



# Highcliffe and Mundeford Patients' Newsletter

SPRING 2010

Produced by patients for patients



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## Patient Participation Group Members

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Jan Hartley	01425 276498
Maureen Rain	01425 278816
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## Changes at the Surgery.....up-dating you on some major changes in the team.

The Surgery has enjoyed many years of stability and the last major change occurred when Dr Anne Lloyd-Thomas and Dr Lucy Godwin joined the Practice on Dr Gilbertson's retirement. Time flies: that was more than an amazing ten years ago!

We have all worked extremely hard together for many years with the shared aim of providing you with a courteous, timely and efficient service. Now we have reached the time when changes in personnel have become inevitable.

In December 2009 Dr Sami celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and he is cutting down from working full-time to half-time work at the Medical Centre. In September 2010 Dr Odbert also plans to reduce his working week by half. This inevitably means that there will be fewer appointments available with these doctors for those patients who prefer to see them for review of their conditions.

Other doctors in the practice will be available to take on patients. We all welcomed the arrival of Dr O'Reilly who became a full-time assistant in August. Dr Lloyd-Thomas will be increasing the number of sessions she works in Highcliffe. We are also fortunate to have Dr Louise Goddard working with us as a GP-Registrar until August 2010.

At the end of March this year, Sister Jane Dobson will be retiring fully. We all thank her for her long and valuable commitment to Highcliffe and we wish her a very long

and happy retirement.

Of course, there are fresh faces amongst the nursing team too. Sister Clare Stride has joined the team to look after patients with diabetes and Sister Claudine Hebron has been appointed as our new Community Matron. We are also fortunate to have Jenny Newman as our new Health Visitor.

The provision of modern healthcare is very much a team effort. Life moves on and change is inevitable. You will see less of the old hands as the newer faces become increasingly familiar to you. We are most fortunate to have a super team at Highcliffe and we will continue to work together to provide you with the best service that we can deliver within our resources.

When you telephone the Medical Centre, you can always speak to one of the doctors (the same day if it is urgent) and appropriate follow-up or an appointment can be arranged that way.

If you wish to book ahead to talk to, or to see a doctor in the future, that can be arranged too.

If necessary a doctor or nurse will visit you at home if you are too unwell or incapacitated to get to us.

Parents can bring children to our drop-in surgery at 4pm, if that is more convenient than telephoning a doctor on the day or booking ahead.

Genuine medical emergencies are always prioritised, whenever they present, but this does mean that doctors can sometimes be delayed.

## Dual Role for Pharmacist

Many of you will know Howard Lacey as the pharmacist at Lloyds pharmacy attached to the Practice. What you may not know is that on his day off from the pharmacy, Howard is contracted to work for the Practice. On that day another pharmacist is responsible for the pharmacy.

Howard is registered with the Royal Pharmaceutical Society as a qualified independent prescriber and he continues his studies at Derby University to become a Doctor of Pharmacy Practice. Meanwhile his work with us at Highcliffe Medical Centre includes Medication Usage Reviews with patients as well as running Hypertension Clinics.

Once a month Howard has a Hypertension Clinic on a Saturday morning which is particularly helpful for working people. In addition, the medical staff at the Practice are able to benefit from Howard's expertise and extensive pharmaceutical knowledge.

## HIGHCLIFFE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

We are an active local community association with 38 different regular activities including:-

Art, Choir, Computing, Craft, Dancing, Drama, Holidays, Languages, Piano and Organ, Rambling, Table Tennis, Theatre Trips, Various Card Games, Yoga, and many more.

Our delightful sea facing building - Greystones House, Waterford Road, Highcliffe, BH23 5JL is open every weekday between 9.30am and 4.30pm. New members are always welcome so why not drop in and chat to one of the duty wardens or call Pat McKean on 01425 278669 for more information.

On Friday mornings, non-members can call in, wander round, perhaps buy refreshments in our coffee lounge or at "Happy Hour" listen to the live music which is provided on the first Friday of each month.

We look forward to welcoming you as a new member.

## Sister Dobson is leaving.

Where has the time gone? It does not seem nearly eighteen years ago when I first started at the surgery, as a medical records summariser, inputting patient data into the computer, tucked away in that cupboard, or it seemed like a cupboard. This was of course being done in preparation for the Practice becoming fund holding.

I have decided to call it a day and retire. As the politicians say, 'I want to spend more time with my family'. In my case I want to spend more time with my husband and two cats. He says he can't wait; after all he has had ten years start on me, so I thought that I would get in on the act. I know that the cats are getting very excited.

The past eighteen years have been a wonderful experience, meeting some very nice people both patients and colleagues. Of course everything is changing in the National Health Service as it is elsewhere, some things for the better and some not so good but that, after all, is progress - or so they say.

I will miss all my patients. I have regarded you as old friends and, of course, friends are never forgotten, so there will always be some happy memories to draw on over the last years of my career and to take into retirement.

Brian and I hope to travel more and see some of the world before it is changed by the stupid things that mankind does both to the planet and the animals that live on it. We shall also dust off our old camper and tow that around, both in this country and Europe. We will try to find some sun which we seem to be sadly lacking in this country.

It is never easy to say goodbye so I am not going to do that, and the reason is very simple. I have bumped into so many of you over the fruit and vegetables in Sainsbury's and Marks and Spencer's super markets over the years, and, I see no reason why that should change. Please do come and have a chat, thanks for your friendship.

Love,

Jane.



## **Pam's Jottings**

### **Telephone System:**

In March BT plan to carry out an upgrade to the telephone system. You may notice the following difference.

If the three members of the reception team who answer the phone are already dealing with calls when you telephone the Surgery, the telephone system will advise you that you are in a queue and will give you information so that you can decide whether to continue to wait or call back later. The team will be able to see from their computer screens that a call is waiting and will endeavour to answer the call as quickly as they can. The practice very much hopes that you will all feel that this is an improvement.

We have increased the number of incoming telephone lines on our telephone number 272203, but there are only ever a maximum of 3 staff available to answer the incoming calls. There are times when they are trying to sort out a problem that one of you has identified and are speaking to a doctor in order to resolve the problem. Also, delays in answering may arise if any of the three have been called to the Front Reception desk to speak with a patient; this takes them away from their desks and answering the incoming calls.

### **Telephoning for Results:**

For many years we have asked that if you need to ask about test results, you contact the surgery in an afternoon. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, the telephones are less busy at this time, and secondly, the members of staff who are qualified to deal with your request are more likely to be available. There may be occasions when you are asked to call back because those qualified to undertake this task are already dealing with other queries. Thank you for your understanding in this respect.

### **Building Alterations**

In September last year the practice was granted planning consent to enlarge and improve the ground floor treatment area and improve the ground floor waiting room. Although at the time of writing I do not have a firm date for the commencement of the work, it will cause some disruption both in the car park and to the waiting room, but until such time as a contractor is appointed and there is agreement as to when the

work will start and finish it is difficult for me to give you exact information.

I do hope that you will all be very supportive of the staff at this time, as with any building work it can be quite a stressful time for all involved.

### **Flu and Swine Flu:**

This year's seasonal Flu sessions were not as well attended as they had been in the past. Perhaps this was to do with the focus on H1N1 Flu (Swine Flue) in the media. As a practice we are expected to give approximately 4,000 injections to those who are classed in the "at risk groups" and those who are over 65 years of age. It may just surprise you that we are already having to plan for the 2010/2011 season and ordering the number of vaccines that we think we will require.

The need to deliver the Swine Flu vaccination has put a tremendous additional workload on both the clinical and non clinical staff. Many of you will have realised that it has been necessary to reduce or curtail some of the Practice Sister's clinics but we have not had to withdraw any of the clinics totally. Some vaccination sessions have been held at Greystones and at the Methodist Church Hall and we are very appreciative of the support from the Patients Participation Group, whose help has been invaluable, as it was for the seasonal flu sessions.

### **Staffing:**

New members of staff need time to settle in and adjust to our systems and to get to know you, the patients. In addition, sickness, particularly amongst the clinical staff, may mean that appointments occasionally have to be cancelled. If a doctor is sick we will try to find a locum doctor to provide cover. However there are no locum nurses to call upon so that does mean that appointments have to be re-scheduled, which is of course disappointing for the patient who had made their arrangements to be available to attend.

The Chiropody service at the practice is provided by Bournemouth & Poole Primary Care Trust and I know that Chiropody has caused many of you problems due to appointments being cancelled. One of the regular Chiropodists had been off sick for a number of months and her replacements have at times been cancelled at the last minute. I can only apologise to you if you have been affected by this.

## Highcliffe Friends in Need need YOU

Friends in Need are a voluntary Group who help others attend medical appointments by driving them to and from the venue. This vital service is again in **urgent need** of extra volunteer drivers.

Volunteering means you will meet many pleasant and appreciative people, which makes this an uplifting and rewarding experience.

### **What would I have to do?**

- You drive a 'friend in need' to and from a medical appointment
- You do not have to commit yourself to drive on a fixed day
- You do not need extra insurance
- You will not be out of pocket
- You can decline a request from any of the co-ordinators to drive 'a friend in need' for any reason or no reason
- You can opt out from giving your services for any specific days. Perhaps you can only commit to one day a week—that's fine. Sign up for a possible call on that day only.
- They do not operate at weekends

### **How does the scheme work?**

- The group has five volunteer co-ordinators, one for each day of the week
- The co-ordinators work from home in the mornings between 9.30 and 12.30
- They receive phone calls from people requesting transport for medical reasons
- On receiving a request the co-ordinator calls various volunteer drivers on their list until one is able to comply with the client's request
- The client is then phoned by the co-ordinator with the name of the driver and time of pick-up
- If no driver is available the client is informed of the situation
- A minimum of 2 days and maximum of 7 days notice is required

### **Good Citizen Award**

This excellent group was presented with a Highly Commended certificate in the Christchurch Borough's Good Citizen Award Scheme in 2007. Please help them continue this invaluable service. You may be able to drive yourself around now—but you never know when you may need to use 'Friends in Need' in the future. Please, if you possibly can, volunteer to help by calling 01425 274378 TODAY. Thank you!

## Understanding stroke and TIA

A stroke happens when the blood supply to the brain is disturbed. It is an emergency and you must phone 999 for an ambulance and urgent medical attention. There is a range of treatments for different types of strokes, so the quicker help arrives, the better the chance of recovery.

You can recall the main signs and symptoms of a stroke or Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) by remembering to Act **F.A.S.T.**: Face-Arms-Speech-Time:

**F**ace: The face may have fallen on one side, the person may not be able to smile or their mouth or eye may have drooped.

**A**rm: The person with suspected stroke may not be able to raise both arms and keep them there because of arm weakness or numbness.

**S**peech: There may be slurred speech.

**T**ime: It is time to dial 999 immediately if you see any of these signs or symptoms.

Strokes are the leading cause of severe adult disability in the UK and the third most common cause of death after cancer and coronary heart disease. But they are largely preventable. Strokes are most common in people over 65, but can happen at any age.

**Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) or 'mini-stroke'** has similar symptoms to stroke but these symptoms are resolved faster and the person usually will get better within 24 hours. The TIA may be a warning sign of a more serious stroke and always requires further immediate medical attention.

You can get more information about Stroke and TIA by visiting the NHS website—the address is below:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Actfast/Pages/stroke.aspx>