

## Practice News Update

So much has happened since our last newsletter!

### GP and staff news

On 1st August 2018, Thatcham Medical Practice welcomed Dr Ellis as a GP registrar, in her final year of GP training. She will be here for a year. Dr Mottram has returned from maternity leave and Dr Pongratz has completed her sabbatical.

We are pleased to have appointed Sarah Gray as Practice Pharmacist. Sarah joined the Prescriptions team in September 2018 and is able to help with complex medication queries and medication reviews.

Three of our longest standing Receptionists retired this year. Between them Jackie, Eileen and Carolyn had completed a combined 67 years of service to the practice. We wish them a well deserved and happy retirement! We were sad to see Mary Elliott (Practice Nurse) leave and move to Wales. Mary's recent work in dementia awareness has helped TMP to achieve Dementia Friendly status. We wish Mary and her husband all the best in their exciting new adventure across the border in Wales.

### Please ask our Receptionists for further information about our new services

- Musculoskeletal (MSK) assessments - patients can book an assessment appointment directly with an MSK Physiotherapist. Subsequent treatment appointments are arranged by them.
- Fibromyalgia group sessions continue and have been evaluated and well received.
- Fibroscan clinic – appointments can be made for patients at risk of liver disease.
- Health coaches provide emotional support for patients with long term conditions - clinic appointments and group sessions are available.
- 2018 is the Year of Care. Patients with more than one long term condition (diabetes, heart conditions, hypertension and COPD) now have a birthday recall for their annual clinic review.
- Patients with learning disabilities or dementia are invited to attend their health check with a carer. Home visits can be arranged for housebound patients.
- The My GP app enables patients to book appointments and view test results on mobile phones. The App can be accessed on iTunes or Google Play

**Educational events** - We work closely with local Consultants. Recently Dr Jane Bywater (Palliative Care Consultant) gave an informative presentation on 'end of life' and 'advanced care planning.' It can be difficult thinking about this subject. We would be pleased to hold an educational evening event for patients on this, or any other, topic. Please let us know if this is of interest.

**Flu clinics** will be held during October and November. If you are in an 'at risk' group or aged 65 or over, please book an appointment for your flu jab.

Special thanks to all our Patient Participation Group members and patient generosity. Fundraising this year has enabled the purchase a new bariatric couch. This couch has great benefit not only to the patients, but also to our nurses, especially in the Wound Care clinics.

## PSA Testing and Prostate Cancer

### Advice for well men aged 50 and over.

The prostate gland lies just below your bladder, it helps to produce healthy sperm. Prostate cancer is caused when some cells in the prostate start to grow out of control. Each year about 47,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer. Slow growing cancers are common; they may not cause any symptoms or shorten your life. Prostate cancer is rare in men under the age of 50.

The prostate specific antigen (PSA) test is a blood test that may help find out if you are more likely to have prostate cancer.

**If you are aged over 50** and would like to have the PSA test done, please find out more information about the test on [www.nhs.uk/psa](http://www.nhs.uk/psa).

The PROSTATE CANCER RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (PCRMP) also provides further helpful information [www.gov.uk/guidance/prostate-cancer-risk-management-programme-overview](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/prostate-cancer-risk-management-programme-overview)

The PSA test can detect prostate cancer and may save lives. However it is not accurate enough to be included within a national screening programme as it has potential harms and benefits.

- only 1 in 4 men with a raised PSA will have prostate cancer
- 15 % of negative results will be in men with prostate cancer.

Therefore it is your decision to have a PSA test. You can book a telephone call with your GP, who would be happy to discuss this further with you and to arrange a blood test after you have read the above information.

**Never ignore symptoms of prostate cancer;** these can include problems urinating, pain when ejaculating, pain or stiffness in the lower body, extreme tiredness and loss of appetite. If you are experiencing these symptoms please book an appointment to see your GP as soon as possible.

# A Day in the Life of a Community Pharmacist

by Bianca Lancaster, Lloyds Pharmacy, Burdwood

My working day usually starts by arriving at the pharmacy half an hour before opening and assuming the role of 'Responsible Pharmacist' for the day. It is a legal responsibility to be in control of and responsible for everything that takes place in the pharmacy that day. During this quiet time, I can concentrate on 'pre-packing' all of the doses required for treatment of substance misuse that day, and brief my team on the expectations and challenges for the day ahead.

Once the pharmacy opens there will be a day long constant stream of patients dropping off prescriptions for dispensing and either waiting for them or calling back later in the day. All prescriptions go through the journey of being labelled, picked, and dispensed before being passed to me to be clinically checked for correct dosing, strength, form, and possible interactions with other medication. I will then physically check the accuracy of the labelling and dispensing to ensure that the patient receives their correct medication, at a safe dose, and provision made for any information and advice that may need to be passed onto the patient or representative.

Each day, hundreds of prescriptions are downloaded from the NHS spine. These are for patients who have ordered directly from their surgeries and passed to their chosen pharmacy. Prescriptions are also physically collected from the surgeries. These prescriptions are then registered within the pharmacy under the services that have been used and then go through the process of being labelled, picked, dispensed, and then passed to me for the clinical and accuracy check. Prescriptions are also dispensed into monitored dosage systems for patients who are in need of this service, and these are all checked before being sealed up. Hence there is always a constant queue of prescriptions in all different forms that need to be checked.

As a Pharmacist, I am always available to offer help and advice to patients, local surgeries, their staff and GP's, Mental Health Teams, Substance Misuse Teams and anyone else who may need the help of a Pharmacist. This could be for minor ailments or conditions, travel advice, malaria prophylaxis, healthy living choices, medication advice, prescription queries, drug availabilities, drug alternatives, and lots more.

I enjoy being able to sit down with patients to discuss their medication through the NHS Medicine Use Review service, where we talk through and ensure that the patient has a good understanding of their medications, is taking them correctly, and does not have any problems or issues. Likewise, I take pride in the NHS New Medicine Service, where I am able to make contact with patients who have started certain new medicines. Again, the purpose of this service is to make sure that the patient is taking the new medication correctly, is able to identify any side effects, and address any concerns or issues to allow successful commencement of the required treatment.

All year round I can offer a travel vaccination service to patients who have been referred to the pharmacy by our online service. This will involve ordering, administering the vaccine and co-ordinating the timing intervals of doses. During the winter season we offer a flu vaccination service where we are able to vaccinate NHS eligible adults, Local Authority 'Front-Line' workers and private patients, all in a very accessible and personal way.

I am responsible for keeping legal and accurate records of all 'controlled drug' transactions, ensuring that weekly stock checks are carried out on this class of drugs and use the few quieter

moments in the day to write down the entries into the relevant registers. The need for hand-written records also applies to private prescriptions supplied to patients, and these can also be recorded in the correct register at these times.

We have 'Safer Care' processes to ensure that the dispensing service we provide is safe and effective. Hence as the Responsible Pharmacist, I must ensure that all members of the team are trained appropriately for their role, following the relevant procedures, and very aware of potential causes of errors through team briefings and sharing 'best practise' ideas.

My working day finishes when I ensure that all prescriptions are checked for the patients who have requested their medication for the following day, all orders are sent, and all entries are recorded in relevant registers. The role of 'Responsible Pharmacist' is then complete that day, and all thoughts will then turn to the following day!

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## Prescription Processing at Thatcham Medical Practice

Our Prescription Team consists of a pharmacist and prescription clerks. They deal with all our requests for repeat prescriptions (scripts), saving GP time. Just over 1000 scripts per week are processed by the "repeat" script re-ordering system (>4000pm).

If you are prescribed a repeat script, it may need to be ordered each month. Please allow **48 working hours** for your script to be processed and only tick the medication you need, not everything on the form.

### Repeat Prescriptions can be ordered by:

- On-line access – please ask our receptionists for further information. They will give you a form to complete, or it can be downloaded from our website <http://thatchammedicalpractice.co.uk>
- Written request - either by post, or by placing your written request in the prescriptions box near the front desk. Scripts can be collected from the front desk, or posted to your home if you include an SAE.
- A chosen pharmacy which deals with repeat ordering. This can be performed by the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) where receptionists can see if the pharmacy has received the prescription and print tokens (like a bar code, to enable the pharmacy to find it). Patients can change their preferred pharmacy at any time with either their pharmacy, or at the main reception.
- E-mail for under 16's only [bwccg.thatchampx@nhs.net](mailto:bwccg.thatchampx@nhs.net)
- Batch prescription - ask your pharmacy for further information.

### Medications Enquiries

Our Prescription Team can deal with the majority of medication queries.

To speak to a member of the Prescription team: Please call the dedicated Medication line on 01635-867171 and use option 2.

*(If this line is busy please leave a message with your name and number, or speak to a receptionist who will book a return call for you. Calls will be returned within 24 hours.)*