

# AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

**Yew Tree Surgery**



**Middleton Medical Centre**



**Sponsored by Friends of Avisford PPG**  
Charity No: 1074882

**Issue 1**

**January 2020**

**FRIENDS OF AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP**  
**CHARITY NUMBER: 1074882**  
**SUPPORTING YOUR SURGERY**

Welcome to the first edition of our new style newsletter. We hope you find it useful and enjoy the articles. You will see that there is more content and also useful information that you can keep and refer to.

The newsletter is funded by the Friends using the money we raise through our fundraising efforts such as the sale of good quality second hand books, the 50:50 Club (see the article on page 8). None of the donations made are used for the newsletter all being kept exclusively to fund any new equipment.

I thought we would start the New Year with some background information on the Friends. The Friends of Avisford Medical Group was established in the summer of 1998 when seven patients met with surgery staff to discuss the possibility of setting up a Patient Participation Group similar to those in existence throughout the UK. At that time, the main aim was to raise funds to purchase equipment, which the over stretched resources of the NHS were unable to provide.

To ensure that the work would be carried out in the most professional and business-like manner, the Group sought and obtained affiliation to the National Association for Patient Participation, the national umbrella organisation. An application for charitable status was made to the Charity Commission and was granted in March 1999.

Over recent years the Friends has developed beyond a purely fundraising role to include funding free health talks, participating in local health events, networking with other Patient Participation Groups and raising patient issues both with the surgery and beyond through the Regis Community Board.

The administration of the Charity is carried out by a management committee, consisting of a minimum of ten members, who meet approximately every six weeks to determine policy, monitor finances and to ensure that the views and concerns of patients are represented fairly.

At the time of the Friends establishment, patients who wished to be part of the Friends paid a small subscription. In 2016 it was agreed that membership would be free and all patients could become members when they joined the surgery.

During 2020 we intend to continue to fund free Health and Well Being talks, participate in the Regis Community Board, raise money for equipment and keep patients up to date with local health initiatives.

If you have access to the internet you can keep up to date with our activities via our website – [www.avisfordfriends.co.uk](http://www.avisfordfriends.co.uk). If you visit the surgery check out our noticeboard and pick up the next edition of the newsletter.

If you have ideas for talks, equipment or events you would like to see us hold either drop a note into the surgery or email: [avisford.friends@gmail.com](mailto:avisford.friends@gmail.com)

### GIFT AID

From time to time, patients like to make donations – used to purchase much-needed items for the Practice. If you would like to donate, cheques should be payable to: The Friends of Avisford Medical Group.

**Gift Aid it!** If you are a UK tax-payer, the Friends can claim back the tax you pay from HMRC. If you are eligible and you would like us to claim Gift Aid on your donation, please sign below – and be sure to enter your address as required by HMRC.

I would like to make a donation of £....to the Friends of Avisford Medical Group

Signature.....Date.....

Please return completed forms (ideally in an envelope) addressed to Friends of Avisford Medical Group to either surgery - or place in the book money honesty box. **By completing this form, you are agreeing to the above information being held on paper and/or electronically by the Friends' committee. It will not be shared with any other organisation, company or person unless required by law.**

## LATEST PRACTICE NEWS

### **New specialist clinics – within your surgery**

Over the past few months, as well as our own permanent recruitment, we have been joined by some specialists who you would normally have to travel further afield to consult.

We now have MSK (musculoskeletal) practitioners with us on a Wednesday. These are the hospital specialists to whom our GPs would often refer you – but now, if you have a musculoskeletal problem, you can book to see them in the Practice.

We also have a Mental Health Worker who alternates between Yapton and Middleton on a weekly basis and we have a Social Prescriber who can help those patients whose health concerns may well be related to their living conditions or other circumstances that are not within the GP's remit.

### **GP Access Hubs**

We are continuing to host GP Access Hubs (GPAH) at Yapton Surgery. Although we are short of space at Yapton, the GPAH clinics run late afternoon/evening and at weekends so they have very little impact on our day-to-day operation.

GPAH clinics are provided by Innovations in Primary Care (IPC) as part of the Government aim to provide extended hours GP cover. As long as staff are available (IPC have had a few issues in attracting GPs to run these clinics), appointments can be booked by patients from any of the local 'Regis' practices for appointments times between 4.30pm and 8pm on most weekdays and some weekends.

Patients must pre-book (via their own surgery) and may only consult a GPAH GP about new symptoms or problems – not conditions about which they have previously seen a GP. As patients attending a GPAH clinic will probably be seeing a GP who is not from his/her own surgery, they must give consent to be treated.

**New Clinical Computer System**

As reported in our last edition, the Practice changed its clinical computer system in Summer 2019. We hope that the switch didn't detract from our service any more than was absolutely necessary.

One of the consequences of the switch was a definite deterioration in the level of on-line information that was available to our patients. A number of people reported this and we have advised them what we know – that our system supplier is very much aware of the government's commitment to make patients' full medical records available on-line from April 2020.

At the time of going to print, we have not been informed of any reason why this should be delayed.

**Local Housing Development**

Although the intended large-scale Ford Airfield and Climping housing developments have not yet begun, a lot of smaller sites in our locality have been – or are being – developed.

Although the big developments are the ones that many are most worried about, the number of smaller plots being built on is still giving rise to a steadily expanding patient list size – particularly at Yapton Surgery.

As previously reported, we will soon struggle to provide sufficient capacity for the influx of new patients. We are in discussion with the CCG (NHS Coastal Commissioning Group - currently the Coastal West Sussex CCG but soon to be merged into a larger West Sussex CCG) about our predicament but, as everyone is aware, there are limited funds available and currently, the only new premises that have been given a green light is at The Croft in Eastergate.

All we can do is make sure that we do everything within our power to continue to provide an effective service for all of our registered patients.

**Our CQC Status**

Although we are still rated as 'Good' overall by CQC, they are adamant that we should improve certain aspects of our Practice. Their concerns do not relate to the standard of health care we give to our patients but how we disseminate learning to staff.

We have robust procedures in place to deal with (and respond to) complaints, significant events and MHRA (medication) alerts but, when we were last visited by CQC in September, they told us that they didn't see enough evidence of lessons being learned and those lessons being shared with all relevant personnel. We now have a plan in place to continue to disseminate such information to all relevant staff – but to keep clearer records of doing so.

**2019/20 Flu**

Uptake of adult seasonal flu vaccinations this year has not been good. This means that a large number of patients who should have this vital annual protection are taking an unnecessary risk with their health. This includes a number of patients aged over 65 and also patients who are under 65 but who are considered to be at risk due to pre-existing conditions.

It's not too late to get your jab – you can book to do so up until the end of January. Please contact Reception at your usual surgery.

**Bognor Hospital is changing....**

There has been a lot of discussion in recent months regarding the future of Bognor Hospital and the good news is that, from April 2020, it is planned to provide an 8am to 8pm service with access to GPs.

This will be in addition to the existing GPAH clinics and will be particularly helpful for people who work full-time. It will also provide an 'overflow' for patients who have been unable to get an appointment in their own Practice.

### **New lighting at Yapton**

During the long winter months, it can be very dark outside Yapton Surgery so we have recently installed new lights. These are positioned high on the main building wall and should make it much safer for patients entering and leaving the surgery in the evenings – including the GP Access Hub clinics (see earlier article) that are often attended by patients who are not familiar with the ‘lie of the land’.

### **Telephones**

The Practice started to have problems with call quality from mid-November 2019 and we reported the problem thinking that BT would find a fault and fix it without delay. How wrong we were, with Christmas looming the problems seem to get worse rather than better. The most common problem was that one person could be heard clearly whilst the other could hardly be heard at all. This meant that when patients called and could hear us, they couldn’t understand why we couldn’t hear them! The problem affected both surgeries, but we are pleased to confirm that shortly before Christmas BT switched us to new lines at the local exchange and since then (touch wood) the problem seems to have gone away. We hope that any patients affected by this problem will accept our apologies for the inconvenience.

### **Middleton Waiting Area BP machine**

With help from the Friends, we have purchased a blood pressure monitor for our Middleton waiting area. If successful, we will look to obtain one for Yapton also. It is important that patients don’t try to use the machine as soon as they walk in off the street – they should be calm and relaxed in order to get an accurate reading. It is also vital to follow the instructions on the top of the machine – if you put your arm in too far or not far enough, you are likely to get an inaccurate reading.

Once the machine has measured your blood pressure, it will print out a slip of paper which you should hand in to Reception – making sure your name and date of birth are both written on it. Your reading will be added to your medical record in due course. We hope that patients will be reassured by being able to measure their blood pressure in this way but we would ask everyone to appreciate that it is not feasible to ask our Receptionists if their blood pressure is normal or what their reading actually means.

**NHS111**

We would like all of our patients to be aware that the NHS111 telephone service will be changing – and for the better! The essence of the change is that, it will no longer be pathway-led (where you describe your symptoms to a non-qualified person who directs you according to a flow-chart).

From April 2020, callers to 111 will be able to speak to a clinician – to be triaged much more effectively.

**AVISFORD FRIENDS NEW FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE  
– 50:50 CLUB**

in Autumn 2019 the Friends launched a new fundraising initiative called a 50:50 Club. Anyone can join by subscribing £5 per month (minimum of 3 months) for a ticket. Each month one number will be drawn and the prize winner will receive 50% of the monthly amount taken. eg: If there are 20 members paying for one ticket the takings that month would be £100 and that month's prize would be £50. The more participants the larger the prize.

To be included in the draw tickets must be bought by the first of the month. This can be done by cheque or Standing Order. Application packs are available in the surgery, on line at the Friends website [www.avisfordfriends.co.uk](http://www.avisfordfriends.co.uk) or by emailing [avisford.friends@gmail.com](mailto:avisford.friends@gmail.com). You can also send your request to:

50:50 Club Administrator c/o Middleton Medical Centre, Elmer Road, Middleton-on-Sea, West Sussex PO22 7SR

The first draw took place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at Middleton Medical Centre. The lucky Ticket **Number 14** was the winner, with a prize of £90.

**Next 3 Draws :**

Thursday January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Yapton Surgery	11am
Thursday February 20 <sup>th</sup>	Middleton Medical Centre	11am
Thursday March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Yapton Surgery	11am



## STAFF NEWS

There have been a number of staff changes since our last publication in the Summer.

On the plus side, **Dr Brenda Gorrie** has re-joined us. Some patients may remember Dr Gorrie from when she last worked in the Practice in 2015. Dr Gorrie works 4 sessions a week across the two surgeries and also specialises in minor surgery, joint injections and women's health.

**Dr Sam Shepperd** is currently on maternity leave but we are extremely lucky to have Dr Margaret Mansi providing GP cover for her.

Although we have lost the services of **Nurse Karen Petroulas**, we have been very fortunate to have recruited **Emma Mist**, an extremely experienced nurse who specialises in Diabetes.

We are also pleased to have recruited **Jules Healy** to our nursing team. We're still on the look-out for a Treatment Room Nurse for a couple of days per week – but so is everybody else!

In Reception, we have taken on **Georgia Hoare** and **Tracy Green** at Middleton while at Yapton we have recruited **Julie Hookway** and **Sara Parish**. **Kim Riley** who has been with us since 2010 is leaving in January – and we have recruited **Emma Ford** to fill the resultant vacancy.

**STAFF FOCUS****JERRY NELSON,  
PRACTICE MANAGER**

Jerry, it is your voice that we all hear when we ring the surgery, so if not the face, you certainly are the voice of Avisford Medical Group.

**What does your job entail?**

*Good question! To be succinct basically a GP Practice is a commercial business (I fear not many people appreciate that) so my most important task is to balance the books. If I don't do that, I will have nearly 11,000 patients and 34 staff to answer to – not to mention the impact on neighbouring GP Practices (who would have to pick up our workload) As in most businesses, key areas (apart from finance) are managing staff and making sure technology does what it's supposed to do! I'm not clinically qualified but I have to manage many clinical aspects of the business - with lots of help from the GP Partners, Dr Bansil & Dr Sidney. It may all seem quite simple but it's not! I have been in the job since 2004 and it gets tougher year on year. The NHS delights in giving GP Practices lots of hoops to jump through and, often as not, I'm the one who is expected to do the jumping!*

**How long have you been a Practice Manager?**

*I joined Avisford Medical Group in 2004, with no prior GP Practice experience. Until around that time, GP Practice Managers were mostly females who had 'come up through the ranks' from reception or secretarial positions. Soon after my appointment, I attended a meeting of Chichester and Bognor Practice Managers and I was the only male. Maybe I set a new trend as in this area the men now outnumber the women! Prior to joining the Practice, I worked for a number of commercial companies including The Body Shop in Littlehampton where I gained experience of managing finance, people and IT systems. Joining an NHS-funded organisation was a bit of a culture shock – especially when compared with private sector business!*

**Were you born in this area or did you move here?**

*I was born in London, my parents moving to Littlehampton when I was just 3 months old and I've lived reasonably 'locally' ever since. I have three grown-up children – all now married - and with a combined total of nine grandchildren. They all live near which is good.*

**If you hadn't become a Practice Manager, what career might you have chosen?**

*If I hadn't become a Practice (Business) Manager, I really don't know what I would have done. On leaving Chichester High School (where it's probably fair to say that my sporting interests outweighed my academic interests!), despite gaining a significant number of O'levels, I decided to 'by-pass' university and became a trainee accountant with Debenhams. After a while, I was bored with accounts and switched to IT (Data Processing as it was then) but I was never technical enough to survive in such a rapidly evolving world. I was probably destined to be office-based but, strangely, I've always much preferred to be outside. Well, in the summer, anyway!*

**What is the best part of your job?**

*The best part of my job is working with a lovely bunch of hard-working individuals who do what they do because they care about people.*

**And which part presents most challenge?**

*The most challenging (and frustrating) aspect of the job (apart from jumping through all those NHS hoops!) is not being able to please everybody all of the time! Although the NHS is free at the point of contact, it is a budgeted service with - especially now - very limited resources and, although demand rises and falls, not every request can be dealt with at the level of urgency on which some people try to insist.*

**What do you like to do in any spare time?**

*I live in Ford with my lovely wife Becky, our ever-hungry cat, Florence and a small flock (well, five!) of chickens and ducks. I still like sport but, apart from running and the odd round of (decidedly mediocre) golf, I now settle for watching rather than playing.*

**AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP:** <https://www.avisford.co.uk/>

**YAPTON SURGERY :** **01243 551321**

**MIDDLETON SURGERY:** **01243 583596**

**FRIENDS OF AVISFORD PPG:** **web: <https://avisfordfriends.co.uk/>**  
**Email: [avisford.friends@gmail.com](mailto:avisford.friends@gmail.com)**

Newsletters are available in each surgery & on the Friends' web-site ([www.avisfordfriends.co.uk](http://www.avisfordfriends.co.uk)). If you would prefer to receive a copy by post, please complete the details below.

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