

Staunton & Corse Surgery Patient Group Newsletter

(www.stauntonsurgery.co.uk)

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For this newsletter we present several articles to inform you of recent changes within the Practice or Practice catchment area that may impact on you or your family. As you will see, this is not just to do with what the Practice can offer as a result of a consultation with your GP or Practice Nurse, but the wider issue of self-referral, which allows you to seek direct help from specialist practitioners and support organisations without first having to see your GP. Links to the various self-referral services can be accessed via the Staunton and Corse Surgery website <https://www.stauntonsurgery.co.uk/2019/02/05/self-referrals/>

Surgery Telephones Lines: Sarah Bryant has been reviewing the telephone facility in order to improve access for patients, especially working patients and as a result the surgery has changed its telephone opening hours. From the 1st July 2019 revised access times have been introduced.

Option 1. Dispensary: Telephone hours remain unchanged at 08.30 - 11.00hrs and 14.00 - 17.00hrs

Option 2. All other enquiries: this line will now be open from 08.00hrs through to 18.30hrs

Pain Management Project: by Dr Roger Whittle. Over the past year the Practice has been reviewing patients who are taking strong opiate pain relief (tramadol, morphine and fentanyl). The review was instigated by the Practice as a result of new evidence suggesting these medicines may actually make pain worse in the long term. We identified patients who had been taking these medications, reviewed the reasons for prescribing them and now are attempting to reduce further prescribing. Sixty four patients were shown to be prescribed strong opiates and we have now worked our way through most of them. Going forwards we will not be prescribing pain relief of this strength for more than three months in most circumstances, because this is the point where pain seems to worsen. If you would like further details about this project please let us know.

Management of Assistance for Carers in Gloucestershire: by Jenni Fenech. Many don't class themselves as 'carers' as it is something that is done without a second thought, but if you are looking after **any** member of your family or close friend, then you are a carer. Having been a carer myself I know just what it is like and often what we don't realise is that there is help and assistance out there for us.

Until 31st March 2019, this help was run by **Carers Gloucestershire**, but the contract has now been taken over by **People Plus** who operate the **Gloucestershire Carers Hub**. You may have been registered with Carers Gloucestershire, but because of confidentiality regulations, details of carers registered with them could not simply be transferred to People Plus without the individuals' express permission. Carers Gloucester wrote to those registered with them since 2016/17, but sadly very few realised the significance of this and may not have actually given their permission for the transfer of information. Therefore, if you were registered with Carers Gloucester and have not been transferred to People Plus please contact them by **Phone: 0300 111 9000** or **Email: carers@peopleplus.co.uk**. They can help with Information, advice and guidance; Carers assessment and support planning; Carers Emergency Scheme; Carers Breaks; Carers Wellbeing payments; Hospital Liaison; Carers' Voice; Positive Caring education and training; Carers emotional support and counselling; Peer support and support groups.

PeoplePlus will also work with employers in Gloucestershire to improve employers support for employees who are carers, for example, developing a discount scheme for carers covering a range of services in Gloucestershire to support health and wellbeing and establish a Carers Partnership Board where carers will have an equal opportunity to take part in decision making for the future.

If you have never considered yourself as a ‘carer’ but are supporting a friend or relative, then please do so and realise that by registering with the **Gloucestershire Carers Hub** you have access to advice and help you never realised was out there. There are those in similar situations you can meet and talk with and outings and events especially for carers and there is so much more if you take the time to find out about it. If you use the internet then please do look up their Webb site <https://gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk/>.

This isn’t the only group caring for carers, there is also **Gloucestershire Young Carers** providing ongoing care and emotional support for those aged 8-18 caring for relatives. Whilst there has been no change in the management of **Gloucestershire Young Carers**, many youngsters don’t realise that they are a carer and even more young carers who don’t realise that they can get help and assistance with a vast range of things. Young carers provide all kinds of care from undertaking household chores to personal care and emotional support. A referral to **Gloucestershire Young Carers** gives them access to having an assessment of their needs and a plan to ensure that they have the right support. The charity provides a range of services including short breaks, information advice and guidance, specialist mental health and substance misuse groups, and a bespoke service for young adult carers. If you know of a young carer, then please persuade them to get in touch with **Gloucestershire Young Carers Phone: 01452 733060; Email mail@glosyoungcarers.org.uk** or visit their **Website <http://www.glosyoungcarers.org.uk/>**.

Finally we will take a brief look at **Yellow Card Reporting**: We are all familiar with the Patient Information Leaflets that are found packaged with the medicines we take. These leaflets provide information on the medicine, how to take it and possible adverse reactions or side effects. Hopefully you have read these leaflets carefully before taking your medicines and towards the end of the leaflet will have come across a section “Reporting of Side Effects”. Here there will be a short statement to the effect that if you get any side effects talk to your doctor or pharmacist. It will also advise that you can report side effects directly via the **Yellow Card Scheme**.

You may have heard of the **Yellow Card** reporting system which is widely used by medical professionals to report suspected adverse drug reactions. The **Yellow Card** system is vital in helping the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to monitor the safety of all medicines, vaccines and healthcare products including medical devices. What you may not be aware of, is that we as individuals, are also encouraged to use the system if we think we have experienced an adverse reaction or side effect to a drug that we are taking. This includes over the counter medicines as well as the prescription medicines that your doctor has prescribed. Also included are the e-cigarettes and e-liquids as well as medical devices and complementary remedies such as homeopathic and herbal remedies. Information on this system is available at the MHRA website <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-yellow-card-scheme-guidance-for-healthcare-professionals> if you scroll to the bottom of the page you will find the section with advice for the general public. To report a yellow card you can use the **Yellow Card** App which is a free download or go online to www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard; there are other approaches detailed on the website, but these are the most direct. **Please remember that if you do have a reaction to a medicine prescribed by your doctor, they will want to know and if it is serious or life threatening, then you need to seek urgent medical attention.**

Contact Us: If you have any suggestions about how our practice might improve patient services, you can pass these to the Patient Group for consideration. Either drop a note in our Suggestion Box which is situated in the foyer at the surgery or send an email to us at sandc.ppg@nhs.net or call Sue Knox (Chair) on 01452 700882 **E-Newsletter:** If you would like to receive our newsletter by email, please let us know at sandc.ppg@nhs.net. (Note: All websites last accessed 05/07/19).

