Balmoral Surgery Newsletter

Summer 23

**Partnership Changes**

We have some good news to share with all of our patients. Our Salaried GP, Dr Ogunleye who you may know as Dr Fikky, has agreed to become a Partner at Balmoral and will be joining the Partnership in the very near future.

Dr Osondu our GP Registrar has completed his GP training and has accepted our offer of a role as a salaried GP which will commence early September. We are delighted to announce this positive news with you all.

Sadly Dr Hoffmann retired at the end of May. We wish him all the best for his retirement.

Dr Viney remains on long term sick leave and we are still also carrying a vacancy due to previous retirements. This vacancy is advertised at the moment.

## Practice Management Team

Lesley Betts, our Practice Manager, is taking early retirement in August 2023 after 41 years at the Practice.  Rebecca Seaman, our Assistant Practice Manager, will be stepping up into the role of Practice Manager and will continue to be supported by Paula Goldstraw, IT & Admin Manager and Angela Hill, Quality Co-ordinator.  Becky and Angela will both be increasing the hours they work at the Practice.  Becca Recas one of our receptionists, is also joining the management team.  Becca is currently undertaking her Diploma in Practice Management and will join the team as Assistant IT Manager.

The next few weeks will be spent gradually handing over work streams and responsibilities to facilitate a smooth transition and so ongoing matters may be reassigned amongst the team and new issues will follow the most appropriate pathway to allow efficient handover.

**Managing our list**

To enable us to continue to provide a safe service to our registered patients, we are continuing to manage our list.  This is an unprecedented situation for us and we have never before had to manage our Practice list but unfortunately we have a lack of capacity as previously explained.

We cannot accept new patient registrations at the moment.  The only new patients that we can accept are new babies born to current patients, returning patients e.g. students returning home, or patients who move into the same household as a currently registered patient.

This situation will be kept under regular review and as soon as we are able to, we will resume new patient registrations again.

**‘Flu Vaccination Programme**

We are hoping to offer appointments for a ‘flu vaccination soon. We will invite patients when the appointments have been released on the system. Those of you who have a mobile number on record will be sent a text message with a link which will enable you book an appointment directly on our system, without the need to contact the practice by telephone. If you do not have a mobile number on your records and would like this link when it’s available, please update the surgery with your current mobile number as soon as possible.

**Be Skin Smart**

Make sure you follow these simple steps to stay safe in the sun.

Avoid being out in the sun during the hottest part of the day – 11am to 3pm.

Make sure you apply sun cream regularly, and you never burn.

Your sun cream should have an SPF of at least factor 30 and a minimum of
a four-star rating.

Wear a hat and stay covered up with suitable clothes and sunglasses.

Find out more about being skin smart and staying safe in the sun at [nhs.uk/sun](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/)

# Checking Moles

When checking moles, know your ABCDEs.

**Asymmetry**

Both halves don’t look the same.

**Border**

The mole has blurred or jagged edges.

**Colour**

The mole has more than one colour.

**Diameter**

Grows larger than 6mm.

**Evolution**

Changes size, shape or colour.

If you find any new moles or changes to existing ones, book an appointment with your GP as soon as possible.

Find out more about being skin smart and checking your moles at [nhs.uk/skincancer](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/melanoma-skin-cancer/symptoms/)

**Self-Referrals**

Do you know that you can self-refer to some health care providers?

* Carer’s Support – please ask at reception, they can send you a link
* Podiatry - email: kentchft.podiatryeastkent@nhs.net or ask at reception for a form
* Weight loss: [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/one-you-kent/one-you-weight-loss/](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ckatym%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CNBMHK8RJ%5Cwww.kentcht.nhs.uk%5Cservice%5Cone-you-kent%5Cone-you-weight-loss%5C)
* Physiotherapy – ask reception for a form
* Self-refer to Midwife – [www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/services/maternity-self-referral-form](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ckatym%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CNBMHK8RJ%5Cwww.ekhuft.nhs.uk%5Cservices%5Cmaternity-self-referral-form)
* Sexual Health Clinic for STIs or contraception advice etc: 0300 790 0245 or email kchft.sexualhealthservice@nhs.net

**Social Prescribers**

## It all starts with a conversation!



At its most basic, a social prescription offers the kind of help that doesn’t come in a tube or bottle (non medical). Instead, a 'social prescribing link worker' creates your own social prescription to provide you with support, help and information that will enable you to access services or activities that will improve your health, wellbeing and overall enjoyment in life.

All you have to do is tell them **“What matters to me?”**

 THESE ARE SOME OF THE AREAS WE CAN SUPPORT

* Housing related queries
* Welfare benefits & debt advice
* Help with daily living tasks
* Making lifestyle changes
* Combating isolation/loneliness
* Living with anxiety/depression
* Bereavement support
* Frequent attendance GP or A&E

Whether you just need help to find information and guidance: a little bit of inside knowledge on your situation or what local resources are available. Someone to introduce you to a community group, a new activity or a local club. Someone to help you start up a gardening club, a fishing group, a ‘men’s shed’ or knit and natter group.

We are here to listen to you.

For more information or to self-refer please email us at social.prescriberpcn@nhs.net

**We can’t take your call right now**

If you phone the practice and get a message saying “we can’t take your call right now” this means that there are at least another 8 patients in front of you in the queue. As a practice we decided to add this message, so that patients know what to expect. The alternative was that all patients would get an engaged tone if the lines were busy, but they would have no idea what position they were in the queue, or whether their call was likely to be answered in a reasonable length of time. We have four receptionists answering phones at any given time, and therefore with 8 patients in a queue, none of these patients should have to wait that long.

**Ordering Prescriptions**

Please note we do not have the capacity to take prescriptions over the telephone. Patients can either drop in their repeat prescription slip, order via the NHS App or Patient Access, or order through their usual chemist. Please note that Paydens will no longer order prescriptions for patients. As far as we know, the other local chemists are continuing to offer this service.

**Patient Forum Group**

Balmoral Surgery has a patient forum which always welcomes new members. The Forum usually meets three times a year and aims to give our patients the opportunity to have their say about the services the surgery provides and to keep members up-to-date with new developments etc. The minutes of the forum meetings are available on our website and if you are interested in joining, please contact Paula. Our next meeting is on 02.10.2023

**Planned Closures**

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 Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group and offer the opportunity for the Surgery teams in our locality to get together for training purposes.  These sessions are on a Wednesday or Thursday afternoon once a month and at present are scheduled to take place as follows:

* 19.07.23
* 23.08.23
* 21.09.23