



PRACTICE NEWSLETTER Spring 2018



Editor: J Nelson

Visit our Web-Site – www.avisford.co.uk

Sponsored by: The Friends

The Friends of Avisford Medical Group

Charity No: 1074882

Latest News

2017 Grand Draw

We are grateful to everyone who supported our 2017 Grand Draw. Thanks to the generosity of local shops and businesses who kindly donated prizes, and the many people who bought tickets, the Draw raised **£801.00**.

The 1st prize of £150, 2nd prize of a luxury hamper and 18 runner-up tickets were drawn at the information and coffee morning held on Saturday, 2nd December in the Scout HQ at Middleton-on-Sea.

All winners have been notified and the generous shops and businesses that donate prizes were as follows:- Baliffscourt Hotel & Spa- Climping, Silhouette Salon - Yapton, Earley's Butcher - Barnham, One Stop - Middleton, Grande Wine Store - Middleton, Yapton Pharmacy, The Elmer Hotel, Elmer Beach Stores & PO, The Cabin at Elmer, Living Well Health Spa (Avisford Hilton Hotel), A&M Barley - Middleton Lloyds Pharmacy – Middleton, Five Villages Pharmacy – Barnham, Barnham Fish Bar, Angie's Crafts – Barnham Windmill, Sarah's Salon – Elmer. Avisford Hilton.

Who are 'The Friends' – and what do we do?

The Friends of Avisford Medical Group was granted charitable status in March 1999 and, over the years, we have raised and spent over £70,000 on equipment and services for Avisford Medical Group and the wider community. We have bought much-needed equipment that the NHS is unable to provide funds for.

Besides refurbishing waiting areas, buying hydraulic couches, nappy changing tables and much more, we were recently able to donate £500 each to Middleton and Barnham towards their community defibrillators. These vital pieces of equipment could save lives.

You will now be able to access our new web-site (see over page) to see what the latest purchases were and how much they cost. There is also information on how to make a donation, gift aid and how you can help with the latest fundraising venture.



.....
I would like to receive a copy of the Practice Newsletter and notifications by email.

Name..... Email address.....

I would prefer to receive a copy of the Newsletter by post.

Address.....

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

I am a UK tax-payer and would like the Friends to claim Gift Aid on my donation.

Signature..... (please also complete your address and postcode above)

Please return completed forms addressed to Friends of Avisford Medical Group to either surgery Reception.

New Friends of Avisford Medical Group Web-Site

The big news story this Spring is the launch of our very own Web-Site, www.avisfordfriends.co.uk which went live in December 2017. Professionally designed, it has been funded from the sale of second-hand books that are donated and bought in both surgeries.

The site includes useful links to other information sites, support groups, and the Practice Newsletters that we sponsor. The Friends always welcome suggestions and comments from patients on the service they are receiving from the Practice and a link to The Friends email address, avisford.friends@gmail.com enables this.

FRIENDS OF AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP

BOOK SALES

This month we raised **£292** through the sale of books.

So far we have raised **£1,178** in 2017/2018

In 2016/2017 we raised **£1,630**

Thank you for your generous support.

We welcome any good quality paperbacks and hardback books that you no longer want.

Please leave under the table in the surgery.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Avisford Medical Practice
website: www.avisford.co.uk

Yew Tree Surgery

Address:
North End Road
Yapton
West Sussex
BN18 0DU
Tel: 01243 551321

Middleton Medical Centre

Address:
Elmer Road.
Middleton-on-Sea
West Sussex
PO22 7SR
Tel: 01243 583596

Friends of Avisford Medical

Apart from raising funds, one of the main objectives of the Friends is to represent the views and concerns of Avisford Medical Group patients. Getting information out to patients has always been a bit of a challenge, especially to those who don't need to visit the surgery very often, and our own website is an excellent way to ensure the latest, most up to date information is always available to you. A regular visit to the web-site will ensure you always know what and when the next event will be, especially the varied and interesting medical talks that we organise. The talks are usually given by a local hospital consultant or professional and subjects in the past have included Dementia, Diabetes, COPD, Cholesterol & Heart Disease, Living with Prostate problems and Power of Attorney. There is always plenty of opportunity to ask questions and the talks are free for anybody to attend.

Please take time to look at the new web-site and perhaps come along to the next talk which is on the subject of Sepsis and will take place on the evening of Thursday 12th April in the Middleton Scout Hall, off Shrubbs Drive, starting at 7pm. Everyone is welcome. For further information visit the Friends of Avisford Website – www.avisfordfriends.co.uk

Please let us have your Mobile Numbers and Email Addresses

Whether you love technology or loathe it, there's no point standing in the way of technological progress – and even the NHS is gradually moving into the 21st century!

GP Practices and Hospitals are being encouraged to make better use of modern computer technology. Patients can already order their repeat medication and book appointments on-line as well as being able to securely view their medical records.

A large number of patients also receive SMS text reminder messages when booking appointments.

Now, we are planning to send patients' blood test results by SMS text or email. To be able to do this, we must be sure that we have an up-to-date mobile telephone number and/or a valid email address. If in doubt, please fill in a form obtainable from Reception – or on our Practice web-site (www.avisford.co.uk). Thank you in anticipation.



Out of Area Patients

We frequently receive requests from patients to remain registered despite moving outside our catchment area.

Some patients feel that it is their right to remain and others remind us that, according to NHS Choices web-site, it is OK to remain registered despite moving away.

Our policy is that we cannot retain the registration of any patient who moves outside our boundary. Due to the current climate – a widespread shortage of GPs and a population that is living longer, often with complex medical conditions – we do not have the capacity to allow anyone to remain with us and such a stance is fully supported by the NHS.

When patients move away, having researched the local practices, they should complete registration forms for their chosen practice – and this will result in their medical records being transferred from us without delay.

Before long, the new practice will be as knowledgeable about the patient as we are!

Social Prescribing

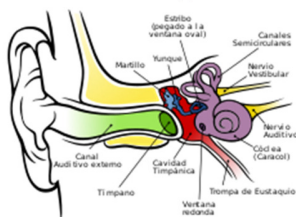
Many patients visit their GP for reasons which are not strictly medical in nature. Maybe they are experiencing housing problems or are struggling to claim benefits – or need some help from social services.

These issues no longer need to take up valuable GP appointments. On the contrary, due to the current shortage of GPs, we must make sure that GP appointments are strictly reserved for patients who have medical problems.

However, don't think that you no longer have anyone to turn to in the event that you have a problem that is social in nature or has been caused by a social issue. The Practice can now refer you to a local team who specialise in helping vulnerable people to get help from the most appropriate agency.

If you feel that you have a social need, please let us know and we will refer your case to the local team.

Ear Irrigation



It has recently come to light that ear irrigation/syringing is not an essential service that GP Practices are obliged to provide.

This Practice does NOT want to see any of its patients suffer as a result of an ear wax problem but we must now check that irrigation is entirely appropriate in each case. Recent research has shown that irrigation is often not the most appropriate thing to do. Sometimes, it could do more harm than good.

Many Practices in the local area have stopped providing an ear irrigation service. This Practice had intended to stop but we were persuaded by patients who contacted our patient group, the Friends, to continue providing the service, albeit on a restricted basis.

We would advise patients who suffer from a build-up of ear wax to seek advice from their pharmacist. Buy some drops over the counter and follow the instructions for regular ear maintenance rather than wait for wax to build up such that it becomes a major problem requiring our intervention.

In all likelihood, a GP-surgery ear irrigation service will not continue in its current format for very much longer – but we will keep all of our patients informed.

Staff News

A few changes to tell you about in this issue – a mixture of arrivals and departures.

Advanced Nurse Practitioner, **Rachel Priest** has left due to personal commitments – but we will still see her on a locum basis from time to time.

Dr Samantha Shepperd returns from maternity leave in April. Initially, she will be in the Practice for 5 sessions per week.

Dr Heather Beaumont is now on maternity leave and will not be back at work until later this year.

Carole Phillips rejoined us in the role of Advanced Nurse Practitioner in October but has found her daily commute from Portsmouth to be a bit too arduous – so has now left us for a job closer to home.

Since our last issue, we are very pleased to announce that another ex-staff member has rejoined us on a permanent basis. **Karen Petroulas** has come back to manage our Diabetes patients, to see patients with minor illnesses and to carry out various treatment room duties. Welcome back Karen!

Another Carole, **Carole Edwards** has joined our Yapton Reception team. Carole will take over the hours vacated by **Janette Bird** who has decided to retire at the end of April after 14 years' service. **Cynthia Corre** has also decided to retire after nearly 10 years and we are currently looking to recruit a replacement receptionist at Middleton. Our best wishes to Janette & Cynthia for a long & happy retirement.

'Miami Light'

A new Minor Illness and Minor Injuries (MIAMI) service is now available in the Regis locality. Unlike in some other areas, this service is only available on Tuesday and Thursday evenings (hence the term 'light') and is currently located at Maywood Health Centre, Hawthorn Road, Bognor.

Each of the 9 GP Practices in and around Bognor have appointment slots that are allocated for their exclusive use – until or unless those appointments are not booked or needed.

Appointments are strictly for new problems rather than follow-ups for an existing condition. Patients have to be able to make their own way to Maywood Health Centre and must give their consent to us to share their medical record with the GP that they see.

If you urgently need to see a GP about a new symptom or problem and all of our appointments at Yapton & Middleton are booked, please consider using this service. You still need to book via either of our two Receptions and they will be able to allocate one of our timed, designated appointment slots.

Medication Switches

Sometimes, patients are prescribed medication (notably in hospitals) that is either unlicensed (not able to be prescribed by a GP) or which is not cost-effective.

As a result, it is occasionally necessary for us to switch the medication that was originally prescribed for a more acceptable alternative.

Although a patient's treatment and care will never be compromised for the sake of saving the NHS a small amount of money, we will often switch from one product to another when the efficacy is the same but the cost is less. As you may be aware, the NHS is in crisis – and any money saved in one area can be used to improve other aspects of NHS care.

If we contact you to discuss the possibility of switching one or more medications, please give it a try. If there are good reasons to switch back, we will do so.

Seasonal Flu Season 2017-18



It's probably far too early to be thinking about this Autumn's flu vaccinations but, nevertheless, this newsletter seems like a good opportunity to let you know that things will be a little different when we get under way in October.

This year, NHS England have advised that there will be 2 different vaccines – one exclusively for patients aged over 65 and the other for those who are under 65 but who are considered to be at risk due to a chronic condition.

We haven't yet worked out exactly how we are going to organise things but we may have to run separate clinics – one for under 65s and the other for the over 65s. Our nurses will double-check patients' age and eligibility before giving each vaccination.

Do You Care for Someone?



Many people who care for friends or relatives do not necessarily regard themselves as 'Carers'. Most do what they do purely because they care – but, even acting in a seemingly unofficial role, can be extremely challenging. Carers may not know about the help and support options that may be available to them and the 'job' can take its toll on their own health.

There is lots of help and support for people who care for others as follows:-

Carers Health Team

Sussex Community Foundation Trust has a team that offers professional support and guidance to (official and unofficial) carers to help them maintain their own health and wellbeing. If you are 18 or over and would like help, please call 01243 623521 or email SC-TR.carewellbeing@nhs.net.

West Sussex County Council (Support)

WSCC has a free on-line resource designed to support all unpaid family and friends carers in West Sussex. This includes information for new carers and information about carers' rights. Visit carersdigital.org and use the code **DGTL2948** to access an eLearning course, links to other local resources and lots more. Carers can also access the WSCC service by ringing 0300 028 8888.

Crossroads (Respite) Care

A free emergency respite care service is available to carers and the people who they care for. There is also a chargeable respite care service 24/7 on 365 days per year. Call 01903 790270 to register.

British Red Cross – Home from Hospital

Provide free short-term practical and emotional support for people living with and caring for someone who has been in hospital. Call 0800 028 0831.

Medication Deliveries

Although GP Practices' responsibility for prescribed medication ceases at the point when the prescription is signed, we wanted our patients to be aware that one local (Middleton) pharmacy has stopped delivering medication to those who cannot get out to collect it. It is quite possible that other pharmacies will follow suit.

If you are housebound or don't have your own transport, you may need to consider asking a friend or relative to collect medication on your behalf.

Medication Reviews

Regardless of who may have initiated a particular medication, the GP who signs your monthly repeat prescription assumes full responsibility for making sure it is the most appropriate medication for your condition(s) and that it is having the desired effect on your health.

For this reason, it is absolutely essential that we review your medication regularly.

If you are not aware that you are due to have a medication review, we will remind you. As we don't often see many of our patients who are on repeat medication, we may telephone you, write you a letter or add a message to your prescription. Please don't ignore our request as, without carrying out a review, we cannot continue to prescribe your medication on a monthly basis.

If you find it difficult to attend either surgery during typical 'work' hours, please ask for an appointment from 7.30am on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at Middleton or on Thursday evenings at Yapton.

Regis Healthcare

Recently established, Regis Healthcare is an umbrella organisation that has been set up as a way of introducing common standards and collaboration across the wider Bognor Regis area. The 9 Regis Healthcare member Practices meet monthly to address issues and to plan for the future. All Practices value their autonomy but sometimes we can have a bigger voice when working closely together to achieve a common goal.

Our patients probably won't want or need to know much about Regis Healthcare – it should be transparent to the majority of our patients.