

Southfields Group Practice

Newsletter

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Spotlight on the 'virtual ward'

Southfields Group Practice houses more than just the General Practitioners and nurses with whom you make appointments. There are also physiotherapists and counsellors along with the remarkable reception staff. Our management and administration team share the second floor with the Community Nursing Team and the Community (or Virtual) Ward Team. This article describes what this latter team does.

The Virtual Ward is designed to reproduce the strengths of a hospital ward in the community by using a multidisciplinary

team approach. There are four community wards within Wandsworth, with the Wandle Virtual Ward being based here. Each ward consists of a GP Community Consultant, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Community Matron, Ward Clerk, full-time Social Worker, and a Pharmacist. These virtual wards assist community services within Wandsworth to help people avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. This is done by a dedicated team of staff to improve the care of the most vulnerable people safely in their own homes. The Community Ward primarily aims to help anyone

aged over 16 who is likely to be at risk of hospital admission, as well as those identified using predictive risk models, and those identified by GPs (and any other health or social services) as being high users of secondary care services. When a person is admitted to the Virtual (or Community) Ward their GP is informed and the person will be visited by the Community matron or Community GP as necessary. Care plans will be discussed and the person who has been 'admitted' will be encouraged to contact the Community Ward with their health

needs. All interaction between the patient and the Community Ward Team will be entered on the medical records so that the family GP can follow progress as it occurs, ensuring seamless continuity of care. Please note that the GPs working on the community wards will be there to support the community services and not to interfere with the relationship between patients and their registered GPs.

In short, the Virtual Ward aims to keep you out of hospital and in your own home whilst providing you with the attention that you would receive in hospital.

Staff News

We bid a sad farewell to Marilyn, one of our experienced reception staff, in October. Marilyn had been with us since 2004 and kept us entertained with her laughter and talented

singing. She was very competent and organised and we wish her all the best for her future. Marilyn has said that the coconut Quality Tin sweets can now be shared amongst the staff rather than saved for her!

Staff Cake Sale. Huge thanks to Nurse Denise who whisked up a plethora of delicacies for the

Trinity Hospice Cake Sale.



(Marilyn came back to purchase some of Denise's famous chocolate fudge

cake.) With other staff adding their dishes to the table we raised an impressive £100 and thanks are due to Debi who organised the event and to everyone who helped.



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Seasonal Reminders

We will be open as usual during the Christmas period. We only close for Bank Holidays (and weekends).

Did you receive a letter inviting you in for your annual flu vaccination? It is not too late to have your injection so please book an appointment with one of our staff. In this, the season of coughs and colds, we would like to ensure that vulnerable people are safeguarded against flu.

Hand hygiene. We're probably all familiar now with the slogan, 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. However, helping to stop the spread of flu is easy, simply by covering your nose and mouth with tissues

when you cough and sneeze. Throwing the tissue away and washing your hands really cuts the chances of spreading the virus. Please remember to wash your hands!

Children and ailments.

Routine appointments can be booked with the doctor of your choice up to a week in advance. We also operate a system whereby if you consider that your child needs to see one of our doctors on the day that you telephone we will endeavour to offer you an appointment. In an emergency we always try to be flexible.

Green Fingered Volunteer needed

Michele writes: 'Is there a potential 'Alan Titchmarsh' or Charlie Dimmock' (physical attributes not necessary!), who would like to look after the flower borders surrounding the surgery car park. There is a small budget available, sadly, no monetary remuneration, although a cup of tea and a great deal of gratitude will always be proffered to the kind soul who volunteers to take on this work. Please contact the Deputy Practice Manager Debi Chapman if you feel able to offer an hour or two per week.'

We would also be happy to receive plant donations if anyone has an overabundance in their garden.

Huge thanks go to Catherine, who has endeavoured to maintain the flower beds for the last five years.

Lisa, our new receptionist, starts this month and I am sure that she will be made to feel welcome.

LATEST NEWS Dr Neil, our senior partner, will be leaving us at the end of March 2012. She feels that the time has come to take some long overdue maternity leave and, maybe, take the Gap Year that she had always intended to.

Any comments or feedback, please address to the Editor for inclusion in February's newsletter.

A patient recommends:

Exercise classes are held on a Monday evening at 7.30pm for one hour at St Barnabas' Church Hall on Lavenham Road. Costing £3 and involving keep fit and dancing the majority of the attendees are females aged 60+. 'It's a good workout and you feel you've achieved something at the end of the session—well worth it.'

