

## **June 2014 – Surgery Newsletter**



I want to focus on appointment availability in this month's newsletter. I've been hearing comments from receptionists, doctors and patients about the waiting time to see a doctor for routine appointments. I want to tell you about the changes we've made and what we are doing to do to improve the situation. We have roughly the same number of patients' as 10 years ago with the same mix of ages and medical conditions. We have the same number of doctors and appointments available too, so not much has changed in that respect. The only thing that has changed is that demand for appointments has increased and we find ourselves having a more difficult job of matching that demand with decreasing resources. We are in a period of severe financial cuts across the NHS so all surgeries are having to do much more work, for much less funding. This puts many, including us, in an increasingly tough position. We're luckier than some, in that we were able to attract new GPs to replace outgoing ones. In one local surgery, patients have to wait nearly two months to pre-book a routine appointment and is at risk of closing, so we feel lucky compared to some. For patients who need to be seen urgently on the same day, we will always see them. We introduced a triage system which ensures that these appointments are always medically appropriate. This helps to free routine appointments for everyone else. This is working very well and patients have provided positive feedback on this new process. Dr Chumbley has finished her training to be a GP trainer so by the time you read this we will have Dr Vine with us on a part time basis finishing her GP training. Having an extra registrar with us each year in the future as a result will help to reduce waiting times further and you can rest assured that we will always be looking for new and innovative ways to help further. If you have any ideas we are always keen to listen to any suggestions patients' may have and the best way to bring these into discussion is to attend the Patient Participation Group meetings. This month's will be at 6.30pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June at the village hall so please do come along and get involved.

### **Richard P Miller – Practice Manager**

---



By the end of June all patients 75 years and over will soon be allocated a named GP as part of a new government scheme to improve continuity of care. Presently everyone is registered with the practice as a whole and is able to see a nurse practitioner or the call doctor for urgent problems and can choose to make routine appointments with a doctor of their choice for ongoing health conditions. By the end of June everyone in this age group should receive a letter informing them of their named GP. We will be trying to ensure that this is a doctor you have seen before and if possible that this is the doctor you have been seeing regularly. Each letter will offer an option of applying to change the allocated doctor if you prefer although we do need to ensure that each doctor has a fair allocation of patients' numbers. This system does not mean that the named doctor will always be able to see you for each appointment. We will continue to offer an on call service for urgent appointments and any home visits will need to be shared equally among the medical team to allow an efficient service. However it does offer a named doctor to discuss ongoing medical conditions in routine appointments should you wish. All our patients will be free to book appointments with other doctors or the nursing team if they prefer. We hope this scheme offers continuity of care to those who wish for it whilst continuing to allow the access to urgent appointments that has received such positive feedback in past patient surveys.

### **Dr Chumbley – GP Partner**