

St. Andrew's Medical Centre

No.20 Q1 Winter 2017

Welcome to our quarterly newsletter, a collaboration between the SAMC team and the PPG (Patient Participation Group)



News from the Medical Centre

Team changes



In case you missed a separate email just before Christmas, **Dr Debbie Mason** left us at the end of 2016 for pastures new. We wish her well for the future and thank her for everything she has brought to SAMC. We are currently recruiting a GP to take over her list of patients.

We are delighted to welcome **Anne Goodchild** who joins the St Andrew's team as our Diabetes Specialist Nurse. Anne has 26 years' experience and spends part of her working week training GPs and Practice Nurses across England to provide diabetes services to a high standard. Her nationally recognised **PIT Stop course** has been highly commended by Diabetes UK and enables people with type 2 diabetes to remain supported by their own practice team, even when they require insulin and other injectable therapies. Take a look at her website: www.pitstopdiabetes.co.uk

Medical Centre training afternoons

We are closed on February 8th from 13.00 for training. If you need to consult urgently with a doctor please call the Medical Centre, listen to the answer phone for the emergency number, or phone 111.

SAMC services



Repeat prescriptions – SAMC piloting new 'order by telephone' scheme

Does your pharmacy order your repeats for you? If so, from January 9th this service was replaced by '**On the phone ('prescription ordering direct' – POD)**'. To use this service call 01732 375262, Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 16.00

NHS West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) manages the service on our behalf and have online access to SAMC records. When they take a request from you they send them electronically to your doctor for signing and forwarding

electronically to the pharmacy where you want to collect your medication. Allow 2 full working days (not weekends/public holidays). Click here for [further information](#) .

Are you prescribed gluten-free products?

For the past 30 years, the NHS has been prescribing some gluten-free products to patients who have been diagnosed with coeliac disease and a small number of associated medical conditions. The NHS West Kent CCG spends over £100,000 a year on these prescriptions. This started when gluten-free foods were not as readily available nor as affordable as they are today. With a limited budget and increasing demand, every service is being evaluated and decisions being taken about the best value for all our patients.

It is proposed that providing gluten-free products on prescription should cease and you may participate in a consultation on the matter in a survey through link below, by 29th January 2017.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WKglutenfree>

New telephone system

As reported last time we will be introducing a new phone system in February with double the number of lines. It can direct calls to the correct areas i.e. appointments /secretarial, and so help speed up calls.

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Your health matters



Turn over a new leaf in 2017 - make a pledge to get fit

Take the health quiz - how Are You? - see how you score. This NHS quiz is here to help you get back to a healthier you and is for over 18s only. It is designed to point you in the right direction, it is not a medical assessment – if you're worried about your health you should speak to a health professional.

Keep Warm, Keep Well - some tips for the cold weather

Cold homes have a significant impact on people's health

One of the best ways of keeping yourself well during winter is to stay warm. Keeping warm over the winter months can help prevent colds, flu or more serious health conditions. These **tips below** are just common sense but serve as a good reminder about the various things to consider:

- get a flu jab if you are at risk. **clinics: Saturday 21st and Wednesday 25th January**
- listen to the weather forecast for information about weather warnings

As the weather gets colder –be prepared with

- a list of emergency numbers to call for help
- check that your home is warm enough. If you have reduced mobility, are 65 or over, or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, you should heat your home to at least 18C
- have a carbon monoxide (CO) alarm as well as a fire alarm and ensure they are in working order
- have warm meals and drinks
- dress up warmly - wear lots of thin layers - clothes made from cotton, wool or fleecy fibres are particularly good and help to maintain body heat
- make sure you have plenty of food and any medicine you need
- keep active by moving about indoors
- try not to go out if you are at risk from the cold

Be aware of people around you who may be at risk from the cold

- Look out for your neighbours and help them - keep in touch with local people at risk and make sure they have enough to eat and drink and check they have a warm room
- talk with friends about clearing snow and ice for those who cannot do it themselves
- if you have to go out wear non-slip shoes or boots
- tell someone where you are going
- take your mobile if you have one and make sure its charged
- tell the emergency services if you are worried about someone

PPG & Friends



Update fund raising: currently stand at £13,165

New targets: We recently purchased 4 new portable blood pressure checkers for loan to patients who need to monitor their BP over a short period. We are now going to fund 3 new examination couches.

Next social morning: Saturday 1st April – further information on the website, at SAMC, and in local media.

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