

Practice Update

In previous newsletters I have talked about the 'Pace of Change'.....well in 2017 that pace has got even quicker! We have had new contracts, new staff, new services and new alliances.....all majorly impacting on the surgery.

Many patients do not realise that a GP surgery is an independent business – running NHS contracts to a series of set agreements; bound by very important things like the NHS Constitution, the NHS care ethos and NHS national regulations, but still being an independent contractor. Like any small business, the very survival of the practice depends on covering all operating costs incurred, and ensuring there is resilience to still be here in the coming years.

Sadly, not all practices in Norwich have been able to maintain their effective resilience; there have been four City practices that have merged in the last 6 months, and others will I'm sure follow in the coming months and years. Despite some media reports, not all Norwich practices want to form into 4-6 'Super-Practices' and the Partners of Thorpewood hope to be an independent NHS contractor in the coming years. They see real benefits in working together under the 'OneNorwich' banner, but not if that means one 'Super Practice' or 'Super Partnership' across the whole of the City. Hopefully, we will be able to care for your needs in 2020 and beyond.

Please understand that although we can negotiate to a degree with Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group (NCCG) as to exact service specifications, we still have a final choice to make; either to accept the required changes, or not to provide a particular service to our patients. As such we are subject to the wider pressures on the NHS, both nationally and locally. Some Norwich practices have chosen not to provide certain services to their patients – we have tried to keep all the services we currently provide going if at all possible. We hope that we will be able to do the same post-April 2018....only time will tell.

Finally, you may have read reports of the Norfolk & Waveney Sustainability & Transformation Plan (STP) and the likely change in Norfolk/Norwich to a Multi-Community Provider (MCP) contract – at this stage nothing concrete is known about the MCP, but what is for sure under plans for Norfolk's healthcare reforms, the changes seen so far in 2017 will keep on coming. **Ian Wilson, Practice Manager**



Clinical Staff Changes

One of the elements that we have been particularly noted for here at Thorpewood over the years is that we are an innovative practice, being creative to deal with pressures in primary care or the wider NHS. The upside is that we are involved in many pan-Norwich 'pilot'schemes and service re-designs.

However, there is the downside that our staff are highly prized 'catches' by other healthcare providers, and we have sadly lost some very valued members of the team recently—Frank Grinnell, Andrew Karrouze and Sandra Mahn all of whom are working on a service re-design at their new practices. We thank all three for their hard work and dedication to Thorpewood patients during their stay here.



We are, however, pleased to have been able to successfully recruit Rosy Scott (*right in photo*) and Carole Biddlestone as Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP), and have just heard that one more new ANP recruit, Natalie Fiander has agreed to join us. Rosy has started seeing patients already, Carole will be starting with us in early September, and Natalie will be with us in November.

Many of you will have met our newest GP, Dr Natalie Heyns (*left in photo*), who we were delighted to welcome in February of this year as Dr Spiros Macris retired.

Phlebotomy Service

It was unfortunate there was uncertainty around the phlebotomy service at Thorpewood once the old contract expired—fortunately we were able to agree with NCCG to continue to provide this service during 2017-18.

Warfarin Monitoring

Patients currently taking Warfarin will have experienced a change to the way their medication is monitored with more being actioned by Thorpewood practice staff. Finger-prick testing is now used as the reliability of this testing kit has improved over the years and is now used by other practices.

This switch from the monitoring team at the James Paget was an enforced change under the Locally Commissioned Services we provide to NCCG's requirements. Further changes may be made in the future.

#SELF CARE + signposting patients to the most appropriate NHS facility



Some members of our friendly reception team—here to help signpost you to the most appropriate care for your needs.

Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Groups have collaborated to produce a campaign around **#selfcare**. This is all part of the NHS England campaign to signpost patients to the most appropriate NHS or social care facility for their particular need. In many cases this may not always be the GP and is about providing the “Right Care, Right Place, Right Time” whilst also looking at the bigger issue of NHS survivability.

Depending on clinician availability there **may** be up to 100 ‘sameday’ appointments of various types available each day at Thorpewood. The Partners, with the endorsement of NHS England and the CCG, have agreed that the clinical needs of those patients contacting the surgery will be prioritised. This is viewed as the safest way of allocating the ‘sameday’ appointments and receptionists will therefore ask for details of your need in order that the most appropriate care can be offered. Please do not take offence therefore if you are signposted elsewhere within the NHS as this is absolutely in line with the “Right Care, Right Place, Right Time” principles and hopefully will mean in years to come, we will have an NHS for all our needs.



Our leaflet ‘Choose the right service, at the right time’ will help you choose the right service for your needs and is available at the surgery and on our website.



Flu Campaign 2017—have you booked your appointment?

These appointments will commence on 16th September and are available to book now via the receptionist, or online, for all patients with a health condition such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease, arthritis or, if a carer, are pregnant, are immunosuppressed, or 65 years or over.

(Amended para) For those patients aged 65y or over and who are not already on Warfarin, we are offering an atrial fibrillation (AF) test at the same time as the flu vaccination. This just involves taking of a patient’s pulse. Should they have a fast or irregular pulse they will be asked to make an appointment for an ECG. The importance of the AF test is to detect and diagnose AF which can reduce the risk of stroke.

Thank you to those patients who have already booked their appointment – the practice appreciates your support as orders for the flu vaccination have to be submitted a year in advance.

The Children’s Flu Vaccination Programme will be available from October onwards.

Healthwatch Norfolk

We have been working in partnership with the ‘consumer champion’ Healthwatch Norfolk to provide an innovative method for patient feedback.

Patients can use a touch screen at the surgery to leave their constructive feedback on the practice and on the care received.



This touchscreen feedback option is in addition to the recent changes to the NHS Friends & Family, which is also now sent out in the form of a textback service to those that have just had an appointment.

If we do not have your updated mobile phone number you will not benefit from this enhanced text service, which also includes an automated cancellation facility and enhanced appointment reminders.

Please advise your mobile number to the receptionist when booking your next appointment.