



I would like to thank all of our patients for using our local NHS services sensibly over the Christmas and New Year period. The doctors' tell me that the vast majority of visits by our patients' to A&E were appropriate which I know was very much appreciated by the staff working there under enormous pressure this year. Thank you all very much for this.

We are as busy as ever and are forever reviewing where we can be more efficient in order to maintain the quality of the service we offer. One recent change is that we now have **dedicated telephone number for prescription queries which is 01206 257557**. This number has a facility to leave a voice message and I promise that you will always receive a call back. We have had to introduce this in order to avoid the prescription issuers being constantly interrupted risking errors being made and slowing down the process considerably.

We have been listening to patients' comments and as a result have now installed several **alcohol gel dispensers** in the waiting room and corridors for patients to use. This is particularly important during the winter months of course, as this helps prevent the spread of infection of flu and other nasty germs. In addition, we have also installed a **baby changing unit** for all parents' to use following recent comments received. It's located in the disabled toilet to the rear of the waiting room, the only place it would fit!

With all of our old paper based medical records having been transferred to computer last year, a large space has opened up behind reception. This **new admin area** enables our reception team to make and receive the majority of calls away from the front desk meaning that they will be able to talk without so much concern about the conversations being overheard by patients' in the waiting room. I would like to clarify however, that names have always been avoided when making or receiving calls on the front desk in order to maintain confidentiality, which we will continue with of course. Where change happens, unexpected consequences can result, so please bear with the reception team whilst they get used to working differently.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that Great Bentley Surgery hosts a **'GP Care Adviser'** called Tim Exley every Wednesday afternoon. The role of the GP Care Advisor is to provide a range of advice, support, information and assistance to vulnerable clients of all age groups, to improve their quality of life, and increase independence and life expectancy. It includes assisting people to access social care, welfare benefits and self-help support to help them maintain their independence at home. If you think that Tim could help you or someone you know, then get in touch with the reception staff.

That's all from me! I hope to see you all at the **Patient Participation Group meeting** at 6.30pm on Thursday 19th February at the Great Bentley Village hall.

Richard P Miller – Practice Manager