

Falkland PPG Newsletter



Spring 2022

Welcome to the latest Patient Participation Group (PPG) newsletter, for Falkland Surgery

In this issue

- Latest Covid news
- The Surgery Open Evening
- Falkland On-line
- The Changing GP Landscape
- Under-the-Bonnet. *The Integrated Care System*
- Get involved with the PPG.

Falkland On-line

Don't forget that the surgery has its own Facebook page where you can get up-to-date information as well as post your own comments

And there's also the website of course:

www.falklandsurgery.co.uk/

Covid — the latest guidance

This is the current Covid advice for England, as published on the NHS Website.

In England, the government suggests wearing a mask in "crowded and enclosed spaces where you may come into contact with other people you do not normally meet".

Face coverings are still required in healthcare settings, although patients no longer need to socially distance from each other in NHS hospitals, GP surgeries and emergency departments.

If you test positive for Covid you are no longer legally required to self-isolate, but you are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with others for at least five full days.

For specific advice on travelling or work for example go to the NHS website at: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Surgery Open Evening

The next Surgery Open Evening will be on Monday May 9 at 19:00, an informal meeting at the Surgery with the opportunity to meet staff and ask questions. As before, we're trying a "hybrid" event which you can attend in person or via "Zoom". To book a place please email:

falklandppg@gmail.com and indicate whether you'd like to attend in person or by "Zoom". As on previous occasions our Practice Manager, Mark Betkowski will be present together with one of our GP's who will talk on a topic of medical interest. This time it will be Dr. Alice Devall who will speak on Common Health Issues in Young Children.

The Changing GP landscape

The latest changes to the contracts that GPs operate under, continue the direction of travel over the last few years. More money is being made available for additional roles supporting GPs (such as pharmacists, physios, social prescribers and mental health workers).

More money is also being funnelled through Primary Care Networks (PCNs) rather than directly to individual GP practices. Falkland is joined with Burdwood Surgery and the Thatcham Medical Practice to form a group of surgeries called the Kennet PCN. Much of the recent Covid vaccination effort has been organised at this PCN level.

Many of the changes to the contract will not have much immediate effect locally, as we are already doing what is required. That includes a requirement, from October, to provide appointments outside core hours in the period 6.30pm-8pm weekday evenings and 9am to 5pm on Saturdays (these may be with another practice).

Under the Bonnet

A look 'behind the scenes' at what is going on in our Health Care System

Integrated Care System - ICS

In the way that most of us find it hard to resist more chocolate or perhaps another drink, politicians just can't stop themselves re-organising.

In November 2009, David Cameron promised no more top-down restructures of the NHS (that had happened under governments of all hues). In 2012 came the Lansley reforms; one of the biggest re-organisations for years.

In this area, despite the disruption, it did at least bring the benefit of GP led decision making at a more local level, with a 'Clinical Commissioning Group' (CCG) – the body holding the purse strings – for the Newbury and District area.

Since then, those reforms have been gradually unpicked, with the CCGs merging into one covering 'Berkshire West' (Reading, Woking and West

Berkshire) and then into the even larger area of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West, or 'BOB'.

Those changes are now being cemented through the Health and Care Bill, currently in its final stages before becoming an Act of Parliament. That will see a new 'Integrated Care Board' replacing the CCGs. The more general name for the bodies at this BOB level is the 'Integrated Care System, or ICS'. (Don't get too hung up on names, because they seem to change each 6 months anyway!)

What does this mean in practical terms? It's hard to be certain but it seems that decision making will be more distant. It is unclear how much patient representation there will be and exactly how that will operate. We also do not know what structure there will be below the BOB board level – ICSs are being encouraged to delegate functions to more local areas. So we have yet to find out to what extent Newbury and West Berkshire will have a seat at the decision making table, or whether we will just be some neglected, far flung corner of a larger empire.

After months of little information being provided, there is now a website where you can get some idea of what is going on, and feed in your views: <https://bobics.uk/engagementhq.com/>. This includes a draft constitution and also an Engagement Strategy, on which any comments are welcome by 18th May. Certainly worth a look, and if you feel up to it, maybe letting them know your view.

We are always looking for volunteers to join the Falkland Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) which acts as the voice of the patients by feeding people's views to the doctors and managers and passing on information. If you'd like to receive emails from the PPG, or join the committee, please email: falklandppg@gmail.com