



# Mann Cottage Matters

## Dr Hywel Furn Davies

Over the summer I was fortunate to attend a 1980's music festival. It was full of wonderful bands from the 80s and this led to a lot of reminiscing. However, it also got me thinking about how general practice has changed in the last 40 years.

It certainly seemed less frenetic during the working day but let's not forget that in those days GPs would cover the patients overnight and at weekends. I can certainly remember, during the first few years when I joined Mann Cottage, providing that 24 hour care and driving around the Cotswolds in the early hours, lost, with a dim torch trying to find patient's homes, often through villages with no street name. I think we can all look back on those days with rose-tinted glasses but the complexity of general practice and rapidly increasing patient demand made this increasingly unsustainable.

We continue to provide weekend cover at our wonderful community North Cotswolds Hospital and hopefully in the next few months we will start a new 8:00am-8:00pm service 7 days a week as part of a nationwide improved access initiative. The reason for this is that we are aware how important it is for patients to gain access to a GP for both urgent and non-urgent care, especially for those who are at work during normal hours. We recognise the importance of continuity of care and hope to improve this within our service.

Linked to this we have revamped our website and we would welcome any feedback. The site encourages and helps patients to avoid unnecessary consultations by having lots of self care information on there. Also there is the facility for online ordering of your medication, booking appointments, even requesting sick notes/fitness for work certificates and a lot more besides. If you have an opportunity please take a look— [www.moretondoctors.nhs.uk](http://www.moretondoctors.nhs.uk)

We all know how Moreton and the surrounding area is rapidly growing so, to meet this demand, we are appointing two new salaried doctors: Dr Angela Alcock and Dr Alison Macrae. We are also delighted to welcome Dr Beth McIntyre as our new registrar who will be with us for 12 months.

From November, because of the changes we have put in place and new team members, we are increasing capacity by over 30%. Hopefully this will mean an increase both in face-to-face consultations and also via telephone. This will be on top of the significant increase in appointments we will provide as part of the nationwide improved access initiative.

Regarding the prescription ordering line; it is fair to say it has had its teething problems but myself, Lorna and Jill had a meeting with the team tasked to improve the service and we were very impressed with their ideas. As a result, could we please ask patients to stick with it. It is going to get better. But, by avoiding Mondays, I think patients will get a better experience when ordering using this service.

We cannot turn back the clock. We cannot go back to the halcyon days of Duran Duran, OMD, Tears For Fears (anyone under the age of 30 please ask your parents!) but I believe we can make things better and that is something at Mann Cottage we strive for.



## HELLO FROM YOUR RECEPTION TEAM!

**New website:** We have recently launched our new website and we really hope you are finding it user friendly and full of useful information. Please do take some time to have a look around it—there are lots of interactive pages you can utilise and ways to get in touch with us. We would also be grateful for any feedback on the new site as we are keen to ensure that you, as the user, find it helpful.

**New staff:** We are all looking forward to Deena joining our Reception team very shortly to begin her training with us, so a new face to look out for!

**Bereavement Support Group:** There is a bereavement support group held on the last Friday of every month from 10:00am-12:00pm in the Campden Home Nursing building. They offer free individual counselling as well as monthly support group sessions. For more information please call 01386 840505 or email: [office@campdenhomenursing.org](mailto:office@campdenhomenursing.org).

**Younger patients—age 15-18:** Can we ask all our younger patients to let us have their contact details—home telephone number, mobile number and email address so we can ensure everything is accurate and up to date for you. Many thanks.

**Appointments not attended:** In the last 3 months we had 163 patients who did not attend their appointments. Can we remind everyone to please let us know if for any reason you are unable to keep your appointment so we can offer it to someone else who may need it. Many thanks.

**Consent:** If you would like a third party (i.e. family member) to collect your prescriptions, make or cancel appointments or collect paperwork on your behalf, please complete a consent form available from Dispensary or Reception and we can update your records accordingly.

### WELCOME TO DR BETH MCINTYRE

We are very proud to be a training practice and support future GPs with their career progression. Dr Beth McIntyre has recently joined us and would like to introduce herself:

I graduated as a doctor in 2013 from Kings College London, I spent my first three years of pre-clinical studies at Oxford University and then completed my clinical years in London.

Since then I have worked at Bristol Royal Infirmary where I was based for my two foundation years.

I then spent a year working in an emergency department on the West Coast of Australia in Perth at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

After arriving back in the UK I started GP training and have settled locally in Cheltenham.

I hope to continue working in the area as I love the beautiful countryside of the Cotswolds.

Beth



### FROM DISPENSARY

Our Dispensary team, Lorna, Jess and Jeanette would like to take this opportunity to wish all our patients a happy and health Christmas! Please could we ask you to order your meds in the normal manner over the festive period. We appreciate that you may be visiting family and friends and of course there will be exceptions to this—we are only closed for a couple of days!

On a positive note we are happy to report that our initiative to reduce costs on prescribing certain medicines is working well. We are working closely with other surgeries in Gloucestershire to reducing spending so we can concentrate on using the funds to support those patients suffering more serious health conditions. You may notice that items such as ibuprofen, paracetamol, certain eye drops and antihistamines have been removed from your prescribing page. These, along with lots of other over the counter medicines, can often be bought in the supermarket or at your local pharmacy and are relatively inexpensive. The NHS spends around £1.3M each year on medicines—help us to try and make a difference. We thank you for your continued support.

Don't forget you can sign up for online prescription ordering; a safe, efficient way of ordering your repeat medications and it only takes a couple of minutes to activate. You can of course still speak to us by pressing Option 3 when you dial the main Surgery phone number.

## PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

We recognise the value of an active Patient Participation Group (PPG) in helping us to meet our objectives in providing the best health care for our patients and improve our patients' experiences. PPGs help us build stronger links with our community and can help us cascade information to our patient population.

The views of the PPG members are invaluable to us; we need to ensure we are putting the needs of our patients first and research shows that a PPG is the most effective means of communicating this. We are always keen to receive feedback from our patients on what is good about the Practice and where improvements could be made.

This is where we need your help: over the past months we have had a number of patients retire from the PPG and we are keen to 'recruit' new members. We will be holding an event on **Thursday 8th November at 6:30pm here at the Surgery**. The aim is to give anyone who may be interested in becoming part of the PPG more information on the benefits and contribution a PPG makes to the Surgery. It will be a very informal chat so do please come along and find out more, thank you.

If in the meantime you would like to find out further information, please contact either Jill or Angela at the Practice.

Thank you.



## FROM THE FRIENDS OF MANN COTTAGE SURGERY

### Book Shelf News

Thank you so much to all who have bought or brought books for the Book Shelf. This little initiative is providing a steady stream of funds for the benefit of Mann Cottage and patients. In the next Newsletter I hope to let you know how much has been raised, but whatever the sum might be - THANK YOU SO MUCH! We hope to purchase a bigger book shelf very soon and so I will be able to put out a larger selection of books for you to choose from.

In the months to come, as well as a general book selection, I intend to set out some special features. The first will be in the run up to Halloween and the featured subject will be crime and murder mysteries. The selection of books on offer will include the entire works of the undisputed Queen of Crime, Agatha Christie. **These Agatha Christie books will be sold at a bargain price of only 50 pence per book!** What a treat for any murder mystery lovers.

Please do continue to support the Book Shelf. Your purchase DOES make a difference. Just have a browse, make your selection and pay at Mann Cottage Reception. Should you have books to donate, please leave them with the Mann Cottage Reception team and I will put them out on display as room becomes available.

Thanks again! **Sharon Harcourt** - Book Monitor

### EVENTS COMING UP:

- \* QUIZ NIGHT AT THE BLACK BEAR PUB — 28TH OCT — 6:45 (TEAMS OF 4-6)
- \* CHRISTMAS RAFFLE AT THE SURGERY—COMING SOON!

THERE WILL BE LOTS MORE FUNDRAISING EVENTS COMING UP SO PLEASE WATCH THIS SPACE!



## FROM NURSE BEVERLEY BOSTOCK



Winter is the time when respiratory conditions can be harder to manage but taking inhalers regularly and being aware of any changes in your symptoms and acting quickly will help to stave off problems.

If you would like to discuss this further or get/update an action plan for your asthma or COPD please book an appointment to see Bev.

## How to cope with a viral illness

Now that winter is looming, colds, sore throats and flu can cause a great deal of worry and frustration. Young people have between three and eight colds a year and adults between two and four a year. The onset is two to three days and symptoms can last up to **3 weeks**. **In children, symptoms last 10-14 days.**

Don't despair though—here are some tips and good advice that may reassure and speed things up:

- ◆ Keep warm—an extra blanket at night perhaps and have plenty of warm drinks such as hot lemon or blackcurrant, and hot chicken soup which may help raise your natural defences, as can probiotic drinks recent studies suggest.
- ◆ Rest as much as you can.
- ◆ Honey can really help with coughing — children must be over one year old though. Try in warm water and with lemon juice.
- ◆ Avoid milky drinks if you find they make you more congested.
- ◆ Take a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement. Eat vitamin rich, light meals if hungry. Drink plenty of clear fluids.
- ◆ Paracetamol and Ibuprofen will make you **feel** better but won't **make** you better as they lower your core temperature. Your immune system is trying to heat treat the virus so if you take these your illness may take longer to resolve. Take sparingly when appropriate. If your throat is sore use a menthol sweet or spray to ease the pain.
- ◆ **Antibiotics have no effect on viral illnesses.** They can cause rashes, increase resistant strains of bacteria, diarrhoea, sickness and changes in your natural defences. They also waste time and money. **Please don't expect to be given them.**
- ◆ Don't smoke and avoid smoky atmospheres.
- ◆ Have a flu and pneumonia vaccine — please check to ensure you are eligible.
- ◆ Use tissues once and bin them—then wash your hands.

Children with a history of febrile convulsions should always be kept cool (do not use tepid sponging) and given Paracetamol as directed.

Burning skin but cold hands, rashes which don't fade when pressed with a glass are worrying signs and such patients should be examined as soon as possible. Drooling or the inability to swallow are signs of upper airway distress so please seek advice. Rapid and/or laboured breathing and/or low urine output and/or persistent vomiting are also worrying signs which need prompt attention. Severe headaches and symptoms that are deteriorating after 3-5 days need urgent review with a clinician.

Anyone who become breathless, wheezy or coughs up dark or blood-stained sputum **MUST** be seen. People who suffer with chronic lung or heart disease are prone to bronchitis and must be seen if they become breathless or unwell. Diabetics who vomit and are unable to eat or keep down fluids must follow their sick day rules and seek advice.

**Remember—we are here to help you, but there are ways to help yourself.**



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AND FINALLY.....

