



Changes afoot in the NHS

As the Government begins to get to grips with managing the NHS, we approached **Mark Easton**, Chief Executive of NHS Harrow, for his take on the proposed changes, which will abolish all Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and hand over financial and service commissioning responsibilities to groups of GPs.

Mr Easton told us "The public sector is facing big cutbacks as the Government tries to eliminate its deficit. The NHS budget is relatively safe and will get limited growth (under 1%), but it faces two pressures that will lead to difficult decisions: the ageing population and the cost of new medical technology.

"Reduce inefficiency and cut the number of managers, you might say. Well, we currently have one of the biggest savings programmes in the London NHS – £18m. We are also reducing management costs by over 50% by merging the NHS Harrow and NHS Brent management teams. Despite this, we are likely to end the year £15m in deficit. This is not because our budget's been cut, but because of a big increase in spend on hospital care. We must ensure that patients who go to hospital really need to, and that others make use of our excellent healthcare facilities in the community.

"In making further savings, we must work with patients and GPs. The Government plans to abolish NHS Harrow and hand over our responsibilities to groups of GPs who will commission care, not only for patients in the surgery, but also for the whole population's needs. There are many questions to be worked out, including the level of support that GPs will need to help them in their new role."

Mark Easton would like to receive your comments about these changes. Please email mark.easton@harrowpct.nhs.uk or write to him at **NHS Harrow, The Heights, Fourth Floor, 59-65 Lowlands Road, Harrow HA1 3AW.**

From the perspective of local GPs, Harrow has historically suffered from a skewed system of funding which favours inner city PCTs with high levels of deprivation and transient populations. The resultant lower level of funding means that Harrow struggles to balance the budget allocated by central Government. With the scale of savings required it is hard to see how services will not suffer. If the management of an artificially low budget transfers to GPs, it is difficult to imagine how GPs will balance the books, given the scale of the financial shortfall. Instead of focusing

solely on good healthcare, GPs will also need to be far more mindful of budgets.

There is also a concern that the loss of experienced local NHS managers may hinder their ability to manage budgets effectively. Once lost, they will be difficult and expensive to replace. The NHS needs good managers as much as it needs good doctors.

Pinn Medical Centre Open Evenings



Open Evenings were recently held at The Pinn to give patients formerly registered at the Village Surgery the opportunity to meet doctors and staff, hear about our appointments system and prescribing arrangements, look around the premises and hear about the different services available, such as physiotherapy and osteopathy. Many people attended and consideration is being given to whether this might be done for existing patients. Let the surgery or the Pinn Patients' Association know if you think this is a good idea (pinnpiper@gmail.com).

Appointments – booking ahead

Appointments may now be booked up to 3 weeks in advance for a named doctor of your choice.

The surgery will monitor 'did not attend' rates and review the position if necessary.

PLEASE don't forget to attend if you book well in advance!

staff news

It is now 20 months since we moved into our new premises and who would have believed that we would still be recruiting new members of staff to the team? Since the last edition of the *Pinn Piper*, four new doctors have joined us, namely **Dr Varun Goel**, **Dr Sonya Jey**, **Dr Radhika Balu** and **Dr Naheed Sarwar** who rejoins the Pinn after spending two years in Texas with her family. **Dr Sobitha Myurithan** is our new Registrar. We now have a total of 17 excellent GPs available for you to see at the Pinn Medical Centre.

Despite a significant increase in the number of reception and admin staff since we moved, it has become evident that further resources are necessary to manage the number of telephone calls and visitors to the Practice. For this reason we are recruiting more staff to provide a further 76 hours on Reception. So look out for more new faces over the next few months, but I would ask for your patience and understanding while they are being trained.

We say goodbye to **Dr Mousumi Mukherjee** and secretary, **Claire-Louise Bean**, and wish them both the very best for the future.

Finally I am delighted to announce the arrival of a new baby girl to **Dr Shaheen Jinah**. Baby Jena was born on 27 October. Both mother and daughter are doing well.

I don't think anyone would disagree that the last few months have been a challenge for both staff and patients alike. I would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding and give you my assurance that we continue to strive to provide the highest standard of care and service for all of our patients.

Hilary Scott
Practice Manager

an appointment with...



Angie Waddell RGN

How long have you worked at the Centre and where did you work previously?

I started at The Pinn in 1993. Over the years, as the Practice has expanded, my role has changed completely. Prior to this I was Practice Nurse in a small surgery in North Harrow.

What do you like, and dislike, about your job?

The best thing is meeting patients! After so many years I know many by name. I like to think they get a very good service from my colleagues and I – it's enjoyable being part of such a supportive team of nurses. However, time restraints in such a busy Practice are very frustrating. There is rarely enough time to give the level of support and care that I would wish.

What do you like (or dislike!) about the new Centre?

The smart new premises are very clean, efficient and well equipped and the patients have a nice environment in which to wait and be seen. But the size of the building means that the ethos has changed and you sometimes go for days without seeing colleagues, so it can be quite unsociable in that respect. Also, delays can be caused by patients getting lost trying to find the Nurses' rooms!

What makes you smile?

My beautiful new (first) grandchild, Poppy Louise, makes me smile every time I see her.

How do you relax after work?

I enjoy cooking, entertaining and making celebration cakes for family and friends. I play tennis twice a week and also swim regularly.

What's your favourite food?

Anything with an interesting salad – perhaps a steak!

If you were stranded on a desert island, what 3 things would you like to have with you?

A wind-up radio, one of those multi-purpose tools and a family photo album.

What's your favourite film, TV or radio programme?

Any period drama – I really enjoyed *Downton Abbey*.

What's the last book you read?

The Girls by Lori Lansens. A wonderful book about conjoined twins, but written from their point of view. It's a remarkable and thought-provoking story.

If you could have dinner with any 3 people, living or dead, who would they be?

John Betjeman, Joanna Lumley and Monty Don.

If you were Health Minister for a day, what would you change?

I'd find a way of stopping the so-called NHS postcode lottery and the inequalities in NHS health care provision.



Pharmacist joins The Pinn

Dr Tricia Robertson, a Medicines Management Pharmacist working for NHS Harrow, has recently been seconded to The Pinn. Dr Robertson's background is in hospital pharmacy, mainly involving care of the elderly, but she also has a special interest in asthma and osteoporosis. Her main role at The Pinn is to help with repeat prescriptions for newly registered patients, review medication and liaise with community pharmacists and patients over any problems with prescriptions. She will also

be holding a clinic once a week to review patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and asthma. She is available Tuesday to Friday to advise on any medication related issues – ask at Reception for further details.

New telephone booking

Our surgery has now installed an automated telephone booking service that allows you to book a single appointment by giving your date of birth and telephone number (this is the number you registered with at the Practice. If it has changed or you use only a mobile, then it will not work). The system frees up our receptionists to talk to patients who need advice or different services over the phone, but what do you think about the new service? Let us know and we will pass your comments to the Centre.

Pinner's GP services

It has certainly been a tough few months for our surgery – and indeed for the Primary Care Trust in Harrow. There have been tense public meetings in the Village Hall, consultation and discussions at Nower Hill High School and opportunities for ex Village Surgery patients to submit written comments about future GP service in Pinner. The need to consult and the ensuing long delay in reaching a decision about the future has of course caused much difficulty for patients and for Pinn Medical Centre staff alike; the Pinn Patients' Association looks forward to 11 January 2011 when the PCT Board will make its decision so that our surgery – and the 2,808 patients who have not yet registered with a GP – can finally make firm plans for the future.

Volunteers needed

As the Pinn Medical Centre now has a register of 17,584 patients (including 3,584 who have transferred from the Village Surgery) and patient volunteers try to deliver this newsletter to every household, we are in need of MORE volunteers to help! If you can spare an hour or two a few times a year to deliver, please let receptionists know and they will put you in touch with Sheila Cole, our Patients' Association delivery organiser. The Pinn Piper was mailed out last time, but this is an expensive exercise.



Sheryl pedals for charity

It's now agreed that there is indeed one thing that can lower cholesterol and blood pressure, halve our risk of heart disease and Type 2 diabetes AND protect us against cancers and conditions such as arthritis, depression and asthma. Yes – it's exercise! **Sheryl Ford** wrote to us about her amazing achievements.

"I have been a patient at the Pinn Medical Centre for the past 11 years and I'd like to tell you about the charity work I have been undertaking

over the last couple of years. I took up cycling two years ago in an attempt to lose weight and regain some level of fitness after having three children and doing no exercise for many years. I quickly got the bug for it and have now lost three stone, lowered my cholesterol levels, improved my fitness and stamina. I also raised £6,000 for the British Heart Foundation (BHF), a national charity that saves lives through pioneering research and provides vital information to help people reduce their heart health risks. It also campaigns for change and supports and cares for heart patients.

"I have taken part in several sponsored cycle rides in the UK and in November 2009 I cycled 250 miles across Egypt. I recently took part in the 90 mile BHF Oxford to Cambridge ride and this November I cycled another 250 miles across India.

"I would like to encourage other people to change their lives as I have – after all, if I can do it, then anyone can! For all those people with excuses about not having the time, I am a single mother of three, I work full time and still find opportunities to train – so it's not impossible! I find exercise incredibly good for the spirit and, if I can't do my training, I really miss it."

Well done Sheryl – keep up the good work! If anyone would like to support Sheryl in her fund-raising for the British Heart Foundation, visit www.justgiving.com/sherylford



Pinn staff Race for their Lives!

In the scorching heat of a beautiful summer's day, ten staff from the Pinn Medical Centre went to Cassiobury Park to raise money for cancer research in the 5km Race for Life event.

This is the second year that Vera Bardakjian, Practice Administrator, has organised a fund-raising day out – almost £1,000 was raised and all completed the course!



what you need to know about...



Blood & Organ Donation

What is organ donation?

It is the gift of an organ to help someone who needs a transplant. Every year in the UK, over 3,000 people need an organ. Kidneys, heart, liver, lungs, pancreas and the small bowel can all be transplanted. Tissue donation is the gift of tissue such as corneas, skin, bone, tendons, cartilage and heart valves.

Why give blood?

Blood is needed constantly, for example, in operations, cancer treatment and in childbirth. Almost anyone aged 17 to 60 and in good health can donate. Usually a pint of blood is taken. Our bodies can replace this fluid within a very short period of time, and every pint can save up to three lives.

Why are more donors needed?

Every year, hundreds of people die whilst waiting for an organ transplant. There is a serious shortage of organs and an ever-increasing gap between donations and the number of people waiting for an organ. The NHS needs 7,000 units of blood every day and only 4% of the eligible population regularly gives blood.

Are donors screened for diseases?

Yes, blood is tested to rule out transmissible diseases and viruses such as HIV and hepatitis. Blood is taken from potential organ donors for the same purpose, and the family is made aware that this procedure is required.

What happens to donated blood and organs?

Blood is sorted into its different types and is distributed to hospitals to meet predicted demand. It is used on whoever needs it the most. For organ transplants, a number of things need to match to ensure success. Blood group, age, weight and tissue type are considered; the best results are achieved if a perfect match can be found. This is done using the national database that lists all patients waiting for a transplant. Priority is given to urgent cases.

How can I become a donor?

Organs and tissue from a potential donor will only be used if that is their wish. Your wish can be indicated by telling a relative or close friend, by carrying an organ donor card or, most effectively, by recording your wishes on the NHS Organ Donor Register (<http://tinyurl.com/piper2001>). You can give blood at various donor centres throughout the UK, or at mobile donor centres (<http://tinyurl.com/piper2002>).

Want to know more?

NHS Blood and Transplant (www.nhsbt.nhs.uk) is a Special Health Authority in the NHS responsible for matching and locating donor organs, as well as providing a reliable and efficient supply of blood to the NHS. For organ donation, visit: www.organdonation.nhs.uk. For blood donation, visit: www.blood.co.uk

digest this...

Since 1 April 2010:

- 577 people have donated organs and 1,499 people have donated corneas
- 1,963 people have received the gift of sight
- 1,539 people have received transplants

However 7,932 people are still waiting for a transplant.

Pinn Patients' Association QUIZ NIGHT



In aid of St Luke's Hospice

Saturday 5 March 2011
7pm for 7.15pm start
St Luke's Church Hall,
Love Lane, Pinner

Come on your own or
make up a team of 8.

Ploughman's Supper included
(please bring your own drinks)

Tickets £10 per person
available from February on a
first come, first served basis
Contact: Jackie Thomas
020 8866 1130
ivor_thomas@btinternet.com

waiting room gossip...

I was recently walking past Love Lane car park with my three-year-old grandson, Aron. He stopped by the surgery sign and asked what it said.

I told him that it gave directions to our doctor's new surgery.

He stood looking at it for some time and then, pointing at the arrow (which of course points upwards) asked "Grandma, does your doctor live in a tree?"

Dr Tarzan Rudolph perhaps...?

Sent in by Mrs Tina Benjamin



Illustration: Evie Efthimiou

The Pinn Piper is
edited by Lis Warren
and designed by Evie Efthimiou

Contact:
pinnpiper@gmail.com