



*The Newsletter of the Patient Participation Group
of the Riverside and Courtyard Surgeries Partnership
(Albion Medical Group)*

Issue 3: Spring 2017

Editor: David Phillips

Dear Riverside/Courtyard Patient

Welcome to the third issue of LINK, the newsletter of what is now the Riverside and Courtyard Surgeries (Albion Medical Group) Patient Participation Group (PPG).

I am pleased to report that the merger of the two surgeries has transitioned smoothly with benefits for patients at both practices. Vikash Malde, Practice Manager, shares some of these with you in this Newsletter.

I attended Horsham and Mid-Sussex CCG's March Clinical Patient Reference Group and am able to update you on an initiative which is currently in progress. Adult Operations is developing a vision and new operating model for the future delivery of its social care services. The objective is to allow people to live independently for longer, whilst enabling the County Council to meet the challenges of demographic and funding pressures.

Significant improvement works at Crawley Hospital are currently taking place which will allow more residents within Crawley and Horsham to be seen locally. A brand new ward (Piper) opened earlier this year to meet the needs of both 'step-up' patients, i.e. those who need more care and intervention than they are able to receive in the community, and 'step-down' patients, i.e. those who no longer need to be in an Acute hospital (e.g. East Surrey) but who still require some clinical input and are not yet well enough to go home. Piper Ward has been designed using dementia friendly principles, incorporating active rehabilitation, which will help make patients' stay as pleasant and productive as possible.

The Clinical Assessment Unit(CAU) at the hospital has moved out of the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) to its own space, offering a dedicated reception desk area, six-trolley bay (previously only two trolleys), three consulting rooms, IV treatment area and discharge lounge to serve the CAU and wards. The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is working with GPs and the ambulance service to encourage referrals, working with providers to increase the number of conditions that can be managed within the CAU and introducing new pathways and treatments such as blood transfusions. The Urgent Care Centre, formerly the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC), is undergoing extensive remodelling to modernise and provide additional capacity. However, the UCC remains 'open for business' while these improvements are being implemented.

All the above initiatives combine to enable more care to be provided to you locally.

Through our regular issues of LINK we will aim to keep you informed about the latest developments both at our Partnership and in the local health community and our regular features from our doctors will share seasonal health tips with you. LINK editor, David Phillips, would **welcome your feedback on what you would like to see included in future editions of the newsletter:** ppg.riverside@gmail.com

Apart from reading this newsletter do please keep an eye on both surgeries' noticeboards and access the PPG pages on the Riverside Surgery and Courtyard Surgeries' websites:

<http://www.riversidesurgeryhorsham.co.uk/ppg.shtml> <http://www.courtyardsurgery.com/ppg.aspx>

If you haven't joined the PPG yet why not sign up now by completing a registration form available from the surgeries' reception or online using the link above? Membership won't take up much of your time; indeed you can participate as much or as little as you like. We look forward to hearing your views as we work together to help enhance health service provision at both Riverside/Courtyard and in Horsham district.

Evelyn Rock: Chair- Riverside and Courtyard Surgeries Partnership Patient Participation Group

Message from the Senior Partner

I have been a GP since 1993, first at Courtyard surgery and now at the merged Riverside/Courtyard surgeries. Originally I was the junior and youngest of three full time male GPs, with a practice list size of 6,400 patients. There have been many changes in the last 24 years, particularly in the eight years that I have been the Senior Partner. The combined list size is now over 18,000 patients and the GPs now comprise a mix of male and female, partners and salaried, and full-time and part-time. I feel that our patients can be assured that the future for our combined surgeries is much more secure and robust, with the resilience to withstand the increasing pressures on the NHS both nationally and locally. The merger is already showing benefits with practices now able to offer extra services to patients who traditionally would have had to travel further to hospital outpatients for example.

It is with this knowledge and optimism that for personal reasons I have decided that the time is right for me to reduce my work schedule to part-time. However, I am also pleased to announce the welcome return of Dr Nina Barrows (who many patients sadly missed when she left us temporarily) as a part time Partner, who will job-share opposite me as well as developing other roles within the surgeries. I am also therefore relinquishing the role of Senior Partner and the appointment of my replacement will be announced shortly.

Dr Mark Chopin



Surgery News

Changes to appointment systems

In December 2016 Riverside Surgery made some significant changes to our appointment system. This was in response to our understanding of the pressures on our reception team to make pre-bookable appointments for our patients and patient feedback about the availability of these appointments and the waiting times to see a specific GP.

The availability of pre-bookable appointments was significantly increased from 75 per week to approximately 148 per week. The intention was that patients who did not need to be seen on the day could be seen fairly promptly afterwards and be offered an appointment in a shorter period of time. After three months of trialling this system we are pleased to say that the wait time for patients to book an appointment with a GP has been reduced from three weeks to one week. We still have 'on the day' appointments available for patients who need to be seen urgently and the duty doctor will have some appointments at the end of their afternoon surgery - these are booked only at the request of the duty doctor. We also want to encourage as many patients as possible to sign up for online services including electronic prescriptions where your prescription can be sent online to your pharmacy of choice so there's no need to pick up a paper prescription. To sign up for on-line services you can complete the relevant form either on our website or in person at the surgery. For security reasons we will need you to come into the practice with some proof of ID before we give you a username and first password. Acceptable ID documents are a photo driving licence or a passport.

Care Coordinators

People with long-term conditions account for more than half of all GPs appointments. However, often their needs are not medical but social issues such as problems with housing or loneliness. In these cases the GP may not be the most appropriate person to help find a solution to their needs. Very often the key to dealing with such situations is to establish clear and consistent lines of communication between the patient, Primary Care practitioners (GP/Practice Nurses) and social care/third sector providers.

Coordination of care for the older patients and those with complex chronic illness is a global challenge and research has highlighted the positive impact that good care coordination can have on the quality of life for the frail elderly and those with multiple long-term conditions.

To meet this need Riverside and Courtyard surgeries have implemented a Care Coordinator service and this has had a very positive outcome for our patients. Our [care coordinators - Silvia Simon at Riverside and Lisa Lord at Courtyard](#) - have made a considerable difference by:

- improving signposting through their up-to-date knowledge of available local services
- creating alternative community options and solutions for problems arising from living with a single (or multiple) long-term condition(s)
- providing an effective link between the patient, healthcare professionals, social care, third sector and other resources.

Vikash Malde: Practice Manager



Health Hints from Dr McGuire

For many the arrival of spring can mean the start of seasonal allergies. Allergic Rhinitis (hay fever) can affect 10-30 per cent of the population, with symptoms of nasal congestion, sneezing, itchy eyes and a runny nose. Avoiding the offending allergen is important but this is not always easy. If you are allergic to pollens, staying inside on days when the pollen count is high will help. It is a good idea to wear sunglasses outside and some people find putting some Vaseline on their eyelashes and just inside their nostrils will help to prevent pollen from entering the eyes and nose. It can also help to take a shower and change your clothes as you come indoors. An effective natural remedy is nasal douching (using salt water washes in the nose) which works by washing out any pollen or dust from the nostrils. There are many different ways of doing this which you can look up online or discuss with your chemist.

The main stay of medical management for this type of allergy is using steroid nasal sprays which can be bought cheaply over the counter from your local pharmacist. Douching prior to using the nasal spray gives you a nice clean surface on which to apply it, enhancing its effectiveness. Non-drowsy antihistamines work very effectively and again can be cheaply bought over the counter. Of course if you have symptoms which are not responding to these simple measures, do consult your practice as we are very happy to help.

For those of you troubled by ear wax, we are now running a microsuction service at Courtyard surgery which is available to patients registered with either practice. If you think your ears are blocked with wax it is worth applying olive oil twice daily to your ears as this may well clear the wax of its own accord. Alternatively you are welcome to book into the microsuction clinic at either reception for the wax to be gently removed.

New Patient Group for Horsham

A new patient group for Horsham has been established. Called the Horsham Locality Patient Group and with PPG representatives from each of Horsham's seven GP practices - Riverside/Courtyard, Park, Orchard, Holbrook, Rudgwick and Village - the group was set up and is chaired by David Phillips, Riverside PPG committee member and lay representative for Horsham at H&Mid-Sussex CCG. It will meet quarterly and receive presentations and updates from clinicians and staff members at the CCG, in particular in relation to developing plans for providing more health services locally within the locality. The group also hope to organise occasional seminars on relevant health topics for Horsham residents and patients.

Refurbished MSK Department at Horsham Hospital now formally open

The refurbished musculoskeletal department at Horsham Hospital was formally opened on February 27th by Cllr Christian Mitchell, the Chairman of HDC. The refurbishment of the musculoskeletal (MSK) department represents a significant investment into Horsham Hospital and a huge amount of hard work by many parties.

For MSK patients this has delivered: triple the number of consulting rooms, an improved hydrotherapy area, health education space for groups, a gym area and waiting and reception areas plus a new rheumatology infusion suite. This enhanced space means that there are more staff, ensuring improved waiting times, which for physiotherapy and musculoskeletal clinics are low, physiotherapy currently one week for urgent and three weeks for routine patients. More space also means that the department can offer new treatments, closer to home. It also means that there is space to bring in a range of different health professionals, thereby offering more of a one-stop shop experience for patients and reducing multiple visits. There are still some minor improvements to be undertaken and these will be implemented following staff and patient feedback.

Stroke Service Improving your Stroke Service

NHS organisations have been working together to improve stroke services for local people. As a result of a review of stroke services in Sussex, begun in 2014, clinicians have recommended changes to how and where Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust (BSUH) provides its stroke services.

BSUH currently provides emergency stroke services at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH) in Brighton and Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) in Haywards Heath. However, after public consultation and to ensure that all patients can be treated by experts with the highest levels of expertise at any time of day or night, clinicians have recommended that BSUH centralises its emergency stroke services in Brighton. This means that emergency stroke services would not be provided at PRH, although specialist inpatient stroke rehabilitation would continue to be provided at the Sussex Rehabilitation Centre at PRH.

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (SASH) is also part of the review and recommendations include the proposal that East Surrey Hospital continues to provide emergency stroke care as a Hyper Acute Stroke Unit. Work is ongoing to further improve the quality of care that patients receive, including access to stroke rehabilitation.

Update on Patient Transport Service

A new contract for Sussex Patient Transport Services (PTS) - non-emergency transport of eligible patients to and from hospital - was introduced in April 2016. From the outset there were significant problems with the new service provided by Coperforma. A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was implemented which did result in an improvement in the service and this improvement has since been maintained. However, the investment required from Coperforma to maintain this improvement has proved unsustainable in the longer term which ultimately resulted in the organization seeking a managed exit from the contract. Following a transparent award process the PTS will therefore transfer to South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) who will assume full responsibility from April 2017.

In order to minimise disruption to patients, the PTS transfer will be phased over the next few months:

- Phase One (from 1 March 2017): SCAS have taken on responsibility for discharges, transfers and repatriation of Sussex patients

- Phase Two (from 1 April 2017): SCAS will provide the remainder of the PTS including the transport of patients to and from renal dialysis and outpatient appointments.

There is a detailed transition in place agreed between SCAS, Coperforma and the Sussex CCGs and this is being reviewed weekly. A detailed communications plan has also been agreed across all parties and this will be implemented over the coming weeks.

Personal Health Budgets Role in the End of Life Pathway

NHS England has mandated that CCGs extend the offer of a personal health budget (PHB) to more people who could benefit. Across England PHBs have only previously been available for people who are eligible for "Continuing Healthcare" (CHC). A national evaluation has shown that Personal Health Budgets (PHBs) improve choice, control and the overall experience of health and care for people who receive them.

Twelve months ago Crawley CCG successfully bid to be a pilot site (one of five across England) and received funding to explore how PHBs could be developed outside of CHC and in particular to support the six national ambitions for end of life care. They then invited many stakeholders to collaborate and design the project, listened to personal stories from people who have a PHB and consulted with the Third Sector to understand the challenges facing individuals who are at an end of life stage.

The aim of the pilot is to help the CCG explore the potential benefits of Personalisation. In particular it will review what impact if any tailored 'early identification' would have on people achieving their preferred place of death and within those preferences whether people choose alternatives to avoidable hospitalisation in the last three months of life? The reason for doing this is because local data shows that almost half of people who die do so in hospital, even though national surveys consistently show that most people do not want to die there. The next phase of the pilot will make the case for extending its duration and achieving the necessary funding to do this.

Help from the Alzheimer's Society

Living with dementia can have a big emotional, social, psychological and practical impact on a person. But Alzheimer's Society in West Sussex offers a variety of services to support people with dementia and their carers to enable them to live well with their condition. These include:

- Dementia Support - Helping people take control of their lives and make sense of what is happening. This ranges from understanding the benefits system to how dementia progresses and the importance of getting financial affairs in order. The Society's Dementia Support Workers are there to explain about the condition but also to signpost people to the support services available.
- Carers Groups - These groups give people the opportunity to meet with other carers who understand what they are going through. The sessions offer a chance to ask questions, obtain information and share experiences in a safe and supportive environment.
- Activity Groups - From yoga and Thai Chi to art and drama workshops, Alzheimer's Society's activity groups enable people with dementia to keep physically and mentally active. They also help people express themselves and improve their sense of wellbeing.
- Dementia Cafes - The cafes provide an opportunity for people to socialise and get much needed face-to-face support and provide people with dementia and carers with a platform to talk openly about living with dementia in a relaxed and informal environment.

To find out more about Alzheimer's Society services, call the charity's Sussex Helpline on 01403 213017.



Keep yourself informed:

There are many resources available to support patients who are feeling unwell. If you need to seek advice you can telephone '111' or go online to www.nhs.uk You can also download the mobile web app to find the right care for you - www.healthhelpnow-nhs.net

A number of local resources are also available:

- **The Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)** at Horsham Hospital can help with sprains, strains, broken bones, minor burns and scalds, minor head and eye injuries. Tel: 01403 227000 ext. 7202 Open: 9am-5pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).
- **Crawley Urgent Care Centre (UCC)** 001293 600300 ext. 4141 Open: 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Remember less use of antibiotics is the order of the day so they will usually only be prescribed for bacterial infections.

There are many ways in which you can keep informed about health matters. Below you'll find details of several organisations which actively encourage you to participate and which will regularly update you on their particular health & well-being activities.

Horsham Wellbeing: www.horshamdistrictwellbeing.org.uk is a FREE service offering friendly information and advice about a range of health and well-being issues for people living or working in the Horsham district. Wellbeing advisors can provide one-to-one support and help and advice on: losing weight, stopping smoking, healthy eating, being more active and emotional wellbeing.

NHS England - In Touch is voice for patients and the public. NHS England distributes a twice-monthly patient bulletin, In Touch, updating readers on what is happening within the NHS, highlighting events which you can attend and identifying research projects you can participate in if you are interested. To receive these monthly bulletins please go to the website below and enter 'In Touch' in the search box.
[NHS England <bulletins@england.nhs.uk](mailto:bulletins@england.nhs.uk)



Partnership Pleasantry

A man goes to the doctor. 'Doctor, doctor, I keep thinking I'm a bottle of gin'. 'I think you need a little tonic' advises the doc.