condition (such as long-term heart or respiratory disease)
- have a weakened immune systems
- have a child aged 2 or 3
- care for someone else

Please book an appointment via reception.

NEWS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome again to another addition of your Patient Reference Group newsletter. As a Patients Reference Group we have enjoyed the summer and made progress in compiling a Community Contacts list which can be viewed on the PRG website. I am sure more contacts will arise as time goes by. Please give us your suggestions.

Now the clocks have gone back, the nights are getting longer, and autumn is here, I confess I enjoy the dark evenings feeling cosy indoors, but I still need to get out in the sun when it shines and to be with others in the fresh air. The Come and Sing sessions which have been so successful have started again. The walking group has had a successful summer, there will still be walks throughout the autumn and winter. We are fortunate in Marden, there is always so much going on. Make the most of our friendly community, venture out not just to see the sun but meet up with others.



Sian Burr

For more information about the PRG www.marden-prg.org.uk

IS THE NHS IN CRISIS?

The consensus from those working in the NHS is that the service is facing its greatest ever challenges at a time when “Austerity” politics has under resourced General Practice even more than the hospitals. What could this mean for our patients?



Hospitals are struggling to manage the aging population with greater needs but fewer beds than before when gaps in social care prevent timely discharge. They also struggle to staff busy departments and can be behind on admin and organisation. This could mean cancellations to operations, cancellations of appointments, delays in correspondence and information and patient diversions to other hospitals when local units are full. We cannot influence these issues.

CCGs are struggling to balance the books because hospital and prescription costs are so high. They also need to oversee other services they pay for like District Nurses and Psychiatry. They respond by applying pressure on GPs to keep down waste while maintaining service. They can also decide to block certain things such as prescribing of Gluten-free foods or NHS vasectomies, or they can introduce barriers to Knee and Hip replacements. We have almost no influence on these choices.

GPs are struggling because complexity of care has risen along with average ages. Patients consult on average 6-7 times per year now not 4 times as it was 10 years ago. The fixed sum to provide the Drs, Nurses, management, staff, building and running costs is largely unchanged so profit is falling even before inflation. Morale is low and recruitment is very difficult. We can only influence this by new systems to redirect demand toward self-help, pharmacists, dentists, 111 etc., or by reducing expectations. You may be dealt with by a trained receptionist, a paramedic or a clinical pharmacist and some procedures such as ear syringing or leg ulcers may need to be redirected.

What this means for the care we give you?

Our ethos that we “endeavour to provide a high standard of medical care with a strong belief in looking after the whole person and the family as well as in prevention of ill health” remains unchanged but we have to constantly analyse and adapt to both the wider pressures from a struggling NHS and the local pressures that the increasing population in Marden are placing on us and our team.

Please can we ask for your continued understanding and support as we do this?

DENTAL INFECTIONS

The Surgery is now strictly enforcing NHS and BMA guidance that GPs should not treat dental infections.

This guidance is taken from NHS choices:

You should see a dentist as soon as possible if you think you have a dental abscess. You can get help from:

- [your registered dentist](#) – if it's out of hours, they should have an answerphone message with details of [how to access out-of-hours dental treatment](#)
- [NHS 111](#) – who can give you details of dental services in your area
- [your local accident and emergency \(A&E\) department](#) – if there are no other options or you're having difficulty breathing

We have informed local dentists of this change in policy.



FRONT ENTRANCE



Work on our front entrance to improve accessibility into the building is well underway. We apologise for the inconvenience caused over the last few weeks and thank the PRG for their assistance in directing patients to the temporary entrance. By the end of November the automated doors should be in place. There may be some more minor disruption over the coming weeks as we improve the waiting room flooring and decorate. Thank you for your patience

TEXT APPOINTMENT REMINDER SERVICE

This has worked extremely well and has significantly improved our non-attendance rates for appointments. We have mobile phone contact details for over 70% of our patients. Please remember to let us know if your contact details change.



OLD OR UNUSED INHALERS



Please can you return any old or unused inhalers to the surgery?

We are trying to do our bit for the environment and can send them off to be recycled.

**A BRIEF REPORT ON THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE AT
THE McCABE DAY CENTRE – STAPLEHURST**

What We Are

The McCabe Day Center is a multipurpose hall with en-suite kitchen and toilet facilities located within a Sheltered Housing Estate.

The hall is currently under the ownership of 'Golding Homes' (formerly 'Maidstone Housing Trust') a Housing Association founded in 2004 and based in Aylesford, Maidstone,

The hall offers a shared facility for local volunteer activity groups to provide social interaction primarily for local elderly and disabled residents.

The Management Team

The facility is managed by The McCabe Day Center Management Group, a volunteer organisation made up of local residents and currently chaired by Caroline Highwood.

Activity Groups

The range of activities provided by the various independent activity groups through the week are as follows:

Monday: Staplehurst Community Club Afternoon Tea Club from **2pm – 4pm** open to both Staplehurst and Marden residents over 55. Local Volunteer Transport for Staplehurst residents only can be arranged by prior arrangement.

Contact: Rita – Age UK Local Leader for more details or just turn up!
Tel: 01580 890541; rita.agame@hotmail.co.uk

Tuesday: Age UK Community Hub Lunch Club open between **10:30am – 2:30pm**
A fee of **£11.00** will include a two course lunch, Hot and Cold Refreshments and Snacks and various activities throughout the day including Bingo, Raffles, Games and Puzzles. Live Entertainment is also provided once a month as well as a Christmas Party and various trips to the coast in summer.
A mini-bus service is available at **£7.50** return trip if required.
Contact: Age UK Maidstone - Tel. 01622 753618 Website: www.ageuk.org.uk
Monday-Thursday 10:00am – 4:00pm Friday 10:00am – 2:00pm

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday / Sunday: Lunch Club for over 50's (Staplehurst Residents Only) open between **11:45am - 1:45pm**
Thursdays & every second Sunday in the month for lunch. Lunch is currently **£3.00** on a Thursday and **£3.50** on a Sunday and optional local transport is **£1.50**. There is a raffle each week and summer and Christmas outings.
Contact: Elaine Martin: 01580 892033.

Friday: The Weald Club for Disabled People Club including Lunch open to all local residents in Staplehurst and surrounding villages from **9:30am - 1:30pm** for people who enjoy companionship, shopping trips, visiting places of interest, games (including indoor bowls (played from a seated position) plus excellent home cooked meals.
Transport provided with specially adapted mini-bus to carry wheelchair users from Staplehurst, Marden, Headcorn and Frittenden with help from our volunteer escorts and support members.
Contact: Maggie Weller: 01580 891870 or Ken Collins: 01580 8913



“Come and Sing”
End of Term Christmas Celebration
Thursday 14th December
Marden Congregational Church



Music 2-3pm, Seasonal Refreshments 3-3:30pm.

Come and hear what we've been singing this term and join in with some old Christmas favourites! All are welcome, particularly those who are thinking about joining the group For more information Contact: Sarah (832925) or Marden Medical Centre (831257)



Supported by Marden Medical Centre, Marden PRG, St Michael and All Angels and Marden Congregational Churches