

St. Andrew's Medical Centre

No. 21 Spring 2017

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



News from the Medical Centre



Medical Centre training afternoons

We are closed on for SAMC training afternoons (which we are obliged to undertake by the NHS West Kent CCG), on **Tuesday 9th May; Wednesday 14th June; Thursday 13th July; Tuesday 12th September; Thursday 12th October; Wednesday 8th November**). 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 is closed for the May Bank Holiday: **Monday May 29**.

Are you at risk of diabetes?

We recently held a special health care event at SAMC focussing on Diabetes and specifically those at risk from contracting it.

Pre-Diabetes is a condition where Blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be called Diabetes. It is diagnosed by a blood test. Lifestyle changes can prevent progression to Diabetes.

Patients recently diagnosed with pre-diabetes were invited to this event which was run by Anne Goodchild our specialist diabetes nurse, and was attended by around 40 patients. Anne focused on key points like dietary changes, how to read food labels and setting realistic goals for weight loss and lifestyle changes. **If you think you may be at risk or for further information**, go to:

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Diabetes-type2/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

We hope to hold another event in the Autumn focusing on **respiratory conditions**.

SAMC services - *Non-medical services*



Our prime focus is on providing medical services for the 8000+ patients. The challenges facing us are generally well known and continue to grow. It is a difficult balancing act as we continuously have to reassess our priorities and introduce new, more efficient ways of working. But we can't do everything. And with very heavy workloads, often working up to 70 hours a week, we have to take paperwork home for evening and weekend working.

One area where ever more time is spent is on **non-medical services** such as **completing forms and preparing reports** for patients, either direct, or for organisations on their behalf.

Sometimes we are only approached because we are in a position of trust in the community, or because an insurance company or employer wants to be sure that information provided is true and accurate. However, some services can be **provided by other professionals or even non-professionals for free**, for example when seeking **lasting power of attorney** (see separate topic below).

The Government's contract with GPs, (who are self-employed, not employed by the NHS), covers **medical services** to NHS patients. The NHS provides most health care to most people free and covers all staff costs.

When a service is not covered by the NHS, **GPs charge a fee** (in line with NHS guidelines), to cover staff costs etc., When a GP signs a certificate or completes a report, it is a condition of us remaining on the

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Medical Register that we only sign what we know to be true; completing even the simplest of forms might require us to check an entire medical record and is very time consuming - carelessness or an inaccurate report can have serious consequences for the GP, with the General Medical Council or even the Police.

NHS services for which GPs can charge their NHS patients,

e.g. accident/sickness insurance certificates; certain travel vaccinations; private medical insurance reports

Non-NHS services for which GPs can charge other organisations

e.g. medical reports for insurance companies; some reports for the DSS/Benefits Agency if they have written directly to your GP; examinations of their employees requested by a Local Authority.

To find out more about the fees chargeable please click 'About our Services' and the 'Non-medical services', on our website.

To process requests, we need at least 10 working days for letters and 21 working days for forms from the date of your request.

Lasting power of attorney (LPA)

Anyone aged 18+ with the mental ability to make decisions for themselves can arrange for someone else to make these decisions for them in the future. This legal authority is called '**power of attorney**'.

The person giving LPA is the '**donor**'. The person given LPA is known as the '**attorney**' and must be over age 18 There are different types of LPA: **(1) personal welfare LPA** and **(2) property and affairs LPA**

Donors should understand exactly what powers they are giving to someone else.

The **GOV.UK website** - <https://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney/make-lasting-power> explains what an LPA means for the 'donor' and the 'attorney'. The **NHS website** also has further information <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/Pages/lasting-power-of-attorney.aspx>

LPAs can be made online. Once an LPA is completed, it must be printed and signed (or 'executed') in the presence of a witness, who certifies that when the form was signed, the 'donor' granting the LPA:

- *understood its purpose and the scope of authority being granted*
- *was not being unduly pressured or being defrauded*
- *was not affected by anything else that could affect the validity of the document*

This certificate can be signed by either someone known to the 'donor' for at least two years, or by someone who 'because of their relevant professional skills and expertise, considers themselves able to provide the certificate'. This person must be acting independently, not be a relative, business partner or employee, or anyone involved in a care home where the 'donor' lives - **it is not necessary for your GP to sign as witness.**

PPG & Friends - Update fund raising:



Since the PPG was formed £13,500 has been raised from sponsorships, events, donations, and our book shop. The March coffee morning raised £275 - thank you to all those who generously gave their time to organise everything, and for all of you who looked in. **We have received a wonderful, anonymous donation to buy 2 examination couches** and have had a tea urn, cups and saucers donated by PPG members.

New targets: 1 exam couch; blood pressure monitor for patient self-checking in the waiting area

Next PPG Meetings: Tuesday 13th June, Thursday 28th September.

New sponsor: A big welcome to **FLYING FISH PROPERTIES**, a new sponsor of SAMC. They aim to provide a bespoke, first class property sales and lettings service in Southborough – and to make sure It's All About YOU! Diabetes UK will receive a £100 donation for every completion.

Website: www.flyingfishproperties.co.uk, email: natalie@flyingfishproperties.co.uk & Contact 24/7 on 01892 514 189.