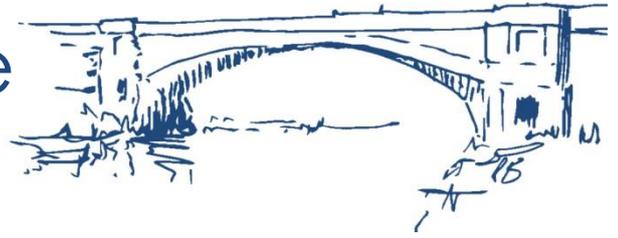


The Alney Practice Newsletter



June 2020

Welcome to our second newsletter for 2020. The previous newsletter was produced in February and about a month before we embarked on lockdown. In the intervening period life for all of us has changed beyond recognition and we have had to introduce new ways of working across our 2 sites to minimise the risk of infection. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with an update on the practice: how we are working now; how we might work in the future; staff changes; and the Highnam extension.

Ways of Working

We have had to adapt how we work in the practice in order to reduce the footfall coming to the surgeries to minimise the risk of spreading Covid-19 amongst our staff and our patients. Currently, our doctors and nurses are triaging all patients by telephone and patients are only asked to come to the surgery if there is a clinical need for a further face-to-face consultation. The GPs also have an alternative option to provide an encrypted video consultation (via an application called cinapsis). If this is appropriate they will discuss the mechanics with the patient.

In accordance with Government guidelines, if you are asked to come to the surgery we ask that where possible you wear a face mask (or other suitable covering such as a scarf) as we are unable to provide them.

As things begin to return to a semblance of normality in the wider community, The Alney Practice, like many other GP surgeries, is exploring how individual doctors would prefer to work. We will not return to 'pre-covid' levels of face-to-face consultations and each GP will be testing new arrangements. These will include the re-starting of Improved Access (IA) appointments in July, which means that early and late appointments (up to 8.00 p.m.) on some evenings and Saturday mornings will be available. We will be delivering these IA appointments alongside our primary care network colleagues (Longlevens, Churchdown, Hucclecote and Brockworth surgeries).

Some patients may be concerned about how we intend to deliver this year's flu vaccinations and we are actively considering options that would allow us to retain some social distancing. In previous years the Milestone School has proved an excellent venue to allow us to vaccinate around 1000 patients or more in a single morning, although there were some issues last year as there was considerable building work going on. The school's revised layout will hopefully allow us to deliver the vaccines in a safe, socially-distanced way in October but further details about our flu clinics will be made known in due course.

Staff Changes

As a result of relocation, Dr Aisha Sohail, who trained with us before becoming one of our salaried GPs (initially at the Cheltenham Road Surgery), will be leaving the Practice at the end of July.

Mr Philip Tagg, who has been the Practice Manager since July 2011, is retiring on 2nd July 2020.

We wish them all the very best for the future.

Philip's replacement, Mr Ilyas Piperdy, joined us on 1st June and we wish him every success in his new role.

Highnam Extension

As a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, building work at Highnam paused for a few weeks but is now back up and running. The anticipated completion date is now September 2020 and this will include the new rooms and the internal reconfiguration of the original building. The reconfiguration work will inevitably cause some temporary disruption in how we deliver services (including the dispensary) and we ask for your understanding and support to our staff while this essential work is underway.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Our invitation to patients to take part in the PPG remains open. Like many other activities, PPG meetings have been paused in order to comply with social distancing guidelines; however, on 18th June we held an online meeting via 'Zoom' and we believe we were the first group in the area to trial this as we again try return to some form of normality and move ahead.

If you are interested in becoming a member there is a link on our website through which to let us know: www.thealneypractice.co.uk

And finally...

Everyone at The Alney Practice would like to express their thanks to the patients and their families for the support they have given us in these unprecedented times. We have had patients who have made us scrubs bags; we have had an almost constant flow of cakes (large and small); and numerous cards and supportive comments.

Thank you.