



## Frithwood Surgery

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## FRITHWOOD SURGERY PPG NEWSLETTER

## AUTUMN 2017

### CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR OVER 75s

Make a diary date for Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> for the Frithwood Christmas Party for surgery patients who are over 75.

This annual event, takes place at Eastcombe Village Hall and starts at 2pm.

There will be food and drink and live entertainment, with the fabulous Carol back by popular demand to sing festive and other songs from a range of eras.

If you are a patient in right age group, do come along, meet old friends and join in the fun. We'd love to see you.

Phone the surgery on 01453 882868 if you are hoping to attend.



### FETE DATE

Retired Frithwood GP Dr Pat Pearson returned to Bisley to open the village's annual fete and flower show. Here she is with the flower queen and her attendants.

### RECEPTION REARRANGEMENT

Those who responded to the 2016 patient survey flagged up privacy and confidentiality at reception as needing attention. This has been taken up by the Patient Participation Group and improvements are now underway. Many patients will have noticed that old cabinets used for storing written records are disappearing from behind the reception area. Meanwhile reception is being re-arranged, with phone calls and other duties currently performed at the front desk being moved to an admin room.

The extra privacy means receptionists will be able to ask for more detailed information from those telephoning the surgery and give relevant sign posting when required. This will contribute towards on-going improvements to have patients seen by the right person at the right time.

The PPG is supporting funding of this project.

**FEEDBACK** - We would love to hear from you on any aspects of the Newsletters or the services you receive from the surgery. If you have questions or ideas that could benefit our readership, please use the 'Suggestion Box' at the surgery reception or 'e' mail [frithwood.enquiries@nhs.net](mailto:frithwood.enquiries@nhs.net) or call 01453 882868.

## INFLUENZA

Leaves are turning brown and falling: Autumn is upon us and it's the time to think about flu.

Widespread outbreaks can cause as many as 20,000 excess deaths a year in the 65-plus age group in England and Wales. Even minor outbreaks can lead to 6,000 deaths. Flu needs serious consideration, particularly with regard to prevention.

Flu is caused by a group of viruses and can occur at any time, but is more usual over the winter months. It has different symptoms to the common cold. A cold has a gradual onset and is characterised by sore throats and runny noses, but most people are still able to work. Flu has a sudden onset and symptoms can include high fevers, headaches, aching muscles and coughs. Most people are so unwell that they cannot go to school or work.

Those with flu symptoms need to rest at home, drink plenty of water and take paracetamol or ibuprofen. They should expect to be unwell for one week.

As with any other infection, there are potential complications: the throat, sinuses, ears or chest can be infected with bacteria, the latter causing bronchitis or pneumonia. These require a trip to the GP for further assessment and consideration of antibiotic treatment, although these drugs will have no impact on the actual virus that causes flu as they are only active against bacteria.

Complications are more common in those over the age of 65 and, importantly, those with an existing medical problem. Patients with chronic chest conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive disease (COPD) are likely candidates for chest infection. Chronic kidney and liver disease and deficiency of the immune system are all potential complications. Diabetics will find that their blood sugar rises and this needs to be carefully monitored. Pregnant women can occasionally go into premature labour.

Antibiotics are useful only in treating the complications of flu as they only treat bacteria. Antiviral drugs do exist, but research has shown that they only reduce the duration of the infection and have no significant impact on the prevention of complications.

### VISITING SERVICE FOR OAPS

A visiting service for the elderly in Chalford is being planned by Chalford Parish Council.

If you feel that this service would be useful, Chalford Parish Council can be contacted either by phone on 01453 887204 or by e-mail on [christine@chalford-glos.gov.uk](mailto:christine@chalford-glos.gov.uk)

### PPG WALKS

The PPG health walkers are hanging up their boots until April, when it's hoped the warmer weather will encourage new additions to their happy band, which meets every two weeks for a health-enhancing gentle walk in the area.

Prevention of the initial viral infection is the key to fighting flu, hence the flu jab programme available to all who are over 65, and the risk groups already outlined. It is important to have the jab every year as there will be variation year to year on the exact type of virus that causes the infection. The World Health Organisation monitors virus strains around the world and recommends the most appropriate vaccine formulation for the UK in advance of the northern hemisphere winter season. The vaccines are either trivalent, containing two influenza A subtypes and one influenza B subtype, or quadrivalent, containing two influenza A subtypes and two influenza B subtypes. In the southern hemisphere, particularly in Australia, influenza A, thought to be an H3N2 subtype, has been prevalent this year. The quadrivalent UK vaccine includes this and the surgery has opted to use this vaccine.

Children between the ages of two and three can have the vaccine administered by nasal spray at the surgery. If the vaccine is administered at school, the age range for this is extended to eight.

Some 800 patients attended Frithwood's flu clinic on September 30 and a further 550 on October 14.

If you missed these flu clinic sessions and are over 65 or in an at risk group, please contact the surgery.

## FRITHWOOD FACE



**Name:** Lucy Walker **Job:** Practice Nurse

**What I do:** I carry out general treatment room work, such as baby immunisations, smear tests, ear syringing, wound care, health checks and blood tests.

**Why my work is important:** My work in the general treatment room means that the other nurses can spend more time on chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes.

**Top health advice:** Exercise daily and eat healthily. There are 24 hours in the day and just 30 minutes out of that day is all that's needed for exercise.

**Most frequent thing you hear:** "You're that lady who's always out running!"

**Favourite way to exercise:** I love running: I run every day. I'm always training for some race I have entered. I particularly like to run half marathons to really push myself. My next big challenge will be a full marathon at some point – maybe next year...?

**When I'm not working:** I'm busy being a mum to my two little girls who are eight and five. Life is very busy outside of work and I'm either taking the kids to various places, decorating our new house or going out running. At weekends my husband Rob and I love to take our girls away. We spend a lot of time at West Bay in Dorset.

**Favourite sport:** I don't like any sports but like watching Gloucester Rugby.

**Favourite pop group:** I like everything from Motown and sixties music to modern day sounds, especially Ed Sheeran.

## DRUG WATCH... STATINS

Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) is a major cause of death and disability, not only from heart attacks but in relation to strokes, peripheral arterial disease affecting the limbs, kidney and eyes.

### There are many factors involved:

Age  
Sex  
Smoking  
Diabetes  
Family history of CVD  
Abnormal heart rhythms  
Blood pressure  
Body Mass Index  
Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance involved in the normal functioning of the body. When levels are too high, fatty deposits build up within the arteries, which can cause blood clots within the arteries leading to blockages causing heart attack or stroke.

To help assess and manage CVD there is an algorithm that combines all the relevant factors to generate a risk score. Clearly the list of risk factors contains a number of items that should be addressed, such as stopping smoking, good blood pressure and diabetes control and weight loss and exercise to reduce BMI.

### With regard to diet, it is best to avoid food high in saturated fat:

Fatty meat, sausages and pies.  
Butter, ghee and lard.  
Cream and ice cream.  
Cheese, particularly hard cheese.  
Cakes, biscuits & milk chocolate.  
Coconut oil.

If, despite these measures, the risk score is 10% or greater, high cholesterol needs to be lowered using a drug from the group known as statins. A risk score of 10% means that if you were standing alongside a group of 100 people with exactly the same risk profile as you, it would be expected that 10 of that group would die within 10 years from a CVD related problem.

Statins work by blocking the enzyme in the liver that is involved in the production of cholesterol. The National Institute of Clinical Evidence (NICE) reports overwhelming evidence for their cholesterol-reducing properties and their effectiveness with CVD. Statins are therefore recommended by NICE for appropriate patients. As with all drugs, there will be a trade-off between benefits and side effects and statins are no exception.

### Common side effects affecting 1:10 patients on Statins

Muscle pain.  
Nose bleed.  
Sore throat.  
Runny nose.  
Headache.  
Nausea.  
Diarrhoea.  
Increased blood sugar.

### Uncommon side effects affecting 1:100 patients on statins:

Weight gain.  
Insomnia.  
Dizziness.  
Tingling.  
Poor memory.  
Inflammation of the liver.

### Rare side effects affecting 1:1000 patients on statins.

Visual disturbance.  
Bleeding.  
Jaundice.

Much has been made by the media in recent years about statin side effects and many patients have stopped taking the drug. What is not known is of this group how many may have needlessly succumbed to CVD. Nevertheless, all reported side effects must be taken seriously. Efforts to address other risk factors can be redoubled, a different type statin can be tried or a non-statin cholesterol drug such as Ezetimibe, although this class of drug is less effective at reducing cholesterol than one from the statin group.

## CRAFTS FOR CHRISTMAS

Talented craftspeople from Bisley, Dursley, Oxford, Wales and Swindon are coming together on November 11 to hold a Christmas art and craft fayre.

Bisley WI Village Hall is the venue for the event, which is being held between 9.30am and 12.30pm.

Entry is free and handmade refreshments will be available.

## RETURN OF DR SKENE

Dr Camilla Skene is due to return to Frithwood Surgery in January following the birth of her son.

## MISSED APPOINTMENTS

There were 142 missed appointments in September.

As well as being frustrating for surgery staff and GPs, missed appointments represent time slots that could be given to other patients wishing to see a doctor.

While the surgery would prefer a little notice if a patient isn't able to make an appointment, it can re-allocate time slots even with half an hour's notice.



## FRITHWOOD LOTTERY

Time is running out to sign up for the Frithwood PPG Lottery.

Some 152 patients are already in the running for a monthly cash prize, which means there are just 48 tickets left to sell before the end of November.

The lottery makes an important contribution to funding pieces of equipment that enhance the services offered by GPs and nurses at Frithwood.

Last year doctors were able to start using a machine that measures levels of C Reactive Protein in patients showing signs of infection. In doing so they can distinguish between viral and bacterial infections and make the right decisions over whether or not to prescribe antibiotics.

This machine is really proving its worth during the current drive by the government to reduce antibiotic treatments. GPs at Frithwood estimate there has been a 20% reduction in the prescribing of antibiotics for respiratory tract infections since the equipment came into use.

Testing has also highlighted cases for which antibiotics were the right treatment, even though traditionally they would not have been prescribed. There has also been success in using the machine to monitor some patients who have had operations or are living with long term conditions.

"We feel the machine is making our antibiotic prescribing more accurate and timely," says GP Dr William Natrass.

Next year the surgery hopes to use money from the lottery towards a new electrically-driven examination couch for the treatment room, which will enable patients to be accurately positioned while procedures are undertaken.

Pictured is PPG chairman Dr Tim Crouch promoting the lottery to patients waiting for their flu jabs.

## CHRISTMAS AT CRANHAM

Enjoy seasonal music and songs at the annual Christmas concert given by Cranham's Village Orchestra and Choir at Cranham Village Hall on Sunday December 17, starting at 2.30pm.

If you play a musical instrument at grade five standard or above and would like to join a friendly and informal orchestra, why not join the several other Frithwood patients who go along to Monday night practice sessions at the hall from 8pm. Call 01452 770337 for more information.