

PPG HELPING YOU

PPG DONATES NEW DERMATOSCOPE TO THE SURGERY



PPG CHAIR JEANNETTE WARD AND TREASURER GOFF NORRINGTON PRESENTING A NEW DERMATOSCOPE TO DR. LAURENT AND DR. DOLMAN FOR THE SURGERY.

For those of you who may not be familiar with a dermatoscope, it is an innovative medical device that combines a high-resolution lens for capturing and sharing images of skin lesions, including moles, with an electronic camera. Images can then be shared with specialists who determine whether or not the lesion needs to be treated and how urgently. Documenting skin lesions allows collaboration, follow-up and second opinions, resulting in a fast and accurate diagnosis and enhancement to the clinical experience of patients.

Funding for the Dermatoscope was achieved through the Tesco Bags of Help scheme and we owe a considerable debt of gratitude to all those who supported our campaign.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **THAT** the surgery will be closed from 12:30 on Wed., 5th Feb. for staff training. It will re-open the next day at 8:30 a.m.
- **THAT** the Surgery now has a new Social Prescriber for the PCN Ridge. Her name is Theresa Millen and she is based in Bearsted.
- **THAT** the PPG Tea and Talk event at The Yeoman Pub resulted in a £50 donation to the Mental Health Foundation.
- **THAT** a new PPG leaflet, 'Mental Health for Young People', has now been distributed to schools and is available in the surgery and in pharmacies.
- **THAT** the PPG webpage has been updated. Have a look!
- **bearsted.gpsurgery.co.uk/patient group**
- **THAT** the PPG would like to recruit a new committee member who is an IT specialist in the age range of 30-50 years. If you are interested and would like to share your expertise, please contact us at the email address below.

b.patientparticipation@nhs.net

JOIN THE PPG!

REPORT FROM THE SURGERY

Abusive Behaviour in the Surgery: A Warning

Regrettably, the surgery staff, including doctors, have recently been subjected to abusive behaviour by a few patients. Aggressive, intimidating or abusive behaviour directed toward receptionists or any other staff at the surgery will not be tolerated. Any person engaging in unacceptable behaviour will be given a warning the first time and the second time will be removed from the surgery registration list. You have been informed.

Reminder of New Extended Hours:

Bearsted Medical Practice has extended its hours to include appointments outside the normal times of 8.30 am to 6.00 pm Monday through Friday.

Patients may now pre-book morning appointments with a nurse or GP from 7.15 am to 8.00 am to accommodate those who work.

The surgery is also open between 12 noon and 2 pm for dropping off prescriptions and for routine queries. Doctors will not be available at this time.

Primary Care Network (PCN) Website

There is now a link to the PCN on the Bearsted Medical Practice website.

Go to bearsted.gpsurgery.net to find the link. The PCN logo is located in the upper right-hand corner of the home page. Click on the logo to find the services offered by the five participating surgeries.

A PPG representative will continue to participate in the PPG Chairs' meetings for the Primary Care Network so we can inform you regarding its development. At the moment, a leaflet on social intervention is in preparation.

Repeat Prescriptions

Patients are reminded that it takes 48 hours for prescriptions to be processed so if you require a repeat prescription, please request it well before the time you need it.

New Flooring in the Consulting Rooms: For health reasons, vinyl tile will replace carpeting in the doctors' consulting rooms.

Why are you waiting? The daily walk-in clinic remains one of the most popular services offered by the surgery, despite the lengthy waiting times. Adopting fixed appointment times in the morning would lengthen the time to see a doctor and the doctors would see fewer patients. The surgery tries to have as many doctors available as possible in the morning clinic. Doctors who need to take time off never do so at that time, despite the demands of medicine optimisation, safeguarding and emergencies. At Christmas, the surgery experienced the highest demand on record: 125 people in the waiting area on a single morning! Please try to understand the extraordinary pressure on our doctors, be patient and come to the walk-in clinic only when treatment is urgent.

PPG DONATION TO YOUNG LIVES FOUNDATION

Thanks to generous participants in the November Quiz Night as well as other patient support for our fund-raising, the PPG was able to donate £400 to Maidstone's Young Life Foundation. The Foundation supports over 3500 vulnerable young people in Kent with a

strong focus on children in care and those leaving care. Volunteer mentors support these young people through the transition from foster care to adult life as well as helping them learn new skills whilst in care. If you are able to volunteer to this effort, please contact YLF on <https://ylf.org.uk>.



PPG ACTION PLAN FOR 2020 COMPLETED

PPG Committee members after completing the action plan for next year. A copy is available on the patient group page of the Bearsted Medical Practice website. Go to bearsted.gpsurgery.net/patient-group and have a look!

PPG GUIDE TO PATIENT ONLINE ACCESS

The 'Guide to Patient Online Access at the Bearsted Medical Practice' is now available on the PPG table in the surgery. If you are not confident with online access, this simple, step-by-step guide will help you to obtain the registration form, register for online access to your medical records, request repeat prescriptions, make appointments and to many other services offered by the surgery. Copies of the Guide will also be sent via email to those of you have joined the PPG. Please share this guide with anyone you may know who has difficulty accessing or navigating the surgery website.

HEALTHY WALKING GROUP

The practice promotes a Healthy Walking Group which meets every Tuesday at 10:15 at Holy Cross Church. The group needs additional volunteer leaders who can help lead the walks on some Tuesdays. If you would be willing to help, please contact Chris Dobson on 07738835302 for more information. There is a training course for new leaders on Friday 3rd April from 10:30 am to 2 pm in Maidstone.

PPG FINANCIAL REPORT

As of January 2020, the PPG has funds in the amount of £1183. We will continue fund-raising as and when the need for further assistance to the surgery is required. Details of the PPG accounts may be found on the surgery website.

PPG 2019 SURVEY AND FOLLOW-UP COMPLETED

The patient survey conducted by the PPG is now available for viewing on the Patient Group (PPG) webpage at the Bearsted Medical Practice website. Many thanks to those patients who completed and returned the survey. In response to your comments and observations, we have taken the following actions:

- A simple guide to online access has been printed and is now available on the PPG table in the waiting area of the surgery. It will also be sent to the Virtual Group by email.
- For those who expressed concern about confidentiality, the receptionists offer a quiet room to discuss health matters, if required.
- PCN leaflets describing the new PCN services will soon be available in the surgery.
- The surgery will investigate the purchase of a fan in the waiting area for the summer.
- We also discussed access to afternoon appointments with the surgery. Managing the best way for doctors and nurses to see the most number of patients effectively is particularly challenging because demands on the service are high. Patients who attend the Walk- In Clinic every morning are guaranteed to be seen but this can have an impact on the availability of staff and therefore of appointments in the afternoon. Flexibility needs to be built into the service so that phone calls, home visits, follow-up paper work, referrals to other health professional and other tasks can all be completed. The service gets pulled in all directions and although the intention is to offer a number of bookable afternoon appointments, not every one is filled to allow flexibility in the system to respond to workload demands. The system can appear to favour some patients more than others but this isn't the case. It is therefore helpful for patients to understand the impact that demand has on the service and to be reassured that the surgery is doing its best to provide a good service to its patients.

(This report was provided to the newsletter by Jeannette Ward, PPG Chair)

ARE YOU RETIRED? PERHAPS LONELY? WOULD LIKE TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS?

The Bearsted Active Retirement Association (BeAra) is an active retirement association for those who reside in Bearsted and surrounding areas, aged 50+ and active in body and mind. Formed in 1998, it currently has a membership of 170. Associate membership at £6 per year is available for senior elastic exercise, Tai Chi, short mat bowls, 10-pin bowling, strolls and walks. Outings, socials and holidays are organised in the UK and abroad. Their informal message is 'With healthy living and companionship, retirement can become enjoyable.' If you are interested, contact 01622 630 313 or 01622 738 965.



New chairs for the nurses' station donated by the PPG and the patients.

