

# PATIENTS GROUP

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## Queen Edith Medical Practice

Patients Participation Group (PPG)

Complementing the Work of the Practice

PPG email: [ppg@alanwilliams.org.uk](mailto:ppg@alanwilliams.org.uk)

**NEWSLETTER NO 29: March 2022**

Editor – David Blake – [artisanpin@gmail.com](mailto:artisanpin@gmail.com)

I hope you find this newsletter interesting. As well as the usual items, it contains an introduction to the social care services that are becoming available as the merging of social and medical care progresses.

The newsletter has been put together using submissions from Claire Surridge QE Practice Manager, Alan Williams, David Bridges, Howard Sherriff and Susie Peters. Many thanks to those who make this newsletter possible.

If you have any requests for items to be included in the next newsletter, please email the Editor.

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### 1. PRACTICE NEWS

**Practice News March 2022, Claire Surridge Practice Manager**

**#BeKind - Please be kind to our staff**

Staff at our practice are working extremely hard and doing their best to make sure patients are safe.

Over the last 2 years, the practice has been supporting the pandemic response and ensuring our patients are able to get their COVID-19 vaccinations, at the same time as continuing to deliver primary care services and seeing a huge increase in demand.

This has made our GP practice very busy and our staff have been working incredibly hard to keep services open for patients.

We're aware patients may experience longer wait times on the phone or for their appointment, but we need to ensure you receive the right treatment from the right person at the right time.

Whether your appointment is over the telephone, via an online video consultation, or face-to-face, patients will always receive the same high-quality standard of care from our practice team.

So please, if you contact our practice, be kind.

Thank you for your patience and support.

**Please note our receptionists are unable to book face to face appointments with a GP – you will be offered a telephone appointment with the GP in the first instance and the GP will then book you a face-to-face appointment if they feel this is necessary.**

## COVID-19 VACCINATIONS & INFORMATION

The practice gets a high number of calls each day regarding vaccinations, travel abroad and general information and in most instances we are unable to answer your query. Therefore, *before* calling the practice, we would ask that you do the following first, as they are better suited to answer all COVID-19 queries -

**go to:**            <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For the most up to date advice and information on COVID-19 and the continuing vaccination programme

**or call**            **119**

If you have a specific issue with your own vaccination data/need to answer a specific query.

**This will help ensure our phone lines are available for those who may be in need of urgent care.**

## 2. PRIMARY CARE TEAM

The organisation of healthcare in the UK is changing and one of the changes will help to deliver additional services via GPs.

### ICS and PCN – What's That About?

A Bill is wending its way through Parliament to establish ICS (the Integrated Care System) in England; NB. Wales and Scotland manage their own Health Systems. When the Law is in place, the NHS will be "replaced" by ICS. Of course, this raises many questions but some parts are known already and are more or less in place. In each area (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, in our case) Social Care, which is currently dealt with in local authorities, will be linked with Healthcare.

Under ICS, healthcare budgets will be devolved to the hospitals and to 21 Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in the County. General Practices (GPs) will receive their funding via their PCNs and will be part of the governance of their PCN. They will continue to deliver health care to their registered patients. The PCN will administer the "social" elements via its own staff. Most of these staff have already been recruited and are "in post". They will be based in certain Practices and many of them will be responsible for their roles in two, three or more Practices. Our PCN (Cambridge City 4) has six

practices (listed in our Newsletter 28 - last December). Members of PPG have been meeting some PCN staff to explore various ideas – more news about these as soon as possible.

The changes will take time to bed in and the process of change may come across as rather bureaucratic. There are however already some staff in post who are keen to help and support mechanisms to deliver Social Care.

### **Health and Well-being Coach**

As part of the new Primary Care Team supporting Queen Edith's Medical Practice, Susie Peters is a Health and Wellbeing Coach offering one-to-one coaching sessions face to face, online or on the phone. The aim of these sessions is to support patients in improving their Wellbeing by taking small manageable steps to make progress in any areas of their lives that are important to them. These conversations can focus on anything from managing anxiety to creating new healthy habits, or from making time for self-care to improving confidence and resilience.

If you would like to know more, email [susie.peters@nhs.net](mailto:susie.peters@nhs.net) and include a contact phone number, and she will call you at a convenient time to discuss the service further. There is a poster following this newsletter which relates to her work.

### **Support for Carers**

Most of us will, at some stage in our lives, find ourselves taking care of a relative or friend who, for one among a wide variety of reasons is unable fully to take care of himself or herself: a disabled child or parent, for example, an elderly relative, a friend suffering from mental or physical ill health. While caring in this way may be deeply rewarding, it can also be exhausting, frustrating, distressing, isolating, and carers often feel that they themselves need a bit of care and support, practical and emotional.

The PPG has been wondering how it can help to put carers in touch with help available – and here is a little information to start with. We are happy to publicise other resources that members think would be helpful.

One of our members, Sue Randall, has drawn attention to Caring Together, which is the main carer support agency in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and produces a regular and very informative newsletter about carer support groups. Their website <https://www.caringtogether.org/> has lots of information and they can be contacted on 01480 499090 or 03452 410954 and via email at [hello@caringtogether.org](mailto:hello@caringtogether.org). Also recommended is Rethink Mental Illness <https://www.rethink.org/> which, as its title suggests, has lots of information on all aspects of mental health. The Advice and Information Service is open from 9.30am – 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays and can be contacted through Freephone 08088 010525.

Making Space, email [C&Preferrals@makingspace.co.uk](mailto:C&Preferrals@makingspace.co.uk) has a small team of paid staff and has been commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council to support the carers of adults with mental health conditions. Contact: 01480 211006.

The PCN has recently established a small team of staff providing or helping people to find care in the community. George Surridge has the role of Care Coordinator and Maria Carvalho has the role of Social Prescriber Link Worker covering the QE Medical Practice and Woodlands Surgery. They are based at QEMP and these services are available through the GP surgery. A poster describing this area of work follows this newsletter.

### 3. HEALTHCARE SNIPPETS

**Covid:** “Fingers crossed” we are in the process of moving from pandemic to endemic. Many people, estimated to be around half the population, have had one or other variant and many have been vaccinated. Older people have had three “shots” and a fourth is on its way (with effect from 21<sup>st</sup> March) for over 75s and people over 12 who are immuno-compromised. It SEEMS as if we are moving towards a situation like we have with flu, some people get ill, a small proportion of them die and we move on. The risk of course is that the Covid virus mutates again into a nastier variant as flu did in 1919/20 with “Spanish flu” and “Asian flu” in 1957. Currently if we catch Covid, we could be unpleasantly unwell but most of us will have some resistance – unlike the situation in 2020 when there were no vaccines.

Apart from the vaccines and some older drugs (eg dexamethasone), which seem to help in dangerously ill patients, two new Covid drugs have been provisionally approved. These are molnupiravir with one active ingredient from Merck, and Paxlovid, which has two active ingredients, from Pfizer (all three active ingredients have names ending *vir* signifying “anti-viral”). But there are also hundreds more trials of other possible drugs underway. According to the journal *Nature* there are 105 late-stage trials in progress now which might lead to the approval of a dozen or more new drugs for Covid and a myriad of early-stage trials.

**Cancer:** A consequence of Covid is that the usual treatment plans for cancer have been disrupted by “log-jams” in hospitals with appointments being deferred. It is clear that it will take a long time to get everything “back on course” but most people are being careful with their predictions and these may be “worse” than the eventual outcomes might be.

### 4. NEWS FROM CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL TRUST (CUHT)

Covid remains active. Locally it is the Omicron variety. Cambridge has the highest number of cases in England. At the end of February there were 67,000 new cases and 1,192 admissions per day up to 27 February.

However, until 27 February there were 2,738 cases per week in Cambridge, which is down by 1,095 from the previous week (28%). This trend is continuing. This means that Cambridge has 416 per 100,000 compared to the national level of 347 per 100,000 and is the highest in England. As a result, there is a need to continue the Covid wards and that is restricting recovery of elective work.

The highest numbers are in 10-14 age group followed by 30-34 year-olds. There is a slight increase in cases in the over 90s. An additional fact is that although Cambridge City has the high number it also has the lowest vaccination rate.

The Governors are pressing for additional space to admit emergency patients rather than admit them through the Emergency Department. An additional area has been identified but will not be available until April 2023. Governors continue to press for this to be developed sooner.

Some good news is that outline planning for the Children’s Hospital has been approved, and it is planned that building should start in 2024, with the Cancer Hospital starting in 2023, as part of the Addenbrookes 3 Phase 2 plans.

All staff including Governors have received the specially made Covid badge designed by a local artist. A picture of the badge is below.



## 5. PPG TALKS PROGRAMME

Before Covid, the PPG had an active programme of talks, mostly given by senior NHS consultants. The talks were held at St James Church and were well attended. Regrettably, Covid put a stop to that although we had the option to use Zoom calls and did so, but the pressure on the NHS meant that it was very difficult to access the specialists. Our solution was to look into related areas where we could find speakers, including tapping into the expertise of some of our own members. On the whole this was a good solution to keeping the activity going.

Now that Covid rules have been “parked” we can consider going back to our previous approach. We are pleased to announce that in the near future, our previous member, Howard Sherriff, will be doing a talk for us concerning his experience of being a Governor at Cambridge University Hospitals Trust (CUHT) which now includes Addenbrooke’s and the Rosie (and will soon implement the new Cancer Hospital and the proposed Children’s Hospital). We expect the date for this talk will be in early April and hope that there will be the possibility of doing this “in person”. Arrangements are being discussed.

For those of you who don’t know Howard, he worked as a Consultant and Director of A&E at Addenbrooke’s in “days gone by”. Also, you may know from the last Newsletter, Howard Sherriff has moved away from QEMP. Alan Williams has now replaced him on the CAPG; see acronyms below.

## 6. THE NHS SYSTEM AND ACRONYMS

The list of acronyms used in the NHS were outlined in the previous PPG Newsletter. For reference a short version of the list follows:

CCG - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group or CCG, with an annual budget of £1.6 Billion, is responsible for allocating the budget to hospitals and 90 GP practices in our area. GPs are responsible for delivering the healthcare at their practices.

During this year, likely to be around July 2022, the CCG is scheduled to be replaced by another body called the Integrated Care Service or ICS. I am sure they will be difficulties in getting the reorganisation to run smoothly but eventually social care will be joined up with health care.

Other groups relevant to local GP delivery are:

CUHT – the Cambridge University Hospital Trust whose responsibilities include Addenbrookes.

PCN – Primary Care Network. Since the NHS was created in 1948, the population has grown and people are living longer. Many people are living with long term conditions such as diabetes and heart disease or suffer with mental health issues and may need to access their local health services more often. To meet these needs, GP practices are working together with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services in their local areas in groups of practices known as primary care networks (PCNs). PCNs have between 30,000 and 50,000 patients and Queen Ediths is a member of Cambridge City 4 PCN.

PRG – Patient Reference Group. The PRG is a formal sub group of the CCG Governing Body. The focus of the PRG is on providing an independent view of the work of the CCG. It helps to ensure that, in all aspects of the CCG's business, the voice of the local population is heard. It is a route for patients to make representations to the body that funds medical services. Until recently, Howard Sherriff was a member of the PRG as a representative of CAPG.

CAPG – The CAPG is the Cambridge Area Patients Group. Any Patient Participation Group or PPG of a Cambridge practice may send a representative to CAPG meetings to exchange information and provide feedback to funding organisations. It also includes a couple of representatives from a large, linked practice (known as Granta) in South Cambridgeshire. CAPG meets about six times a year and represents approximately 26 practices with a total about 250,000/300,000 patients.

Regards

David Blake


The following two posters relate to Wellbeing Sessions and Social Prescribing. These services are part of the social care available following the introduction of the Integrated Care Service (ICS) and are available to you as patients of the Queen Ediths Medical Practice.

Free, Monthly, Online  Via Zoom

# WELLBEING SESSIONS



**Join us in an informal setting to connect with others, learn new ways to improve your wellbeing and receive support from a qualified and experienced Wellbeing Coach**

Topics include resilience, confidence, managing anxiety, journalling, healthy habits, mindfulness, managing stress and many more 

**First Tuesday of every month,  
09:30-11:00 from April onwards**

**EMAIL [SUSIE.PETERS@NHS.NET](mailto:SUSIE.PETERS@NHS.NET) FOR THE ZOOM LINK AND TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS**



# **SOCIAL PRESCRIBING**

We understand that looking after yourself means focusing on more than just your physical health. Your local Link Worker can take the time to chat to you about how you are feeling & **what matters to you**. They can support you to explore options in your community to improve your wellbeing & help you to plan those next steps.

## **What can we support you with?**

- Social isolation and loneliness
- Housing, work and money issues
- Accessing training and volunteering opportunities
- Low confidence or mood
- Linking you to activities to improve your wellbeing
- Healthy lifestyle choices
- Support for carers, or those who need to arrange care
- Life changing events such as birth, retirement and bereavement

**For more information contact your GP surgery**