

# Patient Newsletter, February 2022



## From Dr Richard Hampsheir, Lead Partner

Last year I said at this time 2020 was unprecedented. The Pandemic has remained with us. The Surgery has remained opened throughout and continues to be. There are still risks, hence you will still be asked questions and on seldom occasions have your temperature taken before entering into a small treatment room to see a clinician.



## Care Quality Commission

We have recently experienced a Care Quality Commission Inspection. This followed the Feb 2020 inspection where we required "needs improving". Initial feedback is that we have improved considerably, achieving good in two out of the five categories. We need to focus on two areas in particular this year.



## Patient Survey

The National Patient Survey results have improved on last year, but not enough. It is clear that getting through to the Surgery and achieving an appointment you specifically want is not good enough for you. Please be aware the Covid vaccination has had an enormous impact on the Reception Team. Despite changing the phone system, there are still concerns about getting through quickly but the following may assist in explaining why this is; over the past few months 11,286 patients have had their first Covid vaccination, 9,473 their second, 7870 the third and we are now going out to 500 patients who qualify for a fourth vaccine. We have therefore been dealing with an additional 26,000 calls over and above a usual hectic day at the surgery..



In the coming months you will see Healthwatch representatives in the Surgery Waiting Areas, along with the Patient Participation Group members. They will be asking you for feedback on current services so we can try and improve the survey results and deliver better services.



## Medication Reviews

The other area I believe we will be asked to pay more attention is medication reviews for patients with repeat prescriptions. Many of you ask why we have to do this. It is a safety regulation from the NHS and every year a review of repeat medications must be conducted. We have 7,130 people on repeats. This means every working day we have to achieve 27 medication reviews. Over the past 11 months we have completed in excess of 6,000 and are striving to make sure we get to everyone. If you are notified on your prescription that you are due for a medication review, it would assist us if you could please use the **Medication Review option on E-Consult** (*online access to the surgery*).

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## Pre-Bookable Appointments

Appointments with practice nurses and health care assistants are pre-bookable, via the telephone.

Blood tests, cervical smears, eight week mother and baby post-natal checks, baby and child immunisations, pill checks as well as some diabetic and asthma reviews, are also available to pre-book.

## Dr Ike Nnene, Partner

I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that if you do have any persistent or worrying symptoms, please do contact us. Preferable by phone or via E-Consult. Regarding the Patient Survey my colleague raises, we did identify frustration with waiting on the phone and then when through to the surgery, being placed into our system again by being asked to submit an online E-Consult. If you have access to internet, iPhone or device, please use this first if you can. It alleviates the phone volume and gives the doctors so much more information initially. This means we have a better idea of what is wrong and subsequently more time for identifying care pathways for improved resolution.

### Positive Health Initiative

In the last quarter of 2021, I commenced a series of Online Group Webinars designed to empower participants to help understand and better manage their experiences and conditions. The first sessions we ran regarded Positive Mental Health and Wellness. We received very positive feedback from these which have encouraged us to continue to develop and improve the programme.

We are currently exploring ways to improve the patient experience of these sessions, to make it easier for patients sign up for them, to develop the scheme with forums, and to look at recording sessions for those not able to make them live. Our next session will be about **Diabetes Control**, and details will be sent out for this in due course to patients with diabetes. In addition, if you keep an eye on our website this will give information on forthcoming sessions and will enable you to book online. You need to be a Thorpewood patient, but there is no registration login and no cost.

## Active Norfolk — Working together to get Norfolk moving!

A collaboration between Norfolk County Council, Sport England and Active Partnerships.



At Active Norfolk they are working hard to increase physical activity levels across the county. They are working closely with charities and organisations to ensure physical activity is accessible to everyone across Norfolk to live a happier and healthier lifestyle.

Check out their website at:

<https://www.activenorfolk.org/>

to find out more and search their **brand new activity finder**.

## Thorpewood Patient Participation Group

"One of the great strengths of this country is that we have an NHS that—at its best—is 'of the people, by the people and for the people .... We need to engage with communities and citizens in new ways, involving them directly in decisions about the future of health and care services.'" NHS England and Public Participation Policy.

Since April 2015, it has been a contractual requirement of NHS England for all GP practices to have a PPG and to make reasonable efforts for this to be representative of the practice population. Thorpewood formed their PPG Group well before this in 2007 and has been active since then—even through the recent pandemic via 'Zoom' — meeting approximately every six weeks.

PPGs are seen as a significant way of involving people in

- Contributing to continued improvement of primary care services
- Develop improved communication between the practice and its patients
- Help patients to take more responsibility for their health
- Provide practical support and help to implement change

Now the group is able to meet in person, it is hoped to develop more active ways for them to be involved whilst maintaining the stance of being a critical friend. As mentioned overleaf, you may meet with some of our members who will be helping with the imminent patient survey organised by Healthwatch.

Currently we have our full complement of members on the group but future vacancies will be advertised on our website where minutes from previous meetings can also be found.



## Dr Suraj Ranasinghe, Partner .... and finally

"We have all had to contend with unprecedented challenges in recent times. It is my fervent hope that the patient population we serve, and we, as the care providers, negotiate our way through changes in General Practice and the wider NHS, in the weeks and months ahead."