



*The Newsletter of the Patient Participation Group
of the Riverside Surgery*

Issue 8: Winter 2018/9 Editor: David Phillips

Welcome to the eighth issue of LINK, the newsletter of Riverside Surgery Patient Participation Group and my last as Editor. After many years of involvement with the practice as Chair of the former Patient Reference Group, as interim Chair of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) for the last year and as Lay Representative for Horsham at Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG for the last seven years, I have decided the time has come for me to step down. Some younger blood is needed along with some fresh thinking - more of which anon!

So it's an appropriate time to make a few personal observations about the organisation some commentators have called 'a religion', namely our National Health Service. First the good news: I firmly believe that for the most part our clinicians in both GP surgeries and hospitals are first-class; the bad news is that based on my own experience I regrettably can't say the same for the NHS's administration systems: I'm sure I'm not alone in having witnessed misplaced referrals, problems with hospital appointments, postponed operations and so on.

We've been told that NHS policy is to get more services in to the community, yet it appears that residents in Horsham locality are to lose our local ENT and Urology provision and that before long we will probably have to go to an acute hospital to receive these services. So amidst the seemingly never-ending changes in our health service, one thing remains a constant - our acute hospitals are very adept at defending their patch. In the face of an ageing population more money is obviously needed for the NHS, particularly in support of GP practices. But in my view there also need to be structural changes to management and admin functions at secondary care levels, so that there's more synergy between them and clinical services.

Looking more specifically at Riverside I'm delighted to say that the practice received an overall 'Good' rating from the Care Quality Commission after their inspection before Christmas. Senior Partner Dr Matt Davies reports on this in more detail later in this issue but he, his fellow Partners, all the other doctors and nurses, the Practice Manager and all his administration and reception staff deserve great credit for such an excellent result - so we're all fortunate to be Riverside patients!

And so to our Patient Participation Group. After four years of tireless endeavour, setting up the PPG and working hard to ensure the patient displays in the waiting rooms were up to date, our founder Chair, Evelyn Rock, retired at the beginning of the year to concentrate on her other voluntary activities. We'll miss her very much and wish her well. In discussion with the practice before Xmas Evelyn and I noted that the Partners were keen to expand the activities undertaken by the PPG. Riverside therefore hosted an evening for prospective new committee members in early January and I'm pleased to say that four of them expressed a keen interest in getting involved and will join with the existing three members to enhance the PPG's profile and expand its remit. The committee will also elect a new Chair to take over from me before I stand down. So watch this space!

I've enjoyed producing LINK and do hope you've found it informative and helpful. As I said earlier we Riverside patients are lucky to have such a skilled and dedicated team at the surgery, so I can only close by wishing you all 'Good Health!'

David Phillips: Editor of LINK - Riverside Patient Participation Group

NB The above views are specifically those of the Editor and not of Riverside Practice

Message from the Senior Partner

In December 2018 the practice had a CQC inspection. In their own words The Care Quality Commission “monitor, inspect and regulate health and social care services. We publish what we find, including ratings to help people choose care.” As such each general practice surgery is inspected and given an overall rating of either Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. In addition to this there are ratings given to the questions: Are services safe? Are services effective? Are services caring? Are services responsive? Are services well-led?

Three inspectors spent the day with us and quizzed us about the organisation's leadership and management to ensure that we respond to patients' needs and are safe. Many of the surgery's staff were interviewed as well as patients who were present on the day. The inspectors also viewed comments from patients which were collected at the surgery in the preceding weeks, as well as data from online feedback together with returns from the annual patient survey. It was quite a gruelling day during which every conceivable aspect of the care that we give and the way in which we operate was scrutinized. We were therefore very proud to receive a Good rating across every aspect of our operation along with positive feedback from the inspecting team. The full report will be available to view soon on the CQC website <https://www.cqc.org.uk> on our practice website <http://www.riversidesurgeryhorsham.co.uk> and in the surgery. We continue to strive for excellence in general practice and are working to improve the care and experience we offer our patients. Hopefully next time we are inspected we can do even better.

On another matter you will have read in David's piece on the front page that Evelyn Rock has retired. On behalf of everyone in the practice I would like to express my thanks to her for all her hard work in running the PPG over the last four years and for everything she has done on behalf of patients at the practice.

Dr Matthew Davies



Surgery News

- We would like to welcome Dr Sanam Sadiq who joined Riverside on January 3rd as an additional salaried doctor. Her appointment will enable the Partners to invest more time in surgery development. We have also added extra reception and administration staff to the team.
- Regarding the new hub for extended access appointments at surgeries in the Horsham locality, the system is basically working well although there are occasional frustrations owing to teething problems with staffing allocations. Extended access hub times are 16.30 -20.00 Monday to Friday at Park, Courtyard or Village (Southwater) surgeries. On Saturdays patients are being directed to the Urgent Treatment Centre at Crawley Hospital. Patients can only be booked for a hub appointment by their own surgery.
- Two visiting paramedics are now available to Riverside for two home visits per day, usually from Monday to Friday. This reduces the number of house calls practice doctors have to make and frees up their time for more appointments.
- New patients are now receiving information regarding the Patient Participation Group as part of their registration packs.
- Riverside Surgery currently has capacity to take on new patients, so if you are aware of anyone looking for a GP practice in the Horsham, do please let them know we would be pleased to welcome them.
- **NHS Choices:** Please visit the NHS Choices website to post your views on our surgery. We strive to provide excellent care and access and your feedback will help us to achieve and maintain this. See: <https://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>

Vikash Malde - Practice & Business Manager



Health Hints for Winter

As we enter what is traditionally the coldest part of the winter, the flu season is well underway. Flu, colds and the vast majority of winter coughs are viral in nature and can be managed with advice from your pharmacist. The elderly, the very young and those with chronic diseases of the lungs or heart can be severely affected and we at Riverside are of course happy to see anyone with concerning symptoms.

Some conditions such as asthma can be triggered by cold air. If you haven't had your asthma review in the last 12 months please do contact the surgery and ask to see the asthma nurses. Making sure your baseline asthma control is optimised is key in avoiding exacerbations.

Another common complaint at this time of year is chilblains: small intensely itchy skin nodules which can appear after exposure to cold. They usually occur on the hands and feet but occasionally on shins. Alternatively some patients may find the cold causes Raynaud's: a condition where fingers and toes become extremely painful when cold and turn white, then red, then blue. The answer to both conditions is to keep extremities wrapped up warm and avoid them getting cold.

Icy weather also brings an increase in slips and resulting injuries. The Minor Injuries Unit at Horsham Hospital is open for assessment of any injuries which are under 72 hours old (open 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday excluding bank holidays). But prevention is better than cure, so please take care on the ice!

Dr Sarah McGuire - Practice Partner

Riverside Patient Survey

The results of the 2018 Riverside Patient Survey have now been analysed and are for the most part very positive with 89 per cent of patients who responded describing their overall experience of the practice as good.

In relation to specific areas of the service including accessibility on the phone, receptionist satisfaction, waiting times, care and concern shown, length of consultations, confidence and trust in healthcare professionals and understanding of mental health needs percentage responses were in all cases above the national average.

The only area which responses indicated percentage satisfaction slightly less than the national average related to the availability of appointment times and choice of appointments. However, as the practice has pointed out, the recent implementation of the Extended Access Hub initiative in Horsham locality and the employment of a new salaried GP from the beginning of January should help to alleviate appointment problems.

2018/19 Flu' Vaccination Well Targeted

Although we are now officially well in to the flu' season, there is good news about the effectiveness of this year's jab. According to Public Health England's Head of Flu', Richard Pebody, the main circulating strain this winter is well matched to the strains in this year's flu vaccines. He issued a reminder that to prevent the spread of flu, it is important to practice good respiratory and hand hygiene and to avoid close contact with others if you have flu symptoms.

Horsham and Mid Sussex GP to Patient Ratio

A BBC News report has recently highlighted that Horsham and Mid Sussex is the second worst CCG area in England regarding the ratio of GPs to patients and the story has been picked up by West Sussex County Times, who seem to have interpreted this to mean that our area has the second worst access to GPs in the country. However, it is questionable whether it is accurate to conflate these two statements: for the latter to be true Horsham and Mid Sussex patients would have to have the second longest waiting times in the country for appointments with their GPs and it's unlikely this is true.

It is doubtful that any research has actually been done to indicate respective waiting times across England and the fact is that with regard to practices in Horsham locality a recent NHS survey has shown the lowest figure for appointment satisfaction was 61 per cent and the lowest figure for overall satisfaction with a practice was 79 per cent.

Further, the ratios quoted take no account of recent developments to improve access to appointments which is the real issue. The Extended Access Hub that has been introduced for Horsham and the use of paramedic practitioners for home visits by surgeries are just two of the initiatives that will impact positively on appointment times as indeed in Riverside's case will the recent appointment of new doctors; and looking to the future it's encouraging to know that last year in England all the training places for prospective GPs were filled and indeed new ones had to be opened. But it will take time before the benefit of this in relation to pressure on practices will be felt; in the meantime patients themselves can help improve the situation both by informing their surgery as soon as possible when they are unable to make an appointment and by going to see a pharmacist rather than their GP when they have a cold or a similar viral-type infection.

So the news for our district is by no means all bad; in this instance, as is so often the case, the media headlines have gravitated towards the negative and not given the full picture.

Alternatives to A and E

As has been well documented the increase in the number of visits to A & E nationwide, often by patients who don't need to be there, is putting huge additional pressure on the NHS both in financial and staffing terms.

That being the case it's as well to remind ourselves of the alternatives for Horsham residents to an often lengthy trip to East Surrey Hospital A & E in Redhill. Please use the following services where possible as an alternative:

Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) at Horsham Hospital: Walk in. Open 9-5 Mon-Fri excluding Bank Holidays.

The MIU can diagnose and treat a wide range of minor injuries and ailments for both adults and children over one year old: (e.g. minor head injuries with no loss of consciousness; minor burns and scalds; limb injuries; simple eye infections i.e. conjunctivitis; cuts and grazes; bites and stings; ear and throat infections; skin infections).

See www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/services/servicedetails.htm?directoryID=16407

Urgent Care Centre (UCC) at Crawley Hospital: Walk in. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The UCC can treat most injuries or illnesses that are urgent but not life threatening: e.g. chest infections, sprains and strains, broken bones, minor burns and scalds, minor head and eye injuries, bites and stings. You do not need to book an appointment - just turn up and you will be seen promptly by either a doctor or nurse.

See www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/services/servicedetails.htm?directoryID=16408

Priorities in NHS 10-year Plan

This January NHS England published a 10-year plan setting out what it will be prioritising in the future. It comes after ministers announced the budget for the NHS will be increased by £20bn a year by 2023. The plan highlights the intended shift of funding from hospitals to mental health and the community. In particular the plan focuses on:

- Stressing the public's responsibility for their own wellbeing through lifestyle changes
- 'Super Quick' emergency hospital visits (more same-day emergency care)
- Earlier detection of cancer
- More personalised medicine
- More care in the community (greater synergy between health and social care)
- Easier access to mental health support
- A digital revolution (more online interaction between patients and clinicians)

For more information access: <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk>

Keep Yourself Informed

There are many ways in which you can keep informed about health matters. Below you'll find details of two organisations which actively encourage you to participate and which will regularly update you on their particular health & well-being activities:

Horsham Wellbeing: www.horshamdistrictwellbeing.org.uk is a FREE service offering friendly information and advice about a range of health and well-being issues for people living or working in the Horsham district. Wellbeing advisors can provide one-to-one support and help and advice on: losing weight, stopping smoking, healthy eating, being more active and emotional wellbeing.

NHS England - In Touch is a voice for patients and the public. NHS England distributes a twice-monthly patient bulletin, In Touch, updating readers on what is happening within the NHS, highlighting events which you can attend and identifying research projects you can participate in if you are interested. To receive these monthly bulletins please go to the website below and enter 'In Touch' in the search box: [NHS England <bulletins@england.nhs.uk](mailto:bulletins@england.nhs.uk)

Your Guide to Acronyms and Abbreviations:

- NICE - National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
- COPD - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- TIA - Transient Ischemic Attack

Riverside Ribaldry



Doctor: So how are your broken ribs coming along?

Patient: Well I keep getting this stitch in my side.

Doctor: Good, that shows the bones are knitting.