

## Surgery News

We are now counting down the days until we go live on our new computer system. November 6<sup>th</sup> is E-Day (the system is called EMIS Web) and all of us are undergoing intensive training at present. Although the supplier remains the same, the new system is very up to date and quite different, so we are expecting that it will take a few days for us to get up to speed with it. This is where you can help us out a great deal.

Firstly, please be patient and gentle with us during the transition period. We will all be a bit slow and cack-handed to start with, so many of the jobs that we do without thinking at the moment, e.g. making appointments, printing prescriptions, looking up test results and recording consultations are bound to take us longer when the switch happens. Hopefully, that phase won't last too long.

As making appointments and dealing with results will be taking us a little longer, I'm afraid the speed of our telephone answering could suffer and it might be more difficult to get through to us on the 'phone. The general view here is that if you could ring between 12.30 and 3.00pm you will probably find it easier. We will have extra bodies dealing with the 'phones, but there are bound to be some delays.

Finally, if you can avoid putting in prescription requests during the week 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November, that will also ease the pressure. If you read this in time to get your request in the previous week, that would be great.

I know this all makes the switch to EMIS Web seem like a major interruption to normal service – and it certainly will cause a headache or two – but we are in no doubt that once we've got used to it and have explored all its extra facilities, we will find it much better and far more user-friendly than the old one. It will be another milestone in our efforts to provide the best care and service that we can to all of you.

Next, I want to apologise for the delays and frustrations that we are experiencing with our supply of flu jabs. As many of you will have seen in the media, a major supplier has been unable to release its stock because of quality control concerns. As luck would have it, we (like many other local practices) had ordered through them. When we got the bad news that our supply was delayed indefinitely, I ended up involved in a very undignified scurry around other potential sources, fortunately finding enough stock to cover all our patients who need the jab. The catch is that we won't get our delivery until October 31<sup>st</sup>, which has meant rearranging several hundred appointments that had already been booked. If you were one of those affected – please accept our apologies.

I promised last month to tell you a little more about Dr Arul Nambi, who re-joined us a few weeks ago as our new Salaried GP. He will be working full-time and brings us a lot of youthful enthusiasm as well as one or two skills that will further enhance our range of services.

Quite a few of you will have met Dr Nambi when he did six months here during his training a few years ago. He was popular with patients then and really has developed into an excellent all-round GP since. We are delighted to have him back and he says that he is looking forward to rekindling old acquaintances.

In his home life, Dr Nambi is married to Subha, who also did part of her training here. They live in Colchester with their two boys, Akilan who is 9, and little Nithilan, 18 months. At present, he spends much of his free time taking Akilan to various sporting activities and to piano lessons, but when he gets the chance he is a keen badminton player. He and Subha also love travelling and exploring new places and things. I just hope that while they are doing that they don't find anywhere that looks a more attractive proposition than Great Bentley, as we want him to be a permanent fixture here.

The last thing to mention this month is that the local PCT is starting again on what seems to be its annual campaign to reduce wastage of medication. I know it is covering old ground, but the message is that we still waste several million pounds worth of medication every year in the Tendring and Colchester areas alone.

You genuinely can help with this by only ordering each month medication that you know you will use that month. Don't be embarrassed to tell us if you are not using something that is on your repeat list so that we can stop doing prescriptions for it. Over-ordering and stockpiling are major causes of overspend and waste, and waste means that there is less money to pay for operations and improvements to local healthcare. If you don't believe me, watch out for it in the press over the next couple of months. If you read it in the papers, it must be true.

Hugh Cronin, Practice Manager Great Bentley Surgery