

# Practice Health News

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## NEW HEALTH CENTRE

The current Health Centre has been in existence for over 30 years now and it has long been felt by GP's that a more modern building with more space is required to facilitate the health needs of an expanding and aging population. There have been a number of proposals over the years for a new health Centre in the Lisburn area, but unfortunately due to funding or resource issues these have never come to fruition.

GP's are in preliminary discussions with the South Eastern Trust about the possibility of a new Health Centre that would provide accommodation for GP's and allied health professionals. They are hoping to attract the funding for such a build by engaging with private investors. Discussions regarding this are at a very early stage but there is hope that over the next few years that agreement can be reached by the relevant stakeholders and a new Health Centre can become a reality.



## PHONING IN

The Practice has 4 telephone lines for our 4,036 patients. This in excess of most other practices in the building. There is no more capacity in the health centre exchange to increase the number of lines so that doctors would be able to see the patient's records of those who phone in, we allow patients to phone between 8:30am to 10:30am and we ring them back. This allows some obvious advantages to best meet the needs of the patients. For instance in the past if someone rang up and you were in the queue, if they had a complex problem you might be on hold for 10 minutes or more. This was why we were ringing you back. This is a lot costlier for the practice but to help patients we introduced the system where we ring you back. We will of course ring you back if you are suddenly unwell anytime during the day if needed. Unfortunately, we are ringing back about 40 patients per day so we will not be ringing you back immediately as we need to do the appointments, check the hospital letters and do other necessary things to deal with your problem. We realize that this system is not perfect but offers the best compromise to optimize our time and resources to help the patients. If you have a job or family commitments which stops you from taking calls at certain times please let the receptionist know if there is a suitable time when we can ring you back.

**THESE ARE DIFFICULT TIMES FOR PATIENTS AND THE PRACTICE WITH THE REDUCTION IN N.H.S RESOURCES. THANK YOU FOR BEING PATIENTS OF OUR PRACTICE. WE WILL TRY OUR BEST FOR YOU**

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### CONTACT NUMBERS

Day: (028) 9260 3133  
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The Practice Website Address is [www.fordeandquinn.co.uk](http://www.fordeandquinn.co.uk)



## LAGAN VALLEY A&E

You may have noticed that the Lagan Valley emergency Department has had reduced opening hours recently. The reason for this is an inability on behalf of the Trust, to recruit or retrain junior doctors to work in the department. It has become clear to the Trust that they are not going to be able to staff the emergency department in the traditional manner.

This required them to look at different options to keep the emergency department open over a 24 hour period, which is vital to the survival Lagan Valley as an acute hospital.

A number of proposals are being considered. These include allowing GP's to admit patients directly to the hospital overnight, downgrading the emergency department to a minor injuries unit or become a nurse led emergency department.

One of the Trusts favoured options is the creation of an enhanced GP out of hours service that would run in the Lagan Valley at night time. This would give access to blood tests, x-rays and also be able to treat minor injuries with the back up of emergency department staff. Emergencies and ambulances would still go to the Royal or Ulster Hospitals. There has been a lot of debate regarding this option and the Trust is currently carrying out a consultation exercise regarding these proposals. It is likely that a decision on this will be taken in the near future. The practice will try to keep you informed of any changes, but you are likely to hear about any decision through local media and politicians.



## HOSPITAL QUERIES

It is frustrating when you are waiting for word back for test results or to find out what is happening. Often the hospital has reduced the number of secretaries and there is not the same follow through. It seems strange to us all that an expensive set of tests or investigations have been undertaken but with no end point to get the results. The practice is frustrated by this, but we know we have the same experience ourselves answerphones rather than people to talk to. We haven't the man power to chase up all of these. Please would you ring the Consultant's secretary and if it's an answering phone leave a message to get back to you. If all else fails let the practice know.

**ALSO REMEMBER TO BRING A FAMILY MEMBER WHEN YOU ARE GOING BACK TO THE HOSPITAL FOR RESULTS. FOUR EARS ARE BETTER THAN TWO. SOME TESTS ARE OPEN TO INTERPRETATION AND GETTING THE RESULT REQUIRES THE CONSULTANT'S OPINION ON THE RESULT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM.**

## WHAT IS A PCP ?

There has been a lot of coverage in the media recently about the reorganisation of the health service in Northern Ireland. The Health and Social Care Board was tasked with drawing up a blueprint for the delivery of health services in Northern Ireland for the future. This resulted in the publication of a document called "Transforming Your Care". There has been a lot of controversy about this document and what it is going to mean to the public.

Transforming your care is a complicated idea. Essentially it sets out a vision for a different way of providing health care to the population. The emphasis will be on services being provided at a local level to suit local population needs. GP's have been organising themselves into local partnerships. They are meeting and communicating regularly in order to decide what are the priorities for the health needs of their patients and decide how this might be provided. There 18 "primary care partnerships" across Northern Ireland made up of clusters of GP practices. They are already working on innovative ways of providing different services to their patients.

One of the principles of these partnerships is more services being provided in the community. This may mean in the future that rather than attending your consultant in hospital, you may see him in a primary care centre. This centre may provide a variety of other services to the local population. Some of these services may even be provided by GP's that have expertise in various specialities. The advantage being that the care can be provided by a doctor who understands the needs of the local population in a setting that is familiar to the patient.

You will be hearing much more about transforming your care and primary care partnerships over the coming years. This is a very challenging time for all those working within the service and the health service is likely to look very different in 10 years time than it does now.

## PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

The practice are indebted to the members of the group for all their input and the sacrifice of their personal time.. A special thank you to one member who was the only patient representative at the recent meeting regarding the proposed new health centre.

We would warmly welcome new members, especially young people, to represent younger people's views





**THE CAGE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Why not take this test  
CAGE Questionnaire**

Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?

Yes/No

Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?

Yes/No

Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?

Yes/No

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover

Yes/No

A total score of 2 or more out of 4 in these questions is considered clinically significant and indicates that it would be advisable to discuss the matter further with your doctor.

**WHAT HAPPENS WITH ALCOHOL**

Chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters are released when people drink and these chemicals give a reward sensation.

In some people, (the genetic link is being explored), the withdrawal of alcohol after constant use releases stress chemicals or neurotransmitters which result in a learned behaviour that drinking alcohol the reward alcohol release and not the stress chemicals.

Dependence on alcohol—get tolerance, withdrawal effects, loss of control to reduce intake, compulsion to seek alcohol, stopping doing other things e.g. family life for alcohol, changes in mood, and increased physical and psychological ill health.

**ALCOHOL ADDICTION**

Alcohol is a major cause of premature death in men and women. Alcohol is associated with higher levels of both mental and physical problems. More recently, cancers are recognised to be more common in people who drink excess alcohol e.g. breast and bowel cancer in women and gullet and stomach cancers in men. About 20% of the attendances to GP's have alcohol as a factor i.e. fatty liver, pancreatitis and stroke.

Countries farther north have higher alcoholism rates compared to Mediterranean countries. Usually twice as many men as women are recognised to be alcoholic. The estimate is that 2 in 5 and 1 in 10 women are at risk of alcohol addiction. Experts reckon 40 to 60% of the risk is due to genetics and the remainder due to a combination of peer pressure, alcohol availability, (government open all hours policy and low cost), stress and lack of coping strategies.

Most people, if they are going to be alcoholic, will be so before the age of 30. Most heavy drinking is done between the ages of 18 to 22 years. This is not helped by the use of energy drinks which allow longer drinking sessions, as these delay sleep and reduce the feeling of tiredness at the time.

Further problems with older people drinking more—about a 1/3 of older alcoholics only take it up in later life. Also with pregnant women resulting in problems with babies being born with conditions related to alcohol.

One of the best ways to help people understand the problems with too much alcohol is to ask people to keep a drink diary .

The success rate is about 50% for treatment of alcoholism in one year.

**HOW TO SAVE TIME WITH PRESCRIPTIONS**

Sometimes one medicine runs out more quickly than others. This may be simply because it is, say, a painkiller and the doctors would prefer not to give large quantities of this. However it may be because the medicine was started at a different time than the others. It is estimated that about a third of our 6 receptionists time is taken up processing this important but time consuming task.

It would save time for you and the practice if you speak to your pharmacist and ask them to help you synchronize the ordering of prescriptions. For instance you may not need so many of one type and more of another to help bring them in line. We recommend you use one pharmacist of your choice so that they can help you with ordering and queries as they will get to know you well. Pharmacies offer a range of excellent services and are an excellent first point of call for many health related issues. They can arrange ordering, collection and delivery of your medicines and can arrange for a loved one's medicines to be delivered in blister packs to help older people remember to take their medicines.

To help this we have an internet access. You simply Google [for-deandquinn.co.uk](http://for-deandquinn.co.uk) and our website pops up. This will show the section relating to prescriptions. This means that you don't have to ring up unless it's something that's not a usual medication.

Please try not to ring up for ordering a script as soon as the phone lines open at 8:30am. This is because we need to have the phone free to arrange appointments for patients who were sick overnight. If possible ring for prescriptions after 10:30am. While the practice is open to 6.00pm each night, try not to ring just before we close as again this is a time when people with worries ring.



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YOUR HEALTH IS OUR CONCERN

PHG

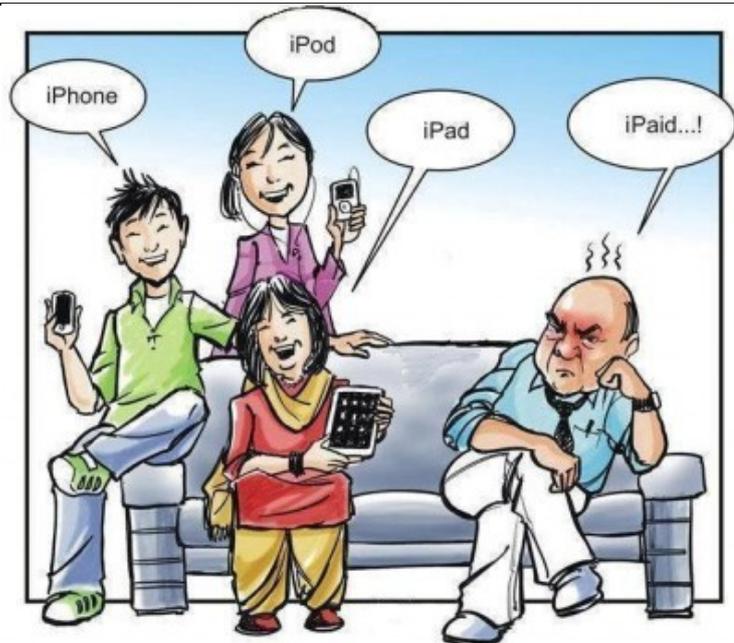
Chairman  
Ray Largan  
Editor  
Godfrey Hayes

## Patient's Letter Page

We welcome patient's letters and comments. These should be sent directly to the Practice clearly marked in the top left hand corner **PHN**.

Please send them to:

Dr. Forde/Dr. Quinn Practice,  
Lisburn Health Centre,  
Linenhall Street,  
Lisburn,  
BT28 ILU.



## IN A LIGHTER VEIN

### One Liners

I always take life with a grain of salt,...plus a slice of lemon, and a shot of tequila.

Never under any circumstances, take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.

Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

War does not determine who is right—only who is left. Whoever coined the phrase "Quiet as a mouse" has never stepped on one.

If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you.

A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you will look forward to the trip.

Some cause happiness wherever they go. Others wherever they go.

When in doubt, mumble.

### QUOTES

One of the great things about books is sometimes there are fantastic pictures.  
George W Bush.

The only reason people get lost in thought is because it's unfamiliar territory.

Flying is learning how to throw yourself to the ground and miss. Douglas Adams.

If your wife wants to learn to drive, don't stand in her way.

If you don't succeed at first, hide all the evidence that you tried.

Always remember you're unique, just like everyone else.

There are three sides to an argument. Your side, my side and the right side.

If you die in an elevator be sure to push the up button.



An old boy turned up at the offices where his son worked. "Hello, I'm Tommy Wheelers uncle. I've come to ask if he can have the afternoon off so I can take him to the match." I'm afraid he's not here," came the reply, "we already gave him the afternoon off so he could attend your funeral .

A highly excited man rang up for an ambulance. "quickly, come quickly, he shouted, "my wife's about to have a baby." "Is this her first baby?" asked the operator." "No, you fool," came the reply, "It's her husband."

A woman goes to the doctor and says, "Doctor, my husband limps because his left leg is an inch shorter than his right leg. What would you do in his case?" "probably limp, too," says the

A salesman asks a little boy if his mother is in the house. "yea, she's home, the boy said, moving over to let him past. The salesman rang the doorbell, got no response, knocked once, then again. Still no one came to the door. Turning to the boy, the salesman said, "I thought you said your mother was home." The kid replied, "She is, but I don't live here"

A distraught little boy rang his dad at work one day. "Dad," cried the boy, mum was backing the car out of the garage this morning and she ran over my bicycle." "Look," said his dad, how many times have I told you not to leave your bike in the middle of the lawn."

If money makes the world go around how come bills travel at twice the speed of cheques.

Why do feet smell and noses run?