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Ridgeway Surgery Patient Group

Open Meeting & AGM—Date to be announced & will include Dr Lloyd on “Update on 21st Century Medicine at The Ridgeway”

Refreshments will be served

Future Talks at 7.30 pm at the Surgery

Wednesday, 24th February:

“Asthma Management”

We are very pleased that Dr Mark Levy, a GP with a special interest in respiratory diseases will be giving this talk. Dr Levy lectures in the diagnosis of Asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and allergic conditions. He considers that every person with asthma must have a personal asthma action plan worked out with their doctor helping them to recognize when things are going wrong and how, when and why to use their medication.

Tuesday, 19th April

“Prostate Cancer”

Prostate Cancer UK is the UK’s largest men’s health charity whose aim is to help more men to survive prostate cancer and enjoy a better quality of life. Amongst a range of activities the charity funds research, courses for health professionals and a specialist helpline. Leaflets published by Prostate Cancer UK are available in the surgery. We are very pleased to be welcoming a speaker from this organization. This talk will be of interest to all: husbands, wives and partners.

Next HeartStart Course, 15th February at 7.30

So far 90 Ridgeway Surgery patients have been trained on this very important course where you can practice the life saving skills of CPR (Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation). There are 12 places available on our next course.

You must be over 18 and able to get down on the floor to practice CPR.

The course is run by trained London Ambulance Service First Responders - people trained to respond to ambulance service emergency calls and to give care until the ambulance arrives.

For details of what you will learn, see the poster in the Ridgeway Surgery or at Alexandra Avenue Clinic.
If you are interested in any of the talks or courses, please send an email with the name of the talk or course to: rspatientgroup@hotmail.com or leave your name and contact number with Reception in an envelope marked: RSPG – and the name of the talk or course
WE WILL CONFIRM YOUR PLACE TO YOU

Another Successful Macmillan Coffee Morning at The Ridgeway!

Thanks to the generosity of Ridgeway patients and their friends we raised more than £450.00 for Macmillan this year. Included in this total is £35.00 raised on the following day at St Alban’s Church from the sale of any left over cakes.

Once again the raffle was popular and the Craft Stall was busy too.
As you will know from reading the papers or watching the news, there are many stories about the pressure that GP surgeries are under to look after our patients well. At the Ridgeway we are aware that there is much expected of us from our patients, the CCG and NHS England.

At the heart of everything we do is our passion for delivering high quality care for our patients. With this in mind the surgery has been considering a few ways to improve our service.

**Our phone system + keeping us up to date with your contact details**

We are aware that our phone system can be very frustrating and we are about to trial a new system where patients can book and cancel appointments through an automated system. There will always be an option to be put through to a person. As we move to a more electronic system it is really important that we have your most up to date contact details so you will notice that we are checking your mobile number more routinely. If you have an email address then let us know (the email list that the RSPG hold is on a separate database so make sure you tell them as well.)

**Annual Health Reviews**

At the moment we are looking at the way the practice plans our annual health reviews for patients with regular medication. We want to make the most of our skilled practice team. We are delighted to tell you that Pauline and Satyen, our Health Care Assistants, have recently passed an additional qualification so that they can do even more patient care. You may find in the coming months that dressings or injections that the nurses did before are now being undertaken by Satyen or Pauline. We are incredibly fortunate to have nurses who have lots of additional knowledge and skills so we want to find a way to make the most of their skills. They already see patients with long term conditions like diabetes and we want them to do more of this type of work.

**Focusing on diseases**

In addition, we are spending some time focusing on particularly diseases. You will have seen already in the newsletter that the RSPG have invited Dr Mark Levy to give a talk on asthma. Dr Levy, who has worked as a GP in Harrow for many years is also a national expert on asthma. He has challenged all the GP surgeries to improve their asthma care. So if you use inhalers you may be asked to come in and see one of the team a bit more regularly so we can make sure you are on the right treatment.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to tell all the readers how grateful we at The Ridgeway are to be able to work with the RSPG. We are immensely proud of the group and how it has developed in the last 10 years or so. I know we are biased but we think it is the leading example of patient groups in Harrow (and probably beyond) and we are very lucky to have the benefit of their support and advice to help us keep The Ridgeway on its toes.

We are sure you will enjoy this Newsletter – as always there is something for everyone.

Genevieve Small
**New Year - New Alcohol Guidelines**

New guidelines from the Chief Medical Officer recommend several key changes to drinking patterns to keep health risks low. The main messages are that any regular alcohol can harm your health in the long term, increasing your risk of several cancers. Men as well as women should stick to 14 units spread over several days a week or less. Pregnant women should not drink at all. Some people are at higher risk than others and need to be particularly careful about their intake. Details of high risk groups are set out in Dr Sarah Jarvis’s Blog on [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

The underlying message is that taking a few days off alcohol each week is good for your health.

**Diabetes**

An interesting article with the title “I am slim so why am I at risk of diabetes”? is available at [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35280028](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35280028)

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**Meet another member of the Team**

**Rosina Kabani** joined the Reception Team last summer and is enjoying the range of work that this job brings. She is studying Pharmacology at the University of Hertfordshire and is using her gap year to help her to prepare for a post in the NHS once she is qualified. Students are expected to use this year to gain relevant experience before their final year. Rosina has always had an interest in science and she also thought that this area of study would be useful later on in life as she hopes to undertake charity work with Voluntary Services Overseas in the future.

Outside of work she enjoys “Bollywood” dancing and travel.

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**Stop Press—RSPG News**

In 2015 RSPG’s application to become a Charity was accepted. Apart from allowing us to accept donations this also means that anything that we buy as a charity is exempt from VAT.

With this in mind we asked the practice to tell us what they needed. As a result we are delighted to announce the purchase of a 24 hour blood pressure monitor and a second drop down couch.
Do you know about the many **Health Improvement Services in Harrow**

Health Improvement Services help you maintain good health and wellbeing, reduce your risk of diseases such as diabetes and support you to feel better; the details on how to reach them are set out below:

**Stop Smoking Service** - Self referral services offered at local Pharmacies. (Walk-in) and some GP Practices.

*Contact stopsmoking@harrow.gov.uk* or phone 020 8420 9536

**The Expert Patient Programme** - A 6 week course for people living with long term health conditions (& their carers) to learn how to better self manage their condition and feel healthier.

*Contact healthyliving@harrow.gov.uk* or phone 020 8420 9525

**Harrow Health Walks** - The Health Walks provide an opportunity to walk regularly in a relaxed and friendly environment with 10 regular local walks led by a trained walk leader.

*Information at www.harrowhealthwalks.org*

**Exercise on Referral** - GPs or other health professionals can refer patients with certain health conditions to an exercise specialist for a tailored exercise programme.

*Contact* your GP for more information.

**Health Trainers** – One to one support that is **free** to Harrow residents which will help motivate you to be healthier and more active.

*Contact healthyliving@harrow.gov.uk*

or phone 020 8420 9525

**Outdoor Gyms** - Many of Harrow’s parks have free to use fitness equipment. Trained Gym Activators can show groups how to use them.

*Contact healthyliving@harrow.gov.uk*

or phone 020 8420 9526

**Community Dance** - Range of free dance sessions available for inactive people.

*Contact healthyliving@harrow.gov.uk*

**Drugs and Alcohol** - Range of support, advice and information for people having problems with drugs or alcohol and their families or carers.

*Contact by phone* 020 8861 2787 or see [www.compass-uk.org](http://www.compass-uk.org)
Sexual Health & Family Planning – Free and confidential sexual health and contraception service. This includes testing, treatment and advice for sexually transmitted infections. Services are provided by GP’s, Pharmacies, Caryl Thomas Clinic (Sexual Health and Contraception clinic), (Genitourinary medicine/ GUM) at Northwick Park Hospital email lnwh-tr.trust@nhs.net or sexualhealth@harrow.gov.uk

Free HIV home sampling – this is a service whereby a resident requests a test kit online from Terrence Higgins Trust which is delivered at their chosen address in the borough. The resident takes a finger prick blood sample which they send back using a prepaid envelope and receive their results within 5 working days.

For more information contact: sexualhealth@harrow.gov.uk

Harrow Memory Services
These services provide assessment and diagnosis of dementia and ongoing support and information to people with memory problems and their carers. All teams have access to medical staff, specialist dementia nurses, occupational therapists and psychologists.

Memory Services offers a comprehensive assessment of an individual’s memory ensuring that if Dementia is an issue a diagnosis is given as soon as possible. From this point services can be given to support those affected helping them to come to terms with the diagnosis. Useful strategies and treatments which help to minimise memory difficulties form part of this service with the aim of helping people to live independently and safely.

The service is based at: -
Fairfield House, Roe Green, Kingsbury, London NW9 0PS
Telephone: 0208 424 7765 or 0208 206 3990

Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH)

We all know about high cholesterol so what is FH? Around 1 in 500 people in the UK have this condition but until recently its prevalence was less well recognized by GPs.

Jules Payne, Chief Executive of the charity Heart UK says “Unlike ordinary high cholesterol this is an inherited condition which leads to exceptionally high cholesterol levels, double or three times those of the general population. It is not caused by an unhealthy lifestyle but is passed from generation to generation through a faulty gene.” Early diagnosis and effective treatment reduces the risk of heart disease and can help ensure that people with FH have a normal life expectancy.
Children, Young People & Mental Health Services

“Against a backdrop of ever-rising need, mental health services for young people appear to be an easy target for healthcare cuts. …..the consequences are inevitable - a rise of nearly 50% in the number of young people admitted to adult psychiatric units in the last year; one in 25 young people admitted to a psychiatric hospital more than 150 miles from their families .... One in 10 young people is suffering - twice as many as a generation ago. Yet just 0.6% of the NHS budget is spent on looking after them. Money is scarce in the NHS - it's getting tighter for healthcare services across the world. But staff at the St Aubyn Facility in Colchester (a built-for-purpose youth mental health ward, with 25 beds) summed up quite how bad the situation has become when they admitted that, "in children's mental health, we usually have to make not the best but the least worse decision." - This is an extract from Dr Sarah Jarvis in one of her recent patient.co.uk blogs.

Against this background, what is “Young Minds” and what does it have to offer?

Young Minds is the UK’s leading charity committed to improving the mental health and emotional well-being of this group in the UK. As they grow and develop young people have to navigate a complex and ever changing world. This journey brings many challenges to our children and young people.

So what sorts of problems might some youngsters have to face?

- Family breakdown is widespread
- Lots of pressure to have the perfect body, money and lifestyle
- 24 hour social networking and what young people can access from a young age can have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing
- Buying on and off line is easy and widespread
- Increasing sexual pressures and early sexualisation throw young people into an adult world they do not understand
- In some communities there is a particularly high level of violence. Fear of crime is a constant source of stress
- Many schools are becoming more and more competitive with an exclusive focus on exams whilst universities are becoming less and less affordable
- 13% of young people age 16 to 24 are not in employment or training

What does Young Minds actually do?

The charity is both a campaigning organisation keeping the needs of children and young people firmly on government’s agenda and a provider of a range of services placing this age group and their parents at the heart of what they do.
A glance at their website: www.youngminds.org.uk gives comprehensive information. This includes a free specialist parents and carers helpline, a range of easy to read and understand publications on mental health plus a comprehensive section for youngsters themselves covering topics such as looking after yourself, self belief, on line support, the connection between eating well and feeling good and much more.

**It is well worth a look for anyone interested in the wellbeing of the family.**

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### Youth Rights in Health Care

A very useful series of posters and a leaflet has been produced by the NHS Youth Forum for young people under 18. Aspects covered include confidentiality, the right to make choices about treatment and a commitment to taking seriously the views of this age group about their care.

**You can find full information on line via the October 2015 E-Bulletin for National Association for Patient Participation (N.A.P.P.)**

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### Focusing on an aspect of St Luke’s Hospice

St Luke’s vision is of a world where everyone with an incurable illness can access the care they need to live well and to die with dignity in the place of their choice.

**The Single Point of Access:**

Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group has commissioned a new pilot service designed to take care of patients who may be approaching the last year of life. The Single Point of Access (SPA) Service is based at St Luke’s Hospice and is available to both patients and carers who may need advice and support regarding End of Life Care.

The SPA provides a co-ordination service through a single telephone number 24 hours a day seven days a week. Direct care can also be delivered at your home through their rapid response team between the hours of 7am until 11pm.

The team is comprised of:
- Trained Palliative Care Registered Nurses
- Health Care Assistants
- Project and Administrative Support

The service aims to improve the patient and carer experience by providing better coordinated care for those in the last year of life and facilitating real choice over the place of care and death. Please speak with your GP if you feel you would benefit from being referred to the SPA service and they will provide you with all the details.
"The gout is a complaint as arises from too much ease and comfort" so says Charles Dickens in his novel "Pickwick Papers" and indeed it is a disease traditionally associated with the Victorian era but it is on the rise again in the UK. Gout causes attacks of painful inflammation in one or more joints. It is a type of arthritis although very different from the more common rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. The pain of an attack can be very severe.

**What causes gout?**

It is caused by a chemical in the blood called uric acid. This is usually harmless and is made in the body. Most is passed out with urine and some from the gut with faeces but in people with gout the amount of uric acid in the blood builds up forming tiny grit-like crystals. Typically the crystals collect in a joint causing inflammation, swelling and pain. This is a "gout attack".

**Why does uric acid build up in some people rather than being passed out in the usual way?**

There may be various reasons for this as:

- Drinking too much alcohol
- Not enough vitamin C in your diet
- Drinking sugar-sweetened soft drinks high in fructose. An excessive amount of fructose rich fruits (such as dried fruits, grapes and apples) and fruit juices also increase the risk
- Certain foods may “tip the balance” such as eating a lot of heart, herring, yeast extract or mussels but eating a normal healthy diet should not raise uric acid levels.
- Some medicines may raise levels
- People with certain other conditions have an increased risk of developing gout. Some examples are: - obesity, high blood pressure, kidney damage

Gout affects about 1 in 200 adults with men being more commonly affected than women. Typically it is a disease of middle age but it can occur in younger people and it also tends to run in some families where for genetic reasons less uric acid is passed out than is usual.

**Whilst gout attacks are painful they do respond to treatment.**

It is common for the foot to be affected and, if so, sitting with your foot raised on a cushion helps to reduce swelling. An ice pack (or a pack of frozen peas) wrapped in a towel and held against the inflamed joint for a short period (up to 20 minutes) will also help. Often a short course of anti-inflammatory painkillers are prescribed by your doctor too.

Taken from: www.patient.co.uk
Cancer Screening Programmes and Age Limits

Screen for Life
Cancer screening sees what you can’t

- Breast
- Cervical
- Colorectal

Automatic and regular 3 yearly appointments for mammograms (breast screening x-rays) are offered to women until they reach the age of 70.

After that you may request continued breast cancer screening every 3 years by calling: 020 8951 4045 or you can make a booking online via: www.nlbss.org.uk

Also, women over 70 are being encouraged to be more aware of the different symptoms of breast cancer, and if they have any concerns, to contact their GP immediately.

Make sure that you are clear on spotting the signs of the breast cancer. Remember that early diagnosis can mean a much higher chance of survival.

Possible signs of breast cancer include:

- A lump or thickening in your breast or armpit
- Change to the skin of your breast
- Changes in the shape or size of your breast
- Nipple changes
- Nipple discharge
- Pain in your breast
- Any other unusual or persistent changes to your breast

Similarly 2 yearly regular invitations for NHS bowel cancer screening (using kits sent to patients who have chosen to participate in the scheme) are offered to those under the age of 75.

However, those over this age limit are still at risk of developing this form of cancer and it is possible to request continued screening.

For continued bowel cancer screening every 2 years call the Freephone helpline on: 0800 707 60 60

The 3 main symptoms of bowel cancer are:
- Blood in the stools (faeces), a change in bowel habit (such as more frequent, looser stools) and abdominal (tummy) pain.

However, such symptoms are very common and need to be checked with your GP as they could have other causes.
A New Direction for Inter Care
by Lynda Ives-Lacy, RSPG Committee member

In June 2015 Inter Care announced changes in the way they support medical clinics in Africa. For many years this charity recycled patient’s returned medicines and the Ridgeway Surgery has been actively supporting this by collecting and forwarding to Inter Care your excess medicines. Apart from providing much needed medical supplies to African clinics it has also saved huge amounts being sent to landfill.

Following recent developments in the regulation of medicines Inter Care are now not allowed to continue with this model. However, these changes now provide an opportunity for the charity to purchase some basic medicines more closely matched to the specific needs of the health units. Other medicines are being donated by pharmaceutical companies and wholesalers. So is this the end of the Ridgeway Surgery’s involvement with the project? The answer is “NO!”

Inter Care have requested from the patients and the partners that we now send medical supplies such as dressings, instruments and devices. Nurse June has kindly agreed to co-ordinate these collections and you will find new lists on the waiting room notice boards highlighting acceptable items.

I’m delighted to pass on from Inter Care their thanks to all who have contributed in the past so helping them to achieve their mission.

NHS DIRECT: 111
The out of Hours GP Service is now accessed by dialling this 111 number

European Emergency Number: 112

The Ridgeway Surgery
71 Imperial Drive
North Harrow HA2 7DU
Tel: 020 8427 2470
Mon– Fri 8.00am-6.30pm

Alexandra Ave Centre
&
Ridgeway@Alex (branch surgery)
Alexandra Avenue
South Harrow, HA2 9DX
Tel: 020 8966 6300
Mon–Sun: Walk-in for Urgent problems only
Doctor 8 am-8 pm Last patient 7.20 pm

Ridgeway Patients will still be able to use Alexandra Avenue branch surgery for booked appointments during the week