

Our patients and GPs meet quarterly to discuss ideas and concerns so that our services can be improved.

If you are interested in joining us or would like more information, why not leave your details at the VR or DHC desk or phone 230656 or email: trevor.wimble@nhs.net

Burning the candle at both ends

That's right. Our GPs and receptionists are rising with the lark and burning the 'midnight' oil to provide you with appointments that better suit your hectic lifestyle and this is in response to requests from patients who completed our recent survey.

We are now offering early morning and/or late night appointments at both our surgeries. We are pleased to be able to offer you appointments at

Victoria Road from 7AM four days a week (ideal if you then need to dash to the nearby railway station) and until 7.30PM on a Thursday night. Additionally our branch surgery at Durrington is now offering a late night surgery on a Wednesday, also until 7.30PM and all these appointments are completely pre-bookable up to a month ahead.

We welcome our two new GPs - Mohammed Haque and Rachel Butler who are helping to provide extended hours' surgeries at Victoria Road & DHC



Every breath you take

Towards the end of last year Peter, our Practice Nurse, undertook a sponsored slim to raise funds to purchase essential equipment for the Practice.



He lost more than three stones in weight and through the generosity of our patients he collected over £500. With the proceeds he has purchased a MicroLoop spirometer which will

enable us to deliver NHS Gold Class assessment of breathing conditions and it will be invaluable when investigating breathing problems. It is PC based which means all the data captured is transmitted direct into the patient's notes on our EMIS computer system which will save valuable time and reduce paperwork.

It also features child friendly and eye catching graphics to entertain our younger patients while they are being tested on the equipment.

VR FACTFILE

Spirometry (meaning the measuring of breath) is the most common of the pulmonary function tests, measuring lung function, specifically the measurement of the amount (volume) and/or speed (flow) of air that can be inhaled and exhaled.

Spirometry is an important tool used in assessing conditions such as asthma, pulmonary fibrosis and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease).

The Wrong Trousers



Fulvio Zotolla, a patient at Victoria Road, has struggled with his weight for a good number of years but two years ago he came to the point in his life where he felt he needed to do something about it as he tipped the scales at 154kg (24st 3lbs). Eating better, healthier food and taking regular exercise has seen Fulvio's weight drop to 94kg (14st 12lb) in 24 months, that is a total weight loss of 60kg (9st 5lb) - equal to nearly *HALF* his body weight (or 60 bags of sugar).

It is quite extraordinary that Fulvio has lost so much weight in a short space of time, but he has achieved this by regular walking and using a home treadmill, eating sensibly, controlling portion sizes and eating lots of fruit and vegetables and no longer snacking on packets of biscuits. Fulvio now reckons he has much more energy and feels healthier & happier in himself - even though he now requires a new wardrobe! If you would like support in losing weight please feel free to discuss options with one of our friendly Practice nurses or visit nhs.uk/livewell.

The holiday season is almost here - please give us at least 4 weeks' notice if you will need immunisations or advice in our Durrington Travel clinic

She's The Biz, not Les Mis



When your mum has a showbiz background and her favourite musical is *Les Misérables* you just had to be named after a character from the hit production. So we welcome to the stage little Eponine, who made her debut last December for mum, Annika, our Reception Manager. We think it's just as well her favourite show isn't the *Sound of Music* - she could be rivalling the Von Trapp family!



Jane de Jong
Practice Manager

2012 brings quite a few changes at our surgery. We have welcomed two new Partners and seen one leave. Dr Samantha Barker has departed for pastures new and I know you will join us in wishing her every success. Dr Mohammed Haque and Dr Rachel Butler have now joined us and both doctors bring many years of experience and we are confident they will make a brilliant addition to our team.

About a year ago now, we piloted an initiative proposed by the Government that offered patients with long term conditions their own personal care plans. The object was to get patients to take more responsibility for their own health. For me personally a better system would be to prevent patients ending up with long term conditions wherever possible. I am pleased to say that the Government thought this too and we are now pleased to offer all patients aged between 40 and 74, who currently **do not** have any chronic Disease, a health check. This health check will look at your cholesterol ratio and blood pressure together with other lifestyle questions. The results of the cholesterol test are immediate and therefore, if necessary, we are able to offer recommended interventions straightaway. To book one of these checks, please just ask at Reception.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Patient Survey. Additionally, may I thank all those patients who agreed to join our Patient Reference Group or our Patient Participation Group. The results of the survey are being displayed in the waiting room and also on our website. The patient reference and participation groups assisted with this by helping us decide upon an appropriate survey. When the results were collated the participation group met to consider how we can make changes to improve areas of service where you have highlighted they require our attention. These are: to provide a quiet and confidential reception area, more appointments outside of core hours and an improved standard of customer care. Our report, on our website victoriaroadsurgery.co.uk, explains how we intend to implement changes. Finally, please be assured I am here to represent the patients and I am very happy to receive any feed back from you that may help this Practice to provide the best service possible.

I spy with my little eye something beginning with C...by Navdeep Sandhu



Over Christmastime and New Year people up and down the country took photos of their loved ones. In one of these photos it was spotted that Jack, the eighteen month old grandson of Hallie on our Reception team, didn't look right. One of his eyes looked different but luckily his granny had just read an article in a magazine so he was rushed to the GP and was subsequently diagnosed with retinoblastoma. He is now undergoing chemotherapy.

So what is retinoblastoma?

Retinoblastoma is a fast growing eye cancer of early childhood. This cancer develops in the cells of the retina, the light sensitive lining of the eye. Retinoblastoma is very rare; only about 40 children are diagnosed with the condition each year in the UK, 98% of children survive their retinoblastoma; this is true for both unilateral (one eye) and bilateral (both eyes) disease. Nearly all of those with unilateral disease survive without further tumour. For those with bilateral disease there is a risk that another type of tumour will develop in later life. Retinoblastoma has one of the best cure rates of all the cancers which develop in children. For the latest news on retinoblastoma check the following website checht.org.uk/cms.

Look out for these signs

A white reflex: A white eye, white pupil or white reflection can be seen in a photograph where the flash has been used. Often one eye will have 'red eye' which is normal but the other eye may look white, yellow or orange. **This may be seen in just one or many photographs of the child.**

An absence of 'red eye' in flash photographs In a photograph where one eye has 'red eye' (which is normal) the other eye may look black or looks 'wrong'. This can also be a sign that something is not right.

A squint A squint can be a sign of retinoblastoma, although a squint can also be nothing more than a squint. It is always worth having it checked out quickly just to make sure. Some people call a squint a 'lazy eye'; this is where one or both eyes look in or out.

Red, sore or swollen eye without infection A child's eye may become very red and inflamed for no reason. This sign is usually linked with other signs.

A change in colour to the iris The iris, the coloured part of the eye, can sometimes change colour in one eye, sometimes only in one area

Deterioration in vision A child may have deterioration in their vision or they may have had poor vision from birth. You may notice that your child does not focus or fix & follow as well as other children or babies of the same age.

If you find any of the above signs please get it checked out. So remember, If the eyes of one your loved ones looks odd (particularly babies) in your photos please get in touch with your GP.

St Barnabas House



As a surgery we have always been closely involved with our local hospice in the shared care of our patients. Sadly this year has been more poignant for us at Victoria Road with the devastating loss of a colleague and consequently we have now seen at close quarters the magnificent standard of care given at St Barnabas. It costs around £4m each year to provide the hospice services; patients

are never charged for their care and only a small part of these costs are funded by the government. For the remainder the hospice relies on the generosity, help and support of the public. Our nurses have participated in the Midnight Walk and raised over £1300 and each year at the surgery many of us donate in lieu of Christmas cards. For details of giving visit: stbarnabas-hospice.org.uk.



VR is published by Victoria Road Surgery, 50 Victoria Road, Worthing BN11 1XE 01903 230656 victoriaroadsurgery.co.uk

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