

The Surgery's Practice Appraisal

On the 22nd March 2013, two members of the PPG Group attended the annual practice appraisal held by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in order to observe the proceedings. The CCG was represented by Dr Darren Jackson, a clinical lead for North West Leicester and Laura Norton, the business development manager for the CCG, the practice was represented by Dr Tim Hammond and Rob Shuter the practice manager.

The purpose of the CCG team is to undertake an annual assessment of each practice in its area. It appraises and assesses the services that the practice offers to its patients i.e. the care offered in surgery as well as referrals to other healthcare professionals and other services. It also looks at what action plans the practice set at the previous appraisal and whether these targets have been achieved. It compares the surgery's results with the national average and if there is a below average result the CCG will investigate to see if there is a reason for this and if not this will be included in the next year's action plan. Disease prevalence, flu and child immunisation uptakes will also be compared with the national averages. The CCG team doesn't only look at the provision of healthcare but also the surgery's staff that it employs, their number and their roles in the practice, to ensure that we have sufficient staff to provide for all services we have specified in the future and present plans for patient care.

You can find more information about the West Leicester CCG at:

<http://www.westleicestershireccg.nhs.uk>.

Action Plan from this year's Practice Appraisal:

- Introduce a 01530 number to run in conjunction with the 0844 number.
- Pilot a new tele-health system to help diagnose high blood pressure with the use of home blood pressure monitors and text messaging.
- Introduce online appointment booking.
- Review dementia screening tools to try and improve diagnosing dementia.
- Introduce H Pylori screening in the Practice.

Introduction of the new 01530 number

The practice now offers two telephone numbers: **0844 477 3722 or 01530 588224**.

If you call the surgery from a BT landline and have a weekend and evening call package or no call package it is cheaper to call the 0844 number. Calls from mobiles and other service providers may charge more for your call to the 0844 number (please check with your service provider). You can use either number to contact the surgery, neither is given priority.

111 Update

111 is the new NHS telephone service for patients needing help with problems that do not justify a 999 call. There has been a lot in the news lately about this service and its reliability. We suspect that a lot of the concerns relate to the fact that this is a huge and complex project and a lot of agencies have been involved in setting it up. The government set very ambitious targets to have this service up and running earlier this year but because of concerns about safety it will not be rolled out in Leicestershire until September 2013. As we are close to the border with Derbyshire, patients in this area may be able to access a 111 service but this will not be a local Leicestershire service and for this reason we do not recommend using it at present. It is hoped that once 111 is running well it will be integrated with the out of hours primary care service but this will not happen until later in 2014. In the meantime you can continue to use other sources of advice such as NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or your local pharmacist. There is also advice about minor illness on our website and don't forget our facility for telephone consultations in order to get advice for minor illness and injuries.

Online Prescriptions – remember you can now order your repeat prescriptions online, please ask at reception for details of how to access this service.

Dental Problems

Although GPs have a wide range of skills and knowledge about a diverse range of medical conditions we have no formal training in dentistry. We are very much aware though of the skills and knowledge that our dentist colleagues develop over many years of training and practise. We are also aware of the pitfalls of trying to deal with dental conditions without those skills. For these reasons we feel very uncomfortable if patients ask us to deal with a dental problem or tooth pain and we would therefore ask you to contact a dentist if you need dental treatment. If you do not have a dentist you can find details on how to access one on the NHS Direct website or by calling NHS Direct on 0845 4647. If a dentist cannot see you straight away they may be able to prescribe antibiotics in the interim if they feel it is appropriate. You can also get advice about pain killers to use prior to treatment from your local pharmacist. If you have a fear of going to the dentist (usually as a result of a bad experience in the past) explain this to your dentist when you make an appointment. These days dentists are aware of the fact that fear can prevent people seeking the checks and treatment they need and are trained to put patients at ease. They also have far more effective ways of numbing pain than existed in the bad old days. The best way you can help us, and yourself is to register with a dentist and have regular checkups – prevention is better than cure!

Why is the Surgery closed on Wednesday Afternoons?

The GPs at the surgery find it very useful to have one half day a week when they are not scheduled to see patients (and ‘no’ they assure me this is not to improve their golf handicap). In fact you will find most of them still beavering away at the surgery. Having Wednesday afternoons free from seeing patients allows your GPs to set up multidisciplinary meetings with other health care professionals, so that they can review the care of specific groups of patients. This includes an ‘end of life’ meeting to discuss care for terminal patients with the McMillan nursing team; a ‘proactive care’ meeting with the virtual ward co-ordinator to ensure that patients with long term serious illnesses can remain in their own homes as long as possible and also a meeting and visit to review patients’ care at a local care homes, again with the aim of preventing unnecessary hospital admissions. Your GPs may also be doing health checks for patients with learning disabilities who can find coming to the surgery in normal hours unsettling, even frightening; your surgery has the residents of two local homes for people with learning disabilities on their patient list. The GPs also use Wednesday afternoons to perform minor surgery and do medicals for insurance or employment purposes. All things considered your GP can be quite as busy on a Wednesday afternoon, if not busier, than any other time of the week.

If however you are taken ill on a Wednesday afternoon and you consider it to be a medical emergency your GP at Long Lane Surgery is still responsible for your care, just phone the normal surgery telephone number, either the 0844 one or the new 01530 one and you will be given a series of options. Obviously if the medical emergency is life threatening, e.g. head injury (involving loss of consciousness, sickness and/or blurred vision), suspected heart attack or stroke you should dial 999; or you might consider calling NHS Direct for further advice. If however you feel that it is a medical emergency and cannot wait until Thursday morning and falls outside of these limits you will be given another number to phone to talk to out of hours who will contact the surgery’s duty GP. This will be the same as a normal telephone consultation, which many of us at Long Lane will already have experienced and similarly your GP may ask you to attend the surgery for an examination if he/she thinks your symptoms warrant it. Although your GPs do ask you to consider carefully whether your problem could wait till the next morning, they are more than happy to deal with medical emergencies.

