



**Budleigh Salterton Medical Centre**

# **Patient Group**

## **NEWSLETTER: WINTER 2019 – ISSUE 56**

**OPENING HOURS:** Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 6.30pm, Tel: 01395 441212 (8.00am – 6.00pm)  
**OUT OF HOURS:** Dial **999** for life-threatening problems and Dial **111** for non-urgent advice  
**WEBSITE:** [www.budleighsaltertonmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.budleighsaltertonmedicalcentre.co.uk)

**IN THIS ISSUE:** Chairperson's News; Are We Taking Too Many Medications?; Be Prepared, Winter is Coming!; Banish Winter Tiredness; Telephone Notice; Booking and Cancelling Appointments; Safety Notice; Talkworks; Memory Café; Seasonal Opening Hours

### **CHAIRPERSON'S NEWS**

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Newsletter. It has been quite a busy time for the Patient Participation Group since our last Newsletter.

On October 9th we were pleased to have Professor Nick Bellenger and Dr Steve Podd from the Cardiology Department at RD&E join us at our Wine and Cheese Event. They gave a very enlightening talk about cardiac function and a number of cardiac conditions. It was a very interactive evening and both specialists provided detailed answers to the questions from the audience. It was great to hear from a number of people that they left the session feeling not only better informed but less concerned about issues which had been worrying them. Interest exceeded capacity and we had to call a halt to issuing the free tickets – with this in mind we will use a larger venue in the future.

On November 2nd a Family First Aid information and training session was held at the Public Hall. This was less well attended and we should not be surprised really, we were up against the Rugby World Cup Final and some pretty awful weather! In spite of this the audience found the training given by Action for Life very helpful and again, a number of questions and concerns were addressed.

The PPG will be organising further health and wellbeing information events in 2020 and the programme will be issued in the New Year. These will be open to all patients and tickets will be available from the Surgery (the tickets keep us informed of numbers and are a great aid to the catering!)

If you have not yet had your 'flu vaccination please contact the surgery. Owing to unforeseen technical issues we are aware that one vaccination clinic had to be cancelled at short notice in November. The PPG know that the surgery team responded very quickly and worked hard to contact over 1,500 patients. Not an easy task and we know that in some cases a household was contacted rather than specific patients. The practice would like to apologise to patients for any distress caused, this letter was sent under exceptional circumstances.

We hope the winter is a healthy one for you and you manage to avoid as many of the prevailing bugs as possible! Your PPG wish you a very Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the coming year at our health and wellbeing events.

Sue Lake, December 2019

### **PATIENT GROUP COMMITTEE**

Sue Lake  
Chairperson

David Forward  
Vice Chairperson

Deborah Mitchell  
Secretary

Peter Frean  
Robert Harland  
Chris Kitson  
Mark McGlade  
Richard Mejzner  
Lynette Oram  
Michael Rice  
Jacqui Ruhlig  
Richard Waller  
Judy Wright

### **CONTACT US**

Either by post to:  
Budleigh Salterton  
Medical Centre, 1 The  
Lawn, Budleigh  
Salterton, EX9 6LS

Or by hand to:  
Patient Participation  
Group post-box in the  
Medical Centre



## ARE WE TAKING TOO MANY MEDICINES?

“Many of us are increasingly taking various forms of medications. As we get older we unfortunately pick up problems along the way. Many of us will have raised blood pressure over the age of 60 and we know reducing the blood pressure reduces the risk of stroke but being effective in controlling the blood pressure means that nearly half of people on treatment will require 3 medications. If we have other conditions like diabetes or an irregular heartbeat we end up needing medication to treat these problems too. It is easy to see how we can quickly end up taking 4 or 5 medications or more and that is not even considering the use of statins which can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease for most people over the age of 60 – and medications to strengthen the bones, something again that can be helpful to many over 80.

The NHS has been successful as well, seeing significant drops in the number of strokes and heart problems and complications with diabetes at a given age, but the average numbers will still continue to increase as we get older.

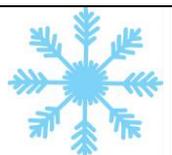
Being on lots of medications requires care and monitoring and this in turn creates a large amount of extra work for the review of medications; a challenge for both primary care and secondary care. There are inevitably risks to being on these medications but of course the risks have to be balanced against the risk of not being on them, for example the blood pressure being higher or the diabetes not being so well controlled.

Another challenge is that the research evidence is often carried out in cases where there is just one condition and often patients are younger and fitter. This leaves us with uncertainty when we get older and into our 80's or when we have multiple conditions and have to decide whether adding a further medication is really justified. Specialism in the hospital tends to mean the specialists are always keen to ensure all the recommended medications for their specific condition are adhered to and it sometimes feels that the other multiple medications are not always taken into account when suggestions are made.

All this leaves us with big challenges to try and make safe, sensible decisions and not deny people medications that might help them keep well. We do need help in partnership with our patients and pharmacies to make sure that we take our medicines as prescribed and that we have the appropriate checks done (ie blood tests or blood pressures) so that we are able to get the benefit and minimise the risk from taking our daily pills.

Dr Richard Mejnzer

## BE PREPARED! WINTER IS COMING!



As Autumn draws to a close there are some basic things people can do to ease their lives in the event of a period of severe winter weather making it difficult or even impossible to venture out:

- Heat your home well (minimum of 18°C) and make sure you are dressed for the weather
- If you use solid fuel or oil, make sure you have enough to last through a period of severe weather
- Ensure any spare blankets are aired and ready for use
- Buy in some extra tinned or dried food which can be heated up if you are unable to leave the house for a few days
- If you have a freezer, stock it up a bit more than usual
- Make sure you have a torch (and batteries) in a handy place
- If you take regular medicine check you have a sufficient supply to tide you over in case you are unable to get to the doctor or a chemist due to the weather
- Buy one or two bags of table salt – these are cheap and a sprinkling of salt on the front step or path will get rid of any snow or ice
- If you are **over 65** book an appointment at the surgery to have your annual **free flu** vaccination



## BANISH WINTER TIREDNESS

Do you find it harder to roll out of bed when the temperature drops and the mornings are darker? If so, you're not alone. Many people feel tired and sluggish during winter.

### Here are 5 energy-giving solutions that may help:

1. **Let in some sunlight:** As the days become shorter, your sleep and waking cycles may become disrupted. The lack of sunlight means your brain produces more of a hormone called melatonin, which makes you sleepy. Open your blinds or curtains as soon as you get up to let more sunlight into your home, and get outdoors in natural daylight as much as possible. Try to take even just a brief lunchtime walk, and make sure your work/home environments are as light/airy as possible.
2. **Get a good night's sleep:** We don't actually require any more sleep in winter than we do in summer – aim for about eight hours of shut-eye a night, and try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Make sure your bedroom helps you feel relaxed and sleepy: clear the clutter, have comfortable and warm bedding, and turn off the TV.
3. **Get regular exercise:** Exercise may be the last thing you want to do when you're feeling tired on dark winter evenings. But you might be surprised by how energetic you feel after getting involved in some kind of physical activity every day. Exercise in the late afternoon may help to reduce early-evening fatigue and also improve your sleep.
4. **Learn to relax:** Are you feeling pressured to get everything done during the shorter daylight hours? If so, it may be contributing to your tiredness – stress has been shown to make you feel fatigued. There's no quick-fire cure for stress, but there are some simple things you can do to help to reduce it. Many people find adding meditation, yoga, breathing exercises or mindfulness techniques into their day helps them to calm down and feel more relaxed.
5. **Eat the right food:** Being overweight or underweight can affect your energy levels and leave you feeling sleepy. So it's important to make sure you eat a healthy, balanced diet. Once the summer ends, there's a temptation to ditch the salads and fill up on starchy foods such as pasta, potatoes and bread. However, you'll have more energy if you include plenty of fruit and vegetables in your comfort meals. Winter vegetables – such as carrots, parsnips, swede and turnips – can be roasted, mashed or made into soup to provide a winter meal for the family. And classic stews/casseroles are great options if made with lean meat or pulses, and plenty of veg.

[www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/5-ways-to-wipe-out-winter-tiredness](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/5-ways-to-wipe-out-winter-tiredness)

**TELEPHONE NOTICE:** Some of our patients have experienced problems with their calls being diverted to a private number when they call the surgery. This has been escalated as a major incident by our providers and the practice and we hope to have this resolved very soon. If this does affect you it would be helpful if you could advise the practice, and if using a smart phone take a photo of the number you dialled which we can forward to our provider as proof. It has been noted that using our full number 01395 441212 is more efficient. We are very sorry for this inconvenience.

### BOOKING and CANCELLING APPOINTMENTS ONLINE



The following clinics are available for online booking:

- Routine doctor appointment
- Annual asthma review
- Blood test and blood pressure

The doctors have asked for a brief indication of the problem at the time of booking.

To enable us to answer more phone calls from patients and reduce the number of non-attended appointments, NHS England has recommended patients register and use the practice's online services. It is possible to use this service in a number of ways, including booking, cancelling and re-booking appointments. Signing up is simple. Just bring in a photographic proof of ID, (ie passport or driving licence) and a proof of your address (ie utility bill or bank statement). The reception team will then be able to provide you with your unique login details. Further information is available on our website.

**SAFETY NOTICE:** Please can all patients who use the disabled parking space take special care when reversing back out into the main road to ensure there are no other patients walking alongside or behind their vehicle.



Devon Partnership  
NHS Trust

## TALKWORKS

### Improving Your Mental and Physical Well Being

Is the way that you are feeling affecting your daily life? Are you struggling to cope, feeling low, anxious or overwhelmed by your thoughts and feelings? Are you living with a health condition that is making you feel tired, frustrated and worried? You are not alone and Talkworks can help.

Talkworks is a free, confidential, NHS talking therapy service, helping you to feel better and giving you the tools and techniques to improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

You can self-refer to this service by calling **0300 555 3344** or via their website [www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk](http://www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk)

## BUDLEIGH SALTERTON MEDICAL CENTRE'S MEMORY CAFÉ

If you are you worried about your memory or you care for someone with memory problems then please come to our Memory Café – new members welcome. It is a great opportunity to meet new people in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere where you can take part in quizzes and games, listen to guest speakers and receive information and support.

**Time:** 10.30am – 12.30pm (every other Friday)

**Venue:** Budleigh Hub (Free Parking)

**Dates:** Christmas Party 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019 by Invitation Only  
22<sup>nd</sup> December 2019; 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020;  
14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020; 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020



The memory café is funded by the medical centre with the help of volunteers. If you could spare a Friday morning twice a month and would like to volunteer please contact Jo Keeler (Tel: 01395 441212) for further information.

## CHRISTMAS 2019 and NEW YEAR 2020

We would like to invite all our patients to visit us on Budleigh's Late Night Christmas Shopping Event to enjoy a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 6.00pm

Budleigh Salterton Medical Centre will be closed on:  
Christmas Day Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and Boxing Day Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
New Year's Day Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020

On all other days our opening hours of 8.00am to 6.30pm, Monday to Friday, will remain the same.

We take this opportunity to wish all our patients a very Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

