

SSPCN NEWSLETTER

The Official Newsletter of Stevenage South Primary Care Network



WELCOME, AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

by Operations Lead, Dan Taylor

As we embrace the spirit of the season, it brings us great joy to extend a heartfelt welcome to you in this special Christmas edition of our newsletter!

Our committed staff have been working tirelessly to enhance the quality of healthcare services provided to our community. Whether it's expanding our range of services or introducing innovative initiatives, our goal remains the same – your well-being.

To add a touch of holiday fun, we've included a Christmas word search, provided by the wonderful Colin Stringer of Knebworth and Marymead Surgery!

As always, your feedback is invaluable to us. We strive to make this publication a source of relevant and engaging information for both our patients and staff. Your thoughts and suggestions help us tailor our content to meet your needs, so please feel free to share your insights.

May this Christmas be filled with love, laughter, and moments of joy. Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas and a safe, healthy New Year.

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WORKING TOGETHER, PPGS AND THE SSPCN



by Graham Fothergill

The four Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) that are allied to the South Stevenage PCN have been working together for some time now with the aim of providing information on medical conditions that are likely to affect a significant number of patients.

Our first venture into this area was in mid-July when we organised a very successful evening on the subject of diabetes and, in particular, on how to live well with this condition. We had an excellent presentation on the subject by Saher Hussain from Diabetes UK, followed by a useful Q & A session.

About thirty patients, drawn from all four Practices in the PCN, attended the diabetes meeting and this gave us sufficient confidence to feel that we were on the right track. Our follow-up in mid-October was a meeting on bowel disease, with particular reference to bowel screening and bowel cancer. More than fifty patients turned up at this one, again with representation from all four Practices. And we were very fortunate to have two excellent speakers. Firstly, Natalie Malins who led us through the processes and procedures of bowel screening at the East and North Herts Screening Centre which is located at the Lister Hospital, and was able to provide us with comparative data on the uptake of this service by our four PCN Practices. The second presentation of the evening was rather different! In January 2014, Paul Finch was diagnosed with stage 4 colorectal cancer with probable secondary to the lung. However, after intensive treatment, he made a full recovery without major life-changing bowel surgery, thanks to the expertise of the teams at the Royal Marsden. As a direct result of this, he has founded the charity “Red Trousers Day” the focus of which is on fund raising to support awareness, prevention and earlier diagnosis research in this very challenging and quite often taboo field. For further information go to <https://redtrouserday.com/>.

Our meetings, which were held at the Stevenage Arts Centre on Roaring Meg, were organised by a small working party consisting of Lorraine Cator (King George and Manor House), Derek Albone (Shephall), Ron Walker (Bedwell and Roebuck) and Rosie Chisnell and Graham Fothergill (Knebworth and Marymead) with support from Matt Charles, Dan Taylor and Tracy Paul from the SSPCN.

We already have a series of similar meetings planned for 2024; the topics include mental health, vision disorders, Parkinson’s disease and prostate cancer, all of which we hope will be interesting and informative for our patients.



LISA MARDLE SOCIAL PRESCRIBING LEAD

by Graham Fothergill

Lisa is very much a local girl! She was born and grew up in Letchworth, and attended school there. She then went on to further education at Hitchin College. Her first job, was with the Land Registry in Stevenage. Despite having the option to stay in her position and relocate to one of the remaining offices when the Land Registry closed its Stevenage branch in 2011, she decided to transition her career into social care.

Her first position in that environment was as a support worker for a private social care provider but in 2018 she moved from there to HertsHelp where, as result of her dedication and social skills, she attained managerial status.

Fortunately, through her work she was in regular contact with the local GP Practices and soon after the formation of the Stevenage South PCN in 2019 she applied for what was then an emerging role, as a Social Prescriber. And, as they say, the rest is history. Lisa took to the job like a duck to water and her skills were quickly recognised, so much so that she is now the lead of the PCN social prescribing team!

Lisa's office is located in the King George Surgery - where she is also their Carers Champion - but she is likely to be found visiting patients or with one of our other Three Social Prescribers, mentoring and helping them with case studies.

Lisa describes the best part of her job as "all of it". She really enjoys meeting patients (and colleagues), having a good interaction with them, being part of their journey and "making a difference".

"The best part of the job, is definitely the patient interaction. I love meeting new people and making a positive impact wherever I can!"

Lisa Mardle

Lisa is a member of a local gym, where her main pursuits are Pilates, yoga and zumba! She loves spending time with her family and she enjoys trips to the theatre, especially to see musicals - her favourite being "Les Miserables"

Lisa sees the closure of the SLR office as a blessing in disguise. Without that she might have never thought about such a momentous career change and the SSPCN would never have been graced with Lisa's infectious personality and enthusiasm for such a demanding job.

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

by Colin Stringer, Patient of Knebworth and Marymead Medical Practice.

S	R	E	G	N	A	M	C	R	A	C	K	E	R	M
A	S	E	L	U	Y	R	A	M	M	T	I	H	A	E
M	H	P	U	D	D	I	N	G	M	A	N	T	T	H
T	E	O	L	S	P	Q	D	L	O	G	G	R	S	E
S	P	S	T	U	N	R	L	Y	L	O	H	I	X	L
I	H	C	N	S	H	P	E	S	O	J	S	B	L	H
R	E	A	D	E	L	S	D	S	E	V	E	E	R	T
H	R	R	F	J	C	N	A	G	E	L	G	S	D	E
C	D	D	E	R	F	N	O	C	L	N	H	T	I	B
R	H	S	O	E	T	A	I	S	A	Y	T	H	N	Y
S	N	O	W	A	D	R	I	K	A	R	V	G	N	E
M	G	T	L	E	O	N	U	R	N	E	O	I	E	K
E	O	T	E	L	T	S	I	M	Y	A	S	L	R	R
F	R	O	S	T	Y	Y	B	E	H	R	R	Y	M	U
W	A	D	V	E	N	T	S	I	R	H	C	F	K	T

- PUDDING*
- CANDLE*
- GOOSE*
- JOSEPH*
- MARY*
- PRESENT*
- CRACKER*
- KING*
- MAGI*
- GOLD*
- MANGER*
- YULE*
- FRANKINCENSE*
- JESUS*
- MYRRH*
- STAR*
- ANGEL*
- BETHLEHEM*
- SANTA*
- CHRISTMAS*
- CAROL*
- TREE*
- LIGHTS*
- SCROOGE*
- SHEPHERD*
- MISTLETOE*
- TURKEY*
- SLED*
- BELLS*
- REINDEER*
- HOLLY*
- IVY*
- FAIRY*
- HOLY*
- EVE*
- NOEL*
- CHRIST*
- DINNER*
- SEASON*
- SNOW*
- BIRTH*
- ADVENT*
- CARD*
- FROSTY*
- NUTS*

THE WORDS TO THE RIGHT CAN ALL BE FOUND IN THE GRID ABOVE. THEY MAY BE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ORIENTATIONS:

- N-S*
- S-N*
- E-W*
- W-E*
- NE-SW*
- SW-NE*
- NW-SE*
- SE-NW*

HEALTH WALKS

by Tracy Paul

- Are you a Bedwell/Roebuck Patient? (however, all are welcome!)
- Is your New Year's Resolution to get fitter and healthier?

If so, join a new taster walk in Bedwell, starting on the 16th January from Bedwell Community Centre in Stevenage at 10:00 am.

Walking is the simplest way to get active. It will improve your mood, help you sleep better, strengthen your heart, lungs and other muscles and boost your energy levels.

You'll also meet new people and explore your neighbourhood in the company of others.

To find out more and register go to
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks

If you love walking and would like to support others to start moving more, become a Health Walk Volunteer - find out about the role It's a wonderful way to give back to your community and stay fit. Upcoming training on the 16th January in Hatfield.

A later date will be held in Stevenage.

Please see the next page for more details

Hertfordshire Health Walks



NEW TASTER Health Walks coming to Bedwell, Stevenage

**FREE, friendly, daytime walks
Tuesdays at 10am**

The first walk of 2024 will take place on 16th January
Everyone is welcome...come along!

Walks and meeting point	Day/time	Date	Grade Walk
Meet outside Bedwell Community Centre, Bedwell Crescent SG1 1NA. Join us for a cuppa after in the Community Café	Tuesdays 10 am	Jan 16, 23 & 30 Feb 6, 13, 20 & 27	Grade 1

You don't need special equipment - just some suitable shoes and warm clothing.

The short walk is at a gentle pace up to 30 minutes on flat ground with stopping points.

There will be a volunteer at the front and one at the back so everyone stays together.

Hertfordshire Health Walks encourage people of all ages and abilities to get outdoors, explore their community, socialise and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits that walking brings.

All walks are **FREE** with no booking required. Register online or, if you prefer, you can turn up 10 mins before your first walk to register as a new walker. To find out more, scan the QR code or visit website below. You can also call us on 01992 555888 or email healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks

Hertfordshire



Health Walks

Design Ref 082xxx

PATIENT SURVEY FEEDBACK

by Dan Taylor.

As many are likely aware, Stevenage South Primary Care Network offers a wide range of accessible services to our patients. Our primary goal is to deliver a patient-centered experience by offering additional appointments with both clinical and non-clinical staff, thereby reducing waiting times and striving for the best possible patient outcomes. Below, you'll find some valuable feedback from our patients regarding our services.

“For the less serious but still essential illnesses this was ideal”

Acute Same Day Hub

“I felt so at ease. I normally get really anxious when I visit the doctors but I felt at ease within a few minutes of meeting the clinician. Felt confident in talking with him and felt he listened to my comments. I was given good advice on managing my pain etc.”

Clinical Pharmacist

“Callum was very knowledgeable and gave great advice”

FCP (Physio)

“The social prescriber is so helpful. I would think twice about approaching the doctor as the help I need is not medical, but more on a holistic level. A doctor is limited with time, but the social prescriber doesn't hurry me along”

Social Prescriber

“Quick appointment, Excellent timing, Excellent location for the surgery with good access”

Enhanced Access (Saturday Appointment at King George Surgery)

“My problem wasn't life-threatening but if I didn't get the right treatment ASAP my condition would have worsened and spread. This hub system was an absolutely fantastic service. Taking the demands off GP's and unnecessary use of A&E, leaving the department for life emergencies not people needing antibiotics etc. I strongly believe this is a great provision to support the NHS and demands of the community.”

Acute Same Day Hub

“It was the first time someone had explained in detail how asthma affects you and how to deal with it. I have been on the same medication for years from another practice and your clinical pharmacist Mr. Tunde spent time with me and suggested a different inhaler, this had resulted in my breathing being so much better and not having to use the new inhaler so much. I have nothing but praise for the clinical consultant and wish to thank him very much for the advice and time he spent with me.”

Clinical Pharmacist

“Initially being anxious about my treatment, all the staff ensured I was totally relaxed prior to commencement.”

Leg Ulcer Hub

“The nurse who called was extremely professional and very pleasant”

Home Access Service

“Allison was very kind and understanding and listened regarding my mental health issues. All the advice and help regarding my referral to mind was great and other sources of support made me feel more hopeful”

Social Prescriber

TOTAL TRIAGE: A NEW CHAPTER FOR PATIENT APPOINTMENTS



by Graham Fothergill

At Knebworth and Marymead Medical Practice, a complete overhaul of the appointment booking system came into operation at the end of September. It goes by the name of “Total Triage” and allows patients to book appointments or to make administrative enquiries online via a short questionnaire.

Patients who are unable to access the new system from a smartphone, laptop, tablet or similar device are still able to contact the Practice and complete the assessment questionnaire with assistance from a member of the Practice administrative staff.

On the introduction of Total Triage, a number of engagement events and digital cafes were held at the Knebworth and Marymead surgeries to help patients to familiarise themselves with the new process and a short video is still available on the Practice website which gives more information.

The perceived advantages of the new system are:

- Safe and effective management of online requests
- A rapid response time
- Smooth integration with the NHS App
- Its potential enhanced value during the busy winter months

Feedback on the update has been overwhelmingly positive thus far and has significantly reduced the waiting time for patients.

It is anticipated that Total Triage, or some very similar process, will become common in general practice in the near future.

Please feel free to contact me at gafothergill@gmail.com if you require further information on this innovative patient access system.