

School Lane Surgery

Patient Reference Group (PRG)

(Condensed)

Meeting: Thursday 15th February 2018

1. Previous minutes

No issues were raised concerning the previous minutes.

2. Presentation from Nat

Nat was introduced to the PRG as he had kindly agreed to give us a presentation on First Aid and talk to us about his role as Emergency Care Practitioner at the surgery. He is a highly qualified paramedic, having retrained in Primary Care in 2008, though there is not currently a national set standard to be met before people can be given the job, and the levels of qualification can vary wildly. Individuals too can vary and not all paramedics are suited to the job of Emergency Care Practitioner, one has to be good with people. Seeing around 170 patients per week means that Nat is one of the busiest people in the surgery, and he tends to be available only at the Healthy Living Centre.

Nat first explained to us just how complicated the human body is and proceeded to impress with a mind-boggling array of facts and figures, most of which left us open mouthed. The endless miles of blood vessels and nerves that make up the human being is astonishing, and that the bones in your skeleton are renewed after every 11 years... who knew! It would seem that medical practitioners of all ranks are being asked to work minor miracles for most of the time.

We also discussed the effectiveness of antibiotics, and their overuse. Bacteria is becoming increasingly immune to antibiotics and other treatments are having to be researched, with probiotics looking promising. One of the problems with antibiotics is that they cannot tell good bacteria from bad, they attack both.

After a brief talk on refined sugar versus complex carbohydrate we moved on to First Aid.

We hear a lot that when people have had a serious accident they should not be moved, they may have a spinal cord injury, but not moving the victim may not always be the best course of action, especially if they are not breathing. In this type of scenario, the airway will have to be made clear as a matter of urgency as the victim may have vomited or swallowed their tongue: if the brain is starved of oxygen it will begin to die very quickly.

Restarting the heart is relatively easy, and until the paramedics reach the scene the victim's chest should be pumped quite vigorously – and in rhythm to the Bee Gees “Staying Alive”! – this will get blood circulating and air into the lungs.

Nat finished here and we asked if he would be happy to return for further discussion – there is much to talk about – which he is.

3. Pharmacy update

Claire gave the group an update and guided tour of the new pharmacy being installed at School Lane, and very impressive it is too.

4. Complaints (1-4), Significant Events (none) & Compliments (5-9)

1. A parent presented their child to the surgery and demanded that an antibiotic be prescribed for a viral illness: there was no clinical need for this medication and it was refused – not upheld.

2. One patient was unhappy that the surgery does not provide an ear washout service – not upheld.
3. A patient referral was refused by the hospital because they were no longer accepting Thetford patients. The referral was not sent to a different hospital, and when it was eventually noticed and passed on, the waiting times for an appointment were long. The referral was then sent back to the original hospital as it had reopened the doors to Thetford patients – upheld.
4. Medication was prescribed for a patient with a lowered initial dose, which could be increased if it was felt necessary. The patient did not understand that they could increase the dose themselves and so waited to be seen by a GP who then explained this to them. The patient was upset that they had spent some time in pain, not realising that they could increase the dose at their own volition – upheld.
5. Gratitude was expressed to the surgery by a patient who shall remain nameless (Hi Sylvia!): “thank you for the outstanding service and care given throughout 2017, often above the call of duty, it has been much appreciated.”
6. A ‘thank you’ was received for Dr Aminu, for being proactive in sending a patient for an ultrasound which resulted in the identification of an abdominal aortic aneurism, and also to Dr Hadley Brown and Dr Smart for their follow-up consultations.
7. A thank you card was received for Dr Tomlinson, the surgery nurses and all the ‘smiley and helpful receptionists.’
8. Muriel Hadley-Brown received a thank you for her efforts in enabling a patient to integrate into the community.
9. The online Thetford Forum recently had a post which asked for the name of a good GP at School Lane Surgery, to which 56 positive responses were made. The one and only negative comment was to do with the waiting times for an appointment.

5. Other Business

- a) It was asked how the flu virus has affected the surgery this Winter: the flu has not had too serious an effect on the surgery, but there is a nasty cold virus doing the rounds.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 19th April, 7.00 pm at School Lane Surgery.