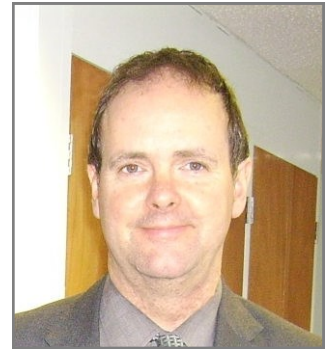


Dr Peter Burrows

Dear Patients

As you may know I am currently senior partner at Thorpewood medical group and have been with this practice for 19 yrs. Soon I will be leaving. During my time here I have seen many changes as Partners and staff have come and gone, some through retirement and others to seek pastures new. There have also been many changes throughout the NHS as a whole which have impacted on the way we deliver services and the resources we have available to us. It's a changing world and the changes happening are at a pace probably not seen since the inception of the NHS.



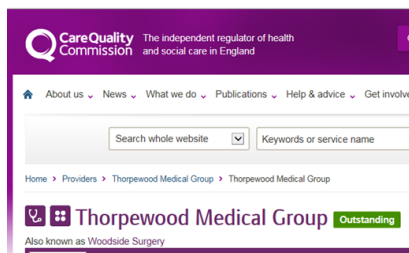
All of this can be unsettling for patients and staff alike. Fortunately I have always found Thorpewood a very adaptable place, not afraid to try out new ideas and often go the extra mile. We have a good, varied team whom I would like to thank for the hard work and support they have given me over the years. I am confident that I leave the practice in safe hands and that it will continue to adapt to the challenges and changes which lie ahead. I wish it the best of luck.

I would also like to thank patients, some of whom I have known since starting at the practice in 1997. I hope I have provided a good service during my time here. There are of course things I wish I'd done better or differently - learning experiences which are all part of being human unlike those computers which we are increasingly reliant on! Enough said—so bye for now.

Peter Burrows

Sadly we will be saying goodbye to Peter at the end of March.

'Outstanding' Care Quality Commission Inspection Report— Published January 2016.



We were really pleased to receive the final confirmation that the CQC inspection from last summer rated us as 'Outstanding' overall. The full inspection report was published in January 2016, and is available via the CQC/our website, or a hard copy is available to read in the reception areas. It was great to get the external validation that what we strive for by way of excellence of care for our patients has been recognised by the healthcare regulators.

The detailed report covered ratings for five key lines of enquiry, across six patient groupings, and found us 'Outstanding' in a number of areas, which led to the overall rating for Thorpewood being 'Outstanding'. It was also very pleasing that no one area of the inspection was less than a rating of 'Good'.

Whilst we know that we are not perfect, and constantly strive to improve the care we provide for our patients, to receive this top CQC rating, and be one of only 114 practices in the UK to date rated as 'Outstanding', is an achievement which recognises the tremendous hard work put in by the Thorpewood team.

Welcome to new staff

We are very pleased to have welcomed a number of new staff to the practice over the past few months:

Joanne Woods—administration of non-nhs medical / insurance report work.

Kirsty Ives—administrative work in the IT department.

Emma Stephens—apprentice receptionist

Sally Arnold—receptionist

Advanced Nurse Practitioners—Sandra and Emma

Both Sandra (left) and Emma (right) are qualified as **Advanced Nurse Practitioners**. This means they are autonomous clinicians who can diagnose minor, acute and chronic disease /illness, order investigations, provide appropriate treatment for patients including prescribing medications and making referrals to other agencies when required (including hospital referrals).



Each consultation includes comprehensive history taking, physical examinations, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests and at the time of their clinics there is always a GP available to whom they can call on if required.

GP services of the future



The media certainly seems to have picked up on the issues of the unsustainability of primary care services in the UK. Whether the specific area covered is funding, the national GP shortage, patient expectations, population increases or movement of some hospital services into GP surgeries, there has been a lot of media comment in the last three months.

Here at Thorpewood we are buoyed by the 'Outstanding' CQC rating covered elsewhere in this newsletter, but we are also suffering with just under a 3.5% cut in NHS funding this year, and for each of the next three years. That means trying to do more with less!

January saw a Norfolk GP practice close through inability to recruit clinicians, and I am sure there will be other casualties through this issue or on the back of the funding cuts. With 17,500 extra patients in the locality to service over the next 10 years, without any new surgery facilities planned, the practices of North Norwich will need to do things differently to survive, in order to continue to provide suitable services for our patients. This may mean that conditions/medical needs that are seen here at the moment may not be in future. Equally some medical needs that are seen elsewhere may switch to being seen here.

I can go on record as saying the Partners have no plans at this time to merge into a 'superpractice' as has sprung up in some big cities, where patients are seen in a 'superpractice' of 50,000 patients or more. However, the Government's plans for the GP service are currently unknown - we will find out more when the 2017 GP contract is published later this year. It may be that radical change is required simply to maintain our NHS GP contract.

We will always endeavour to update and involve our patients - we have an excellent Patient Representative Group (*minutes of meetings can be found on surgery noticeboards and on our website*) which acts as a conduit for patient communication. Part of that process is being honest in saying that nothing is certain at this stage....other than change is on its way in some shape or form.

How YOU can help: If you feel that a strong GP service is something you care about, please do contact your MP at: House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, to make the case for more funding for the existing model of service, not less.

It was great to host Healthwatch Norfolk, the 'consumer champion' for health & social care in Norfolk, who visited the surgery in February. They spent time with both staff and patients to get a greater understanding of the needs of our patients, how we meet those needs, and the pressures the GP service is under.



Healthwatch Norfolk's independent feedback on our services was really positive, and it was great to see the good things we are doing at Thorpewood being highlighted through their own publicity. Their full report is attached.

Thank you so much to those patients that were questioned as part of the Healthwatch Norfolk visit.