



FRIENDS OF BRADLEY STOKE SURGERY NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2010

WELCOME

A very warm welcome to the third Newsletter from the Friends of Bradley Stoke Surgery. We are a group of patients and staff who meet on a regular basis to discuss all aspects of Surgery matters and to provide feedback and comment. The Friends have organised many fund raising events and have raised large sums of money to purchase equipment which enables the Doctors and Nurses to provide first class medical care.

We are very keen to enlist new members to our group and if you have a little spare time would be very welcome to help us in this enjoyable activity which benefits the wider community of Bradley Stoke. If you are interested in finding out more, please leave your contact phone number at reception and we will get in touch.

THE NEW SURGERY BUILDING

Work has progressed extremely well and the Practice Nurses moved into the new extension at the front of the Surgery on the 21st June! A message has been put on the automated screen to direct patients into these new rooms and signs have also been put up around the waiting room to help patients find their way. The Nurses will move again in the near future as this is a temporary arrangement whilst their new treatments rooms are being built. We respectfully ask for prams and pushchairs to be left in the entrance to this annexe so patients can sit on the chairs provided.

The main waiting room has had to be made smaller as an interim measure to enable internal alterations to relocate the reception area within the old building and enlarge the waiting room. Building is progressing on target with the aim of completion in November.

APPOINTMENTS

We are pleased to report that the Practice On Line Booking system is working well and offers an alternative to patients to avoid the telephone congestion which can happen in the morning between 8.30am and 9.30am. The Practice are reviewing procedures and are monitoring the uptake of this new development of how many appointments are being booked and appointment availability. They will add

more appointments when necessary. Patients need to register in order to use the Book On Line system and this can be done in person at reception. There is a leaflet available in the Waiting Room which will give patients all the details they require on this new service.

TELEPHONE

The new Surgery building is a major investment by the Partners to provide better health facilities and alongside this exciting development they have completed phase one of the new telephone system. There will be future developments and if anyone would like to make any constructive comments we would like to hear them. Please address any comments to the Practice Manager, Sandra Lloyd.

CHOOSE WELL

In South Gloucestershire there are many health services to help keep you well and provide you with support and treatment if you become unwell. Making the right choices at the right time will get you the best possible treatment. There is a leaflet you can pick up from the Surgery called 'Choose Well' and we encourage you to collect one of these leaflets.

FUND RAISING EVENT

The Friends of Bradley Stoke are pleased to invite you to a skittles evening at Little Stoke Social Club on Saturday 7th August 7.30pm to midnight. Come along and join in the fun and help raise some money for Help 4 Heroes and The Friends of Bradley Stoke. There will be some light refreshments provided on the evening and we look forward to meeting you and seeing you test your skills, or in our case the lack of them!

THE FRIENDS

SOME INFORMATION ON ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY

A&E departments, sometimes called casualty or emergency departments, are hospital units where the public can attend without appointment, for accidents, emergencies and other very urgent medical conditions which may require the facilities and expertise of highly skilled hospital teams.

Examples where it is right and appropriate to attend A&E without delay include:

- Major injuries such as injuries from road traffic accidents
- Falls from a considerable height
- Major head injuries
- Collapse
- Severe breathing difficulty
- Severe chest pain
- Severe haemorrhage
- Poisoning
- Extensive burns

There is absolutely no doubt that someone who is seriously injured or collapsed needs to attend A&E and may well also require pre-hospital care from the Ambulance Service.

Unfortunately many people attend A&E with very minor problems. This makes it difficult for A&E staff to deal with the volume of cases, involves delays for patients and incurs considerable costs.

The following are example of minor problems for which A&E attendance is not appropriate. Generally, if the person is unwell, but alert and speaking without impaired consciousness or severe breathing difficulty, then they do not need to attend.

- Flu-like illnesses, coughs, earache, back ache
- Sore throats
- Minor breathlessness or wheezing
- Abdominal pain (unless extreme or associated with collapse)
- Urinary difficulties (unless completely unable to pass water)
- Vaginal bleeding (unless very heavy and associated with faintness)
- Rashes (unless it appears like spontaneous bleeding under the skin or the person is very unwell)
- Backache
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Simple bites and stings
- Social problems
- Emergency contraception
- Dental problems (except major trauma)

Such conditions can generally be safely managed by your GP, practice nurse and sometimes by the individual themselves.

Disadvantages to attending A&E if not essential

People who attend A&E with non-serious conditions risk overloading the services that are primarily intended for delivering emergency care for people who are critically ill. We should all remember that "one day it could be us" who need that life-saving care. They are also likely to wait quite a long time for treatment, though due to the recently introduced 4 hour A&E targets, this is improving.

Most GPs believe that people who attend hospital A&E departments are likely to be seen by junior staff, are more likely to undergo non-essential tests and are more likely to end up being admitted to hospital than if they are seen by experienced doctors such as GPs.

How much does it cost?

Following recent changes to NHS funding arrangements, each attendance at A&E is now individually charged to the Primary Care Trust and ultimately to the patient's general practice.

Each attendance at A&E is charged at a standard rate. For more complex cases a higher charge is levied. Costs of admission or outpatient follow up are added to these costs. The current tariffs are:

A&E standard	£61
A&E higher	£93
MIU	£35

So, a person attending A&E with 'flu, a sore throat, diarrhoea or an insect bite costs a minimum of £61. Some will say "I pay my taxes and it was urgent to me", but we all have a responsibility to make best use of limited resources. Money spent on non-essential A&E attendance means less money to spend on other services or developing new ones.

What alternatives are there to attending A&E?

- 1 **General Practices** provide comprehensive services between 8am and 6.30pm Monday to Friday. All practices can provide same day appointments for urgent problems. Some practices have nurse practitioners or practice nurses who can see and advise patients themselves. Most GPs can arrange to telephone a patient to offer advice if requested to do so.
- 2 When practices are closed during the evenings, weekends and bank holidays, there is an **Out of Hours Service** for urgent medical problems which cannot wait until the person's own practice is open. If you do not have the number of the OOH service, just telephone your usual surgery number and you will either be transferred or will hear a message giving you the number to ring.
- 3 **NHS Direct** (0845 4647) or www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk can provide information on what to do if you are not sure, as well as information about local services such as pharmacy opening times and emergency dental care.
- 4 Most **pharmacies** can advise on minor illness and can provide medication to help you manage your condition yourself. Pharmacies can also provide emergency contraception and some pharmacies are open extended hours.
- 5 **Minor Injuries Unit Southmead Hospital**
Southmead Hospital has a designated Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) open 9am until 9pm seven days a week. The Minor Injuries Unit is located at the Monk Park entrance, Bristol BS10 5NB. Both Minor Injury Units are staffed by highly trained nurses to deal with minor injuries such as wounds, sprains, minor fractures and minor head injuries where the patient does not need the facilities of a major A&E department and parking is available.
- 6 There are additional **NHS Walk in Centres** in Knowle and Central Bristol, which can treat minor illnesses.
Central Bristol: 33 Board Street, Bristol BS1 2EZ. Open Monday to Saturday from 8.00am to 8.00pm; Sundays and Bank Holidays open from 10am to 6pm.
Knowle: West Health Park, Downton road, Bristol BS4 1WH open 7 days a week 9am - 9pm
- 7 **The Orchard Medical Centre - Kingswood** has appointments available even if you are not registered with them. Contact **0117 9805100** and you can arrange to be seen by a doctor or nurse.
Orchard Medical Centre, Macdonald Walk, Bristol BS15 8NJ (Nr Somerfield). Open 7 days a week from 8.00am to 8.00pm.
- 8 **Minor Injuries Unit at Yate West Gate Centre**
Yate Minor Injury Unit will be open Monday - Friday 8am - 7:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am - 2pm from 22nd June 2010. It is located at West Walk, Yate Shopping Centre, Yate BS37 4AX.