



# BARGOOSE

Dr Simon P Hughes and Partners  
Patient Participation Group

No 45 Summer 2016

Newsletter No 45 Summer 2016

## Contents

### Page 2

Alzheimer's  
Online services

### Page 3

DESMOND

### Page 4

Colour dash for Keech

### Page 5

Diabetes UK  
Medication wastage

### Page 6

Booking appointments

### Page 7

Carers in Bedfordshire

### Page 8

Flu clinics  
Carers event in Barton

## GENERAL PRACTICE - which is where we the patients first meet the NHS

The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Local Medical Committee Ltd is the representative body for all the GPs in the two counties. The Mission Statement says that 'the aim of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire LMC is to support GPs and practices to aspire to excellence in patient care by advising on and promoting the development of all aspects of general practice'. The LMC provides all kinds of personal support for GPs in their

increasingly stressful work, as well as support for the practices and the patient services they offer. They say 'If it's good for patients, it's good for GPs'

The speaker at our Open Evening on 14 September will be Dr Peter Graves, Chief Executive Officer of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Local Medical Committee. He speaks with authority on all aspects of General Practice today.

Local Medical Committees are statutory bodies set up in 1911, long before the NHS came into being. They were recognised in the NHS Act of 1948 as the only elected professional body representing all local GPs. They have survived all the many NHS re-organisations since 1948.



Dr Peter Graves, Chief Executive, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Local Medical Committee

## THE ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY will have a stand at the Open Evening on 14 September

The **Alzheimer's Society** provides support groups for Alzheimer's sufferers and their carers throughout Bedfordshire. There is a group based on St Nicholas Church Hall in Barton, several groups in Luton, and others in the surrounding area such as Shefford and Ampthill. The groups are run by a facilitator who encourages and supports people to take part and also to relax and socialise with those present. Trevor Hurrell of the Alzheimer's Society will be at the Open Evening and ready to advise and answer questions.

Alzheimer's is a disease that causes dementia. It is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for about two thirds of the cases in older people. There are thought to be about 500,000 sufferers in this country. It often develops slowly over several years. It is not always obvious to begin with and symptoms can be subtle and overlap with other illnesses such as depression. In the early stages it can sometimes be difficult to distinguish Alzheimer's from mild forgetfulness which can be seen in normal ageing. Everyone with Alzheimer's will experience symptoms in their own way, but certain changes are characteristic of the disease. Typical early symptoms are forgetfulness, repetitive questions, storing items in odd places, getting lost and loss of self confidence. Alzheimer's gets worse over time, but the speed of change varies from person to person.

*(Information courtesy of Alzheimer's Research UK)*

## ARE YOU USING THE ONLINE SERVICES?

**A**re you using your computer, tablet or smartphone to access on-line services with the doctors?

There are two separate systems, one for repeat prescriptions and one for booking (and cancelling) appointments. This is because prescription ordering is done via the website whilst the appointment whilst the appointment system is linked directly to the clinical system.

To access the repeat prescription on line service go to the website [www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk](http://www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk). Then select the tab 'prescriptions'. There is then the facility to sign up for services which will take you 2 minutes.

In order to be able to book and cancel appointments on line you will need to ask a receptionist for a user name and password.

Some patients may wish to access more information online and contractually practices are obliged to assist access to medications, allergies and adverse reactions and coded data. However, this requires additional considerations which are outlined in a patient leaflet which is available on the website, or you could ask for a copy at reception.

There is a set procedure that we will follow in order to provide you with this additional access to information.



Some of the participants and the course leaders at a recent DESMOND day in Dunstable

**H**ave you, or one of your family or friends, been told in recent times that they have diabetes? Would you, as one with diabetes or someone close to one with diabetes, like to share experiences with other patients, have the condition explained in simple terms, and come away with a very different view of food, food labelling and nutritional needs? Then ask your doctor if you can be referred for a one-day DESMOND course. And if you do not have diabetes (as far as you are aware) but would value a hugely interesting day on lifestyle management and its effect on health see if you can be invited to go along as the supporter of the one referred.

**T**he DESMOND day is about Type 2 diabetes. This is a condition in which there is too much glucose, a form of sugar, in the blood. Once you have diabetes it will not go away. The problem can progress over time and it needs to be checked on a regular basis. The symptoms are various and, in the early stages, there may be no symptoms at all. There can be a temptation to dismiss it as a mild problem not to be taken seriously. The DESMOND session shows that there can be major health risks and medical complications, but a lot that can be done to reduce the risks, mainly through lifestyle changes.

**S**o the main theme of the day is, after a very clear and simple explanation of the place of glucose and the hormone insulin in the body, 'taking control'. There is much that can be done to reduce the risk of poor health, whether we have diabetes or not, by taking control of our lifestyle. It comes under these headings:

- Reduce blood pressure
- Reduce blood glucose levels
- Reduce cholesterol
- Stop smoking
- Lose weight
- Eat five portions of fruit and veg a day
- Eat at least two portions of fish each week, including oily fish

*The DESMOND day is led by two DESMOND certified trainers, they are always health professionals in our local area. The day we observed, the trainers were a diabetes specialist nurse and a diabetes specialist dietitian. It is interactive between the participants and the two leaders. It is practical, informative and fast moving. The day passes very quickly. Don't miss it.*

## 'IMAGINED REALITIES' - a book written by one of our patients, John Geraghty

**I**magined Realities is a captivating collection of short stories and poetry that will keep you enthralled throughout. Spanning the depths of Swaziland and the rural Home Counties of England, these short stories capture the very essence of these contrasting locations and are a must for any reader who enjoys being transported off into another time and place. Each story has a colourful range of narrators and is perfectly unique – from scary old ladies, relentless bullies and brave young boys, to an immaculate conception, a trouble-making gossip who gets her comeuppance and a dreamy time traveller whose boundaries between fiction and reality are wonderfully hazy.

**T**hese beautifully crafted and succinct stories are packed with drama, depth, mystery and excitement; many of which will have you smiling by the final twist in the tale. The poignant poetry sparks an abundance of contemplation, reflection and emotion, and is filled with a kaleidoscope of colourful visual imagery to set your imagination on fire. Tackling life, death, the human psyche and the bigger picture of life on earth, these fascinating poems will reach into the very depths of your heart and soul.

Imagined Realities is available from Amazon price £4.44

## COLOUR DASH FOR KEECH

17 July saw a number of staff (and some children) take part in Keech Colour Dash to raise funds for Keech. The total raised was £632.85.

It was a lovely sunny day and within a very short space of time the sparkling white t-shirts were soon all the colours of the rainbow. Faces and hair also covered with the bright powder paints!



A super day all round. Thank you to all the patients who sponsored us.

The picture shows some of the participants - adults and children

**Diabetes UK** is the charity that cares for, connects with, and campaigns on behalf of every person affected by or at risk of diabetes. It provides information, help and peer support, so that people with diabetes can manage their condition effectively. Diabetes UK is one of the largest funders of diabetes research in the country. It claims 300,000 supporters, 5000 volunteers and 6000 healthcare professionals working together to face the challenge of diabetes.

### WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a common life-long health condition. There are 3.5 million people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK and an estimated 549,000 people who have the condition, but don't know it.

1. Insulin is the hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose to enter the body's cells, where it is used as fuel for energy so we can work, play and generally live our lives. It is vital for life.
2. Glucose comes from digesting carbohydrates and is also produced by the liver.
3. If you have diabetes, your body cannot make proper use of this glucose so it builds up in the blood and can't be used as fuel.
4. There are two main types of diabetes, Type 1 and Type 2. Diabetes develops when glucose can't enter the body's cells to be used as fuel. This happens when either : (a) There is no insulin to unlock the cells – Type 1 diabetes or (b) There is not enough insulin or the insulin is there but not working properly – Type 2 diabetes.

### CONTROL OF THE MORE COMMON TYPE 2 DIABETES

There is an immense amount individuals can do to control and avoid diabetes through lifestyle and diet changes and understanding and control of medication. The Diabetes UK team at the Open Evening will be ready to discuss this and will have leaflets and literature available.

*See the note on DESMOND on page 3*

### MEDICATION WASTAGE

The NHS estimates that 4-5% of all medication prescribed is wasted. This is equivalent to some millions of pounds within Bedfordshire - money that could be spent in other areas of patient care. Some of the wastage is unavoidable, as for example when medication is changed or following the death of a patient. Otherwise there are ways of reducing wastage:

- Check what you have at home
- Only order what you need

- Tell your surgery if you have stopped taking any medicines on your repeat list
- Make it clear what you need when you order your medicines
- Don't keep more than a month's supply at home - hoarding medicines can lead to confusion (if instructions are changed), mistakes, out of date medicines.

Return any unused medicines, prescribed or purchased, to the chemist for safe disposal. Do not treat them as domestic waste.

*From Fiona Garnett, Prescribing Adviser*

## APPOINTMENTS - some changes in the arrangements

**W**e have recently reviewed our appointment system with the aim to try and reduce the number of appointments lost through patients just not turning up.

**In July alone 245 appointments were lost by patients not turning up.  
In total 45 hours of Doctor/Nurse time was wasted.**

The system allows for

- Routine pre-bookable appointments
- Same day appointments for when patients need to be seen on the day for urgent issues

In addition we have designed some appointments to be made available every day for issues that cannot wait for a routine appointment but do not need a same day appointment. These are released daily for the following week.

For example – Using the week beginning Monday 19 September

<b>Appointment date</b>	<b>Available for booking on</b>
Monday 19 September	Friday 9 September
Tuesday 20 September	Monday 12 September
Wednesday 21 September	Tuesday 13 September
Thursday 22 September	Wednesday 14 September
Friday 23 September	Thursday 15 September

Unfortunately the slots that become available are booked quite quickly and we know that there are times when the wait for a routine appointment may be longer than any of us would like. As I am sure you are aware from media reports the pressures on General Practice at the moment are enormous and the General Medical Council are campaigning heavily for more resources to be put into primary care services.

Please be assured that we will continue to aim to provide an efficient and effective service for all our patients.

**Gill Hiscox, Practice Manager**

## CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE will have an exhibit at the Open Evening

**CARERS IN BEDFORDSHIRE** is a registered charity existing to help family carers and former carers cope with the mental and physical stress arising from their role. The charity offers assistance such as practical help, advice, training, advocacy, support and information. Carers in Bedfordshire was constituted in 2004 to help and support all unpaid carers of family and friends. Carers in Bedfordshire is a network member of the Carers Trust, a national network helping and supporting carers throughout the UK. It is also affiliated to Carers UK.

### THE FACTS

- There are 7 million known carers in the UK
- There are an estimated 40,000 carers in Bedfordshire alone
- 15% of English households contain a carer
- Every year 2.1 million people become carers
- In the UK 42% of carers are men and 58% are women
- The economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is £119bn per year  
(*Information source: the Carers Trust*)
- 

### THE TEST: AM I A CARER?

If the answer to most of these questions is 'Yes' then you certainly are and, if you live in Bedfordshire, Carers in Bedfordshire is there to help you.

- Do I look after or help support a family member or friend who needs additional support?
- Do I help out with their practical household tasks?
- Do I help with their personal care?
- Do I provide them with emotional support?
- Do I help with sorting out their paperwork?
- Do I help them with making or attending appointments?
- Do I assist with their medication?
- Do I help them to prepare meals?
- Am I relied on as transportation for them due to disability or old age?
- Do I support them without a formal wage?
- 

A carer is someone of any age, and the range being helped by Carers in Bedfordshire is 4 to 90 years, who spends a significant amount of their life providing unpaid support to a relative, friend or neighbour who is ill, frail disabled or with additional needs.

*See the back page for news of a recent morning for carers arranged by our surgery*



The Carers in Bedfordshire exhibit, with the Chief Executive, at a recent Open Evening

Dr Simon P Hughes  
and Partners,  
The Surgery,  
Hexton Road,  
Barton le Clay  
Beds MK45 4TA

Telephone 01582 528700

BARGOOSE



Health Centre,  
Gooseberry Hill,  
Luton, Beds LU3 2LB  
Telephone: 01582 528721

PRACTICE WEBSITE

[www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk](http://www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk)

## MALIGNANT MELANOMA

Malignant melanoma, also known as melanoma, is the most serious type of skin cancer. It often starts with a change in the normal look or feel of a mole. If you notice changes in a mole or in previously normal skin, it is important to act right away. Most changes are not caused by cancer, but do need to be checked out. Melanoma can be cured when found early and treated quickly.

*From Cancer Research UK*

## QUESTIONS

Do you have a question for the doctors at the Open Evening? Leave a note of it at the Surgery

## A MORNING EVENT AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH HALL, BARTON

For some time now Kate Dearman, our Care Champion and Reception Manager, has been encouraging patients who are in fact carers to register as such at the surgery so that the care and services they might need can be ensured and provided.

Those who had registered, and others interested, were invited to a morning at St Nicholas Church Hall, Barton on 10<sup>th</sup> June. Representatives from various agencies including Age UK, Alzheimer's Society, Respite at Home and Mind were present. There was advice available on such matters as accessing benefits, and there were pampering sessions featuring massage and manicure. But perhaps the most important feature was the relaxed atmosphere and the easy contact between those present. Many carers, by the nature of their duties, live in comparative isolation, and would gain a great deal from this company.

The aim is to forge stronger links between carers and the surgery, between carers and the various agencies involved, and between carers themselves.

Finally, Kate's baking for the refreshments was special. Some thought they had arrived at *The Great British Bake-off* by mistake.

## FLU CLINICS 2017

We will be holding flu clinics this year on

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> and 28 September and 5 October at Barton Surgery from 1.30 – 5.00

And on

Saturday 1 October from 9.00 – 12 noon at Gooseberry Hill

Saturday 8 October from 9.00 – 12 noon at Barton Surgery

If you are 65 or over or in one of the at risk groups ring now to book your appointment.

If you are not sure if you are eligible please just ring reception and ask.

