

# St Stephen's Medical Partnership

## Summer newsletter 2017

### Help us to save our NHS!

**Did you know that £300 million of NHS taxpayers' money is spent every year on unused medicines that are thrown away?**

Over £150 million can be saved by preventing medicines waste. That could pay for 53 million extra prescriptions of medicines to help prevent heart attack and strokes.

#### **Medicines waste can be reduced if we all...**

- Open prescription bags in the pharmacy.
- If your bag contains unwanted medicines you can return them to the pharmacist, then and there. You can only do this before you leave the pharmacy.
- Checking what medicines you have at home before re-ordering more.
- Remember 'don't tick it if you don't need it'.
- Please also make sure that the Chemist only orders the medication you require.
- Only tick the items you need on your repeat prescription. The items will not be removed from your repeat prescription.

You can book a telephone appointment with our practice pharmacist to discuss any concerns regarding your medication.

#### **Did you know that...?**

- Once you leave the pharmacy even unopened medicines must be destroyed?
- Check your prescription bag when you are still inside the pharmacy. You can return any unwanted medicines to the pharmacist.
- Taking medication doesn't have to be a burden?
- Don't be afraid to ask for support taking your medicines. Your community pharmacist can suggest ways or aids to help you. Sometimes medicines can give you side effects or interact with other medicines you are taking? If this happens it is very important that you tell your doctor so they can help you.
- You don't need to order all the items on your repeat prescription? Only order the items you need. Don't worry - all of the medicines will still be available for you to order the next time.

**Everyone has a part to play to reduce medicines waste**

# Choosing the right service for you

The national Choose Well campaign aims to direct patients to the service best suited to their illness or condition, which in many cases may be self-care, pharmacies or walk in centres.

The number of people attending Accident and Emergency Departments and calling 999 is growing each year. People often inappropriately turn up at hospitals with minor illnesses and injuries that can often be better treated more quickly elsewhere.

For general information on your health and how to stay healthy please see: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**If you need a doctor when the surgery is closed please call the NHS 111 (out of hour's service) telephone 111.**

## Care Navigation

We are currently training staff with the help of Birmingham University to undertake the role of a Care Navigator this will help direct patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional. Many patients simply don't know how skilled the practice support team is. Many don't know about the work provided by our nurses, health care assistant, phlebotomist, practice pharmacist, advance nurse practitioner and physicians associate.

The Care Navigators are members of our practice team and they have been trained to ask a number of questions in order that patients receive the most appropriate treatment/advice from the most appropriate professional at the most appropriate time. The questions asked will also help doctors prioritise their phone calls to ensure that all patients receive the appropriate level of care.

Doctor's surgeries are being filled up with patients who would have been better served by the nurses/HCA/Phlebotomist and those patients who really need to see a doctor are struggling to get an appointment.

### How does it work?

Care navigation is a tried and tested model of care that improves access to primary care services for patients, by just asking a few simple questions the care navigator can guide patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional, offering the patient choice to access the most appropriate service first which isn't always the GP.

- Patients are referred to the person who is most skilled and able to meet the needs of the patient.
- Some problems can be managed solely over the phone (with or without prescriptions) avoiding the need to come to the surgery.
- Patients can be advised or reassured that what they are doing is right without the need to come to surgery.

**By working this way it will help us free up time for GP's to care for our patients with complex or serious health conditions. More importantly though, it means you are seen by the clinician that is**

**best placed to deal with your problem each time you visit and will save un-necessary trips to the surgery.**

The staff are all bound by the very strictest of confidentiality agreements and we expect the highest standards of them. Your problems will never be discussed outside the building by our staff so we hope you will feel safe and trust everyone in our team.

### **Missed appointments**

We appreciate that sometimes things come up and you may need to cancel or rearrange your appointment. If you are unable to attend please cancel your appointment with as much notice as possible so we can offer that appointment to someone else.

## **X-ray examinations**

Did you know that the radiation from x-rays is present in your body for a number of days or months depending on the x-ray and there is also an increased risk of developing a fatal cancer. Considering a referral for an x-ray is a complex decision to be made by your GP, in many cases having an x-ray will not change the management of your condition.

X-ray procedure	Equivalent period of natural background radiation	Lifetime additional risk of fatal cancer
Chest	3 days	1 in a million
Hip	7 weeks	1 in 67,000
Thoracic spine	4 months	1 in 30,000
Lumbar spine	7 months	1 in 15,000
CT Chest	3 and a half years	1 in 2,500
CT Abdomen	4 and a half years	1 in 2000