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**The Grove Medical Centre**

**Patient Newsletter**

**Spring 2016**

**Welcome to the first of what we hope will become a regular update for all our patients at The Grove!**

Our aim is to publish a regular, quarterly update to keep you abreast of all that’s new at the practice. The services we offer are constantly changing at an ever increasing speed and we want to keep our patients informed and up to date with all the important news. So without further ado, on with the news!

**New Faces**

Many of you may be aware that our Practice Manager Jenny Molloy has recently left the practice after working here for almost 30years! Jenny started out as a receptionist at the old Central Surgery and was a familiar face to many of our patients. Jenny will be sadly missed by everyone and was a very popular member of the team with colleagues and patients alike.

Our New Practice Manager is Adrian Ilott, who joins us from another local practice, begun work here on 4th January. Adrian has many years of managerial experience in the NHS and Local Authority and has also spent time working for a National Children’s Charity. Outside of work, he is Chair of Governors at The Bridge School Ipswich, which provides education to disabled children and young people. Adrian is a very keen cyclist and lives locally with his wife and two teenage children.

Dr Karen Smith also joined the practice on 4th January 2016 as our new salaried GP. Dr. Smith has also worked locally before joining the practice and she is a very welcomed addition to the team here at The Grove. Dr Smith will be working full time at the Grove and will be here most weekdays.

Sadly, we bid a fond farewell to Dr Eleanor Twomey, who has decided not to return to practice following her recent maternity leave. We wish Dr Twomey and her family every best wish for the future.

As you may be aware, there have been a number of recent staffing changes within the practice and we are actively recruiting for a further salaried GP at present. We hope to be able to share some further news regarding this in the near future!

**PPG News**

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) had its first meeting of the year on 11th of January 2016. We really value the work of this group and we look forward to developing a number of new initiatives with the PPG in the coming months – we have already begun to implement some of their excellent suggestions! The Group have elected a new Chair (Leisha Klein) and Vice Chair (Ann Long) and we are very happy to be able to pass on the following message from Leisha in her capacity as Chair of the PPG:

*'I would like to introduce you all to the Grove Medical Centre PPG, the Patients Participation Group. We represent all the patients of the practice and our aim is to improve communication and co-operation between the Surgery and Patients for the benefit of both.*

*We meet 3 times per year at the Surgery and our meetings are attended by the group members and senior members of the practice staff, including at least one doctor. The meetings give us the chance to hear from the surgery of any current CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) and practice decisions. It gives us the chance to contribute to future decisions and to question any current decisions or practices. We also bring up any suggestions, complaints or praises our members have or have been given by other patients,*

*You may have filled in a Patients Survey; we look closely at the results, question the staff on any sections where we have a low rating and discuss ways to improve that particular aspect.*

*We are always looking for members from all age brackets to give us a balanced view of how the practice is perceived and any areas that could be improved. If you would like to get involved or just to learn more about our group, and I hope you do, please contact Adrian Ilott, Surgery Manager, for details.*'

***Leisha Klein, Chair, Grove Medical Centre PPG***

We look forward to sharing regular updates from the PPG in future newsletters and on our practice Website.

**Patient Online**

We are always looking to improve ways we communicate with our patients and introduce new and more effective ways of working. The Practice has a website which can be found at the following link; <http://www.grovemcfelixstowe.nhs.uk>

In addition to this we are currently developing the number of services patients can use on-line, which include making appointments, ordering prescriptions and accessing a summary of current healthcare needs and treatment.

**Prescribing Costs**

It will not be news to many of you that the NHS is under a great deal of pressure financially at present. We at The Grove are required to play our part in helping wherever we can to ensure that NHS funds are used wisely, efficiently and in the most cost-effective way possible. One area that we are constantly looking for ways to ensure good financial management is in the area of prescribing. For example, did you know that last year, over £1 million worth of Paracetamol was prescribed by GP’s across Suffolk? In many cases, this could have been purchased over the counter at a pharmacy and would have helped to save money. This is just one small example of ways that we need to work in order to ensure that funding for YOUR NHS is protected and used where the need and priority is greatest, such as providing care for patients with Alzheimer’s or those in need of Cancer Care.

We are also asking some patients to switch medication where it is safe and clinically appropriate to do so. In such cases, these changes are reviewed by our Doctors in the first instance in an effort to ensure safe and effective care is maintained for patients. We may contact patients asking them to cooperate and agree to these changes and you can really help by agreeing to this. Please remember – these savings help the NHS, this money doesn’t come to the Practice, so you really are helping to improve the ‘bigger picture’.

**Help us to help you!**

We always try to offer patients the best possible service, but there are a couple things that you as patients can do to help us:

Firstly once you have checked in, please take a seat and wait to be called. It can be tempting to pop into the pharmacy or nip off to the loo, but sometimes this results in precious time being taken trying to track down missing patients. If you can, please attend to these things before checking in!

Secondly, if you need to book an appointment such as a blood test, please try at do this at the earliest opportunity. Our Phlebotomists and Nurses do get booked with appointments several days, even weeks in advance and it can be difficult to fit patients in at short notice. Your help on both these fronts will be greatly appreciated and will help us to ensure your appointment runs smoothly.

**And finally……**

**Congratulations to our patient Mrs. Dorothy Belcher who has been nominated for a special honor in recognition “**of the courage and perseverance of living with diabetes” Dorothy is a great example to us all and we greatly appreciate her kindness in allowing us to share this excellent news with you all.

**The John Macleod medal** is awarded to people who have lived with diabetes for 70 years or more. In 1923, John Macleod was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine for the discovery of insulin. Diabetes UK’s Central Offices are named in honour of Macleod’s great work and dedication to diabetes.

So that’s it! The first edition of our newsletter done and dusted. If you have any ideas or suggestions for future items, please contact our Practice Manager, Adrian Ilott