

Spring 2014



BALMORAL SURGERY

Do you wish that it was easier to make an appointment?

# Balmoral Surgery Newsletter

## Drop in sessions to register for online

Patients can now book their appointments online and have access to exactly the same appointments that are available by phone. Online appointments can be accessed any time day or night, and is usually a much quicker way of booking an appointment. Whilst some of our patients have already signed up to this service, we would like to increase the amount of patients we have registered to cut down pressures on the telephones.

We are aware that the registration process is not as straight forward as it could be, and this is something we have fed back to our supplier. However, to try and improve the amount of patients that we have using the service we are going to offer two sessions for patients to drop in and have their online account created with a member of staff. The member of staff will also show you how to use the service.

These will be held on;

**28th February: 9-12pm**

**4th March: 2-6pm**

You do not have to be a computer expert to access this service, all you need to have is a computer and an internet connection.

Patients are welcome to turn up at any time during these sessions, but patients must bring photographic ID with them in order for their account to be created. Photo ID is necessary for confidentiality purposes. At the moment patients can only book appointments and order repeat medication, but eventually patients will be able to view their medical record online and therefore the practice has a responsibility to check patients' identity before an account is created.

## Staff Changes

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In November 2013 Dr Paul Vig became a full time partner at the practice. Dr Vig has been with us for a number of years, originally as a GP Registrar and then as a locum covering Dr Mah's absences due to his role in clinical commissioning. The practice has taken on Dr Vig as an additional partner because Dr Arvind Singh has reduced the number of sessions that he now works. Dr Vig will no longer cover Dr Mah's absences, instead Dr Mah will be job sharing with Dr Wismayer. If you wish to know more about the times that each of these GPs are available please look on our practice website, or speak to a receptionist.

We are pleased to welcome a new Practice Nurse to our team. Julie Everard started at the surgery in December and is skilled in all practice nursing duties including asthma.

One of our long standing members of staff will be retiring in May, Pauline Chilton. Pauline is a medical secretary and a receptionist. She has been an asset to our practice team, and we wish her well in her retirement.

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## Patients can self refer to a number of services

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Patients are able to self refer to some NHS services. Self-referring to services saves patients a lot of time as they do not need to make an appointment with a doctor. If patients self-refer to services, it also means that the appointment that they would have made to obtain a referral from the Doctor, can be used for patients who do need to be seen.

Patients can self refer to the following services;

- ♦ **Podiatry**
- ♦ **Physiotherapy**
- ♦ **Weight Management**
- ♦ **Smoking Cessation**

To refer to podiatry and physiotherapy you need to complete a referral form at reception. If you wish to self refer to weight management or smoking cessation, you can book an appointment for these clinics either in person, over the phone or online.

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# Would you like to lose weight?

Balmoral Surgery runs a Weight Management Clinic for all of the patients in the Deal, Ash, Sandwich, Dover and Shepway localities, no matter which Doctor they are registered with.

Patients can self refer if they feel they have a weight management issue that they would like some help or advice on, or can be referred into the service by their GP or other Health Professional.

The Clinic consists of three or four elements and so patients may follow a variety of pathways depending upon their needs.

## **Dietician**

We have a Dietician who offers appointments to patients for dietary advice.

## **Health Care Assistant**

We can offer appointments with our trained Health Care Assistants who can offer advice and support.

## **Drop In Weight Monitoring**

We offer everyone the opportunity to drop in weekly to have their weight and progress monitored.

## **Group Educational and Exercise Sessions**

We run a weekly group session when attendees gather together for an educational talk plus question and answer session, usually with our Dietician.

## **Psychotherapy/Weight Management Counselling**

We can also offer access to some weight management counselling to patients for whom this is appropriate. It can help to explore relationships with food and help patients understand why they feel the way they do.

## **Usual pathway**

Most patients self refer to the Weight Management clinic.

Their first assessment appointment will be with our Dietician. These appointments usually last about half an hour.

They will then be offered another two follow-up appointments with the HCA which will be about 20 minutes long.

Sometimes patients ask to see the dietician again for further advice and so they might be made another appointment with the dietician. A second dietician appointment is usually about 20 minutes long.

Patients are encouraged to join the group education sessions, and during these sessions the HCA will offer the weight monitoring service for anyone who wishes to be weighed. This is not shared with the whole group and is done in a separate room.

Patients can choose just to drop in for weight monitoring and not attend the Group Session if they prefer not to.

Some patients might benefit from seeing the Weight Management Counsellor and so sometimes will be referred to her direct from their GP or from the Dietician. The Counsellor may suggest these patients join either the Group session mentioned above, or possibly a counselling group session. They may also continue to see the counsellor for one to one sessions for a period of about 6 weeks or so as appropriate. These appointments usually last about 45 – 60 minutes.

If you require further information about any of this, please ask at reception or contact the surgery on 01304 373444.

## Care.Data

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**You may have received a leaflet in the post about information sharing.** Confidential information from your medical records can be used by the NHS to improve the services offered so that the best possible care can be provided for everyone. This information, along with your postcode and NHS number, but not your name, are sent to a secure system where it can be linked with other health information. This allows those planning NHS services or carrying out medical research to use information from different parts of the NHS in a way which does not identify you.

### **You have a choice.**

If you are happy for your information to be used in this way you do not have to do anything. If you wish to prevent this from happening, please complete an opt out form at reception.

More information can be found at [www.nhs.uk/caredata](http://www.nhs.uk/caredata), by ringing 0300 456 3531 or you can email queries to [enquiries@hscic.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@hscic.gov.uk).

## Have you ever visited our Practice Website?

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Our Practice website offers up-to-date information about the practice and the services that we offer. It also has other useful contacts.

**[www.balmoralsurgery.com](http://www.balmoralsurgery.com)**

## Infection Control

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The Infection Control lead within the practice is Sarah Fulbrook (Nursing Team Leader). The practice has strict protocols and procedures in place to ensure that infection control takes place. If you have any concerns about infection control within the practice, please ask to speak to Sarah.

Please cancel your appointment if you cannot attend!

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From 1.12.13 to 31.1.14 there were

**388**

unattended appointments.

The practice now has a cancellation line which patients can text to cancel their appointment, the number is **07513225850**, please include your name and the date and time of your appointment.

## Planned Closures

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Please note that Balmoral Surgery is closed from 1pm on some days once a month to allow the doctors and staff to have protected learning time. These sessions are arranged by the South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group and offer the opportunity for the Surgery teams in our locality to get together for training purposes. These are usually on a Thursday afternoon, although not always, and are usually held once a month.

The dates of the next planned closures are as follows: 27/2/14, 20/3/14, 10/4/14, 30/4/14, 15/5/14, 19/6/14, 17/7/14 & 5/11/14

## Patient Forum Group

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If patients wish to have a say about the services provided by Balmoral Surgery and decisions being made by the local commissioning group, they are invited to attend our patient forum group. Patient forum groups have a very important role to play in the future of the NHS, and we welcome new members to the group. The group meets three times a year, if you are interested in joining this group please contact Becky.



*Our next meeting will be held at the surgery on 3rd March 2014  
@ 6pm*

## Dr Sharvill's recent trip to Nepal

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Dr John Sharvill and his wife Alison have recently spent some time doing voluntary work for a charity called Phase Nepal.

This charity help remote villages improve their teaching and health care. The role of the volunteers is to teach the teachers rather than provide the service themselves so the system is self sustaining.



**“Our Kitchen”**

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**“Teaching at a local school”**



**“Our bathroom”**

Later this spring they are also taking part in some fund raising by attempting the Yorkshire three peaks. They would welcome any contributions to that charity via <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/johnsharvill>

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## Primary Care Community Link Service - Did you visit your GP because there is something playing on your mind?

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Porchlight, a leading homelessness charity based in Kent, has just started to deliver an innovative service for adults with mental health needs in the county.

The Primary Care Community Link Service, which has been commissioned by Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups and Kent County Council, will work alongside GP Practices across the county to support people who are experiencing social isolation and exclusion.

Support can last for up to 8 weeks and trained professionals from the charity will help people with issues around money, housing, education, training and volunteering, community involvement, health, drugs & alcohol and confidence.

Chris Coffey, Head of Community and Youth Services at the charity, said: “Our aim is to reduce isolation, promote recovery, build confidence and reduce the number of repeat visits to GPs.

“Many people visit their GP with low level mental health issues caused by their circumstances at home. This initiative is part of a range of community services provided by Porchlight to help address issues that may appear to be separate from homelessness but without intervention could lead to individuals losing their housing.”

If things at home are getting you down and you can't see a way forward you can call Porchlight on 0800 567 76 99 or speak to your GP surgery about the Primary Care Community Link Service.

## Mammograms

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Women over the age of 70 can have breast screening but the NHS does not invite this age group automatically. To arrange for a mammogram please ring the breast screening unit on 01227 783000. Please note that breast screening does have the potential to find problems that would never cause any active harm to people screened.