

## WHO'LL BE CHOOSING FOR YOU?

Most people will be aware from newspaper, radio or television reports that major changes are under way in the management structures of the National Health Service. Gateshead Primary Care Trust is to be abolished, and its commissioning activities – identifying and obtaining the best available medical services for patients – will pass to Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. This is not a new organisation; it is well established under its former title, Gateshead Network Commissioning Consortium, and has already been responsible for significant improvements in medical services in the Gateshead area.

In its new role as the Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group, the organisation considers that its prime responsibility will be to work with patients and local practices to improve the health of the people of Gateshead. It will try to ensure that people are cared for in a seamless way, free from any difficulties arising from professional or departmental boundaries, and that commissioning of services is both clinically led and highly responsive to the needs and wishes of patients and carers. In a nutshell, it will do everything possible to help the people of Gateshead to live longer, happier and healthier lives.

Grange Road Medical Practice is actively committed to playing its part in the new structure, and any issues we think are important to our patients will be raised in the council of members, where we hope to play a full part in discussing and resolving problems and formulating important decisions.

### SURGERY UPDATES

The surgery will be closed all day for the Late Summer Bank Holiday on

**Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2012**

reopening at 8.00.am. on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> August.

We will also be closed from 12.30.pm. on the following dates for staff training –

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

In an emergency please contact the Out of Hours Service on **08450 568 060** or if necessary dial 999.

### FUNDRAISING

We are currently collecting in support of the MS Society, which raises funds for research into Multiple Sclerosis and offers support to those who suffer from the illness. There's a donation box on the desk at Reception, and all contributions will be very much appreciated. You can find out more about the Society and its vital work on line at [www.mssociety.org.uk](http://www.mssociety.org.uk).

### YOUR PRACTICE NEEDS YOU!!!

We're looking for more members for our Patients' Forum – the group we consult about how the practice is organised. There are two ways of helping. The original Forum Group meets roughly quarterly, usually at 6.15.pm.; the meetings normally last an hour or so. We also have what we call our 'Virtual Group' – though it's definitely real! – which helps us by providing e-mail feedback. We need new members for both groups; you don't need any special skills, just a willingness to say what you think about the things we discuss. We'd be delighted to welcome anyone willing to volunteer, but to help us get a balance of opinions reflecting all of our patients, we'd be especially pleased to hear from volunteers in the age group 16-45. You can pick up a leaflet at the Surgery, or call Reception (after 10.00.am., please!) and leave your name, address and e-mail contact details, or you can simply come along to the next meeting of the Patient's Forum, which will be held in the waiting room at 6.15.pm. on Wednesday, 12 September 2012.

## BUSY TELEPHONES

We do try to answer our phones as quickly as possible at all times of the day, but there are times when delays can't be avoided. Although quite a lot of the calls we receive are very straightforward and can be handled quite quickly, we often need to deal with more complicated calls which can occupy staff for considerably longer periods. We'd be grateful if you could keep this in mind if your call isn't connected straight away – we'll do our best to make your wait as short as possible. An extra telephone line has recently been added to our system and this should ease the problem but, as we are a fairly small team, there will still be times when we don't have enough people to deal with all the lines simultaneously. If you still have concerns about the time it takes you to get through to the surgery we'd be grateful if you could let us know so that we can identify problems and do what we can to resolve them. Of course, it also helps a lot if you can avoid making non-urgent in the busiest period, between 8.30.am. and 10.00.am.

## CHILD HEALTH CLINICS

At present there is no weekly Child Health Clinic in either Ryton or Crawcrook. The nearest clinic is held at Greenside on Tuesday mornings, but you can take pre-school children to whichever of the following Clinics is most convenient for you. Bear in mind that these Clinics are for weighing and parenting advice only; if your child is ill you should ring for an appointment here at Grange Road.

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**BLAYDON** TUESDAY, 1.30.pm. – 2.30.pm.  
(0191) 413 5577 THURSDAY, 9.30.am. – 11.30.am.

Blaydon Winlaton Children's Centre, Shibdon Bank, Bleach Green, BLAYDON-ON-TYNE NE21 5EZ.

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**CHOPWELL** MONDAY, 1.30.p.m. – 2.30.p.m.  
(01207) 560295

Chopwell Child Centre, Chopwell Primary School, Derwent Road, Chopwell, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE17 7HS.

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**GREENSIDE** TUESDAY, 9.30.a.m. – 11.30.am.  
(0191) 413 9893

Greenside Children's Centre, Greenside Primary School, Rockwood Hill Road, Greenside, RYTON NE40 4AX.

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**HIGHFIELD** WEDNESDAY, 1.30.p.m. – 2.30.p.m.  
(01207) 544175

Highfield Family Centre, 66 Whinfield Terrace, Highfield, ROWLANDS GILL NE39 2JY.

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Please note that there is also a Child Health Clinic at Blaydon Precinct, but this is only available to families registered with the Chainbridge GP Partnership.

## ONLINE SERVICES

You can now go on line to book appointments with any of our Doctors or with our Nurse Practitioner, or to order repeat prescriptions. If you'd like to register for online services, you can obtain further details from Reception. Unfortunately we can't make Practice Nurse appointments available on line, because they vary in length according to what needs to be done; for example, an appointment to provide a blood sample takes only 10 minutes, but for a diabetes review a 20-minute appointment is required.

## DO YOU NEED TO SEE A DOCTOR OR A NURSE PRACTITIONER?

It isn't always necessary to see a doctor when you need to visit the surgery. Gill, our Nurse Practitioner is able to see and treat patients suffering from a wide range of minor ailments. When you telephone to ask for an appointment, we may sometimes ask you for some additional information so that we can be sure that you are seen by the clinician with the appropriate skills to deal with your problem.

## CYCLE PARKING

If you travel to the surgery by cycle – or might consider doing so in the future! – don't forget that we now have cycle parking facilities. The rack is at the front of the building, outside the waiting room window.

## GRANGE ROAD HEALTH TIP No. 9

Are you planning a foreign holiday this year? People from Britain travel abroad in their millions and the vast majority of these trips pass without giving rise to any significant health problems, but you should never be complacent about the potential risks involved. **Seek expert advice** before you go, at least six to eight weeks before you plan to travel – you may need a course of vaccinations and some of these can take several weeks to complete. Don't forget that you also need appropriate travel insurance; this is vital if you fall ill and need to be brought home, and in a lot of locations treatment can be very expensive.

At Grange Road we can offer a limited travel immunisation service, restricted to immunisations provided free by the NHS. These cover Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and B, Polio, Tetanus and Typhoid. We can also provide advice on protection against malaria. Other travel vaccinations are available from specialist private travel clinics, but there will of course be a charge for this service. You can find more useful information on line at [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk).