

Writing several weeks before our newsletter is published does make it hard to predict what the Covid 19 situation will be like at the time of publication. What is very clear is that Covid is still with us, infections are high particularly in school age children and there remains disruption (often at short notice to the services we provide). We are though monitoring the situation very closely and as soon as it is practical and safe to do so, we do aim to resume at least some pre-bookable GP face to face appointments.

Please take a look at the Calverton community hub (CORE)'s website as though now relocated it is offering more and more services. Recent additions include a pop in BP check service and appointments with a Your Health Your Way support worker who can advise on lifestyle change, alcohol reduction and smoking cessation. Their website is <https://www.calvertoncore.org.uk>

Other services are headed under 'well-being'; 'courses' and a 'job club', it would be well worth checking to see whether there is something useful or of interest.

A reminder that in addition to CORE's BP checking service, we do have BP monitors we can loan from the practice. These are particularly useful for patients requiring a set of readings over a week and are free to borrow (though we do ask for a deposit re-imbursed on return). Many of our patients requiring frequent checks do buy their own monitor, we recommend those used on the upper arm rather than the wrist.

Next, a reminder that though there have been delays to some routine care during the pandemic, many key services at the practice are unaffected. We are particularly keen that contraception checks take place, we are continuing to fit coils and implants, cervical smears are happening and we are maintaining immunisation services. In the news recently it was mentioned that nationally some childhood vaccination rates have fallen (particularly MMR) which is a worrying trend to be avoided locally. Those potentially serious childhood illnesses have not gone away and it is very important we don't see a resurgence of those non-Covid infections.

Also, we will soon be launching a service called 'Patients Know Best', I will write more in next month's newsletter but to use this service you do need to download the NHS App which would be worth considering anyway. We anticipate this will allow our patients more options to access services in future.

Finally this month we do say fond farewell to Dr Partington, her patients will automatically be transferred to Dr Richmond in April and in Dr Richmond's place we welcome back Dr Hughes.

Phil Rayner

Late news from Dr Brown:-

As a practice we actively participate in research activity. There is currently a research study called PANORAMIC which is a national priority study to explore whether new anti-viral treatments for COVID-19 can reduce the need for hospitalisations. The study is for those with confirmed COVID-19, is home based, lasts for only 5 days, the antivirals are oral capsules and participants are free to withdraw at any time. Over 5000 people have already taken part in the study, but they are urgently encouraging others to come forward. For further information visit www.panoramictrial.org

