

# Keeping Well?

The Newsletter of the Nuffield Patient Group

Winter 2017 Issue 15

## Welcome!

We celebrate the New Year with Issue 15 of *Keeping Well!*. I hope that you really have been. I had a hefty dose of flu just before Christmas which persisted for ages and really knocked the stuffing out. Next year I'll have the flu jab.

Enough whinging. It's good to say that the lead story in this issue celebrates the joys of pregnancy and childbirth (see report this page).

Appropriately, page 2 has a lovely story about springtime and all the crocuses that local Rotary Club members (including your intrepid PPG Chair Susy Brigden) have planted to raise awareness of the need to rid the world of polio.

We had our Care Quality Commission inspection in August and we were rated uniformly good, so well done Nuffield Practice! It is great to include an unsolicited patient commendation on page 3.

Also in this issue:

- Be Food Smart (see page 4)
- The Big Consultation on Health and Social Care (page 5)
- A timely update on which cold remedies are helpful (Page 6).

If you have a patient story that you'd like to share do, please, get in touch with me, Graham Shelton. Contact details are on the back of this newsletter.

## *My NHS journey through pregnancy at the Nuffield and delivery at the JR*

*by Deborah Carpenter*

After the initial shock and joy of discovering I was pregnant using a home pregnancy test, I realized I had absolutely no idea what to do next. I remember a rather farcical conversation with a doctor's receptionist to whom I made my second jubilant announcement of pregnancy (only fair my husband should be first) followed in a much smaller voice by the question of what I should do next. She explained I would need a 'booking in' appointment.

I was 9 weeks pregnant when we attended the 90-minute appointment with a community midwife to discuss every aspect which could affect a healthy pregnancy (current lifestyle, family history). She booked me in for my 12-week scan at the John Radcliffe, gave me my 'blue notes' which were to become my holy book of pregnancy, and a list of essential phone numbers.



The Carpenter Family

*Continued overleaf*

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The 12-week scan revealed a small pulsating bean which I was quite surprised about, given the only confirmation of pregnancy I'd had until then had been my own home test.

It then became more real and over the next 5 months I attended regular midwife appointments, as well as GP appointments (for a first pregnancy). At every appointment, I was gently but thoroughly prodded and given the time to explain how I had been feeling and whether I had any questions.

Things then started to get really interesting in the last month of pregnancy as I started measuring big for dates...then massive for dates...then back to big again once the baby engaged ready for labour. Our midwife had taken the time to talk to us about our options regarding where to give birth, as well as writing down our wishes for the birth, and I opted for the delivery suite (level 2) in the John Radcliffe mainly because my eyes watered at the prospect of delivering a 'giant' baby without the possibility of an epidural.

I reached 40 weeks and had two stretch and sweeps to try to get things moving. Finally, spurred on by a frustrated power-waddle, my waters broke 4 days past my due date—without contractions—and I headed to the JR. Having been induced, and after many hours of labour, our baby started to get distressed. It was decided that I needed an emergency c-section and I was prepped for theatre. I vaguely recall being introduced to a room full of very efficient-looking people.

Samuel was born about 10 minutes later, weighing an impressive 9lbs 11oz, and through my drug-induced, sleep-deprived haze, I just remember his mass of hair and big eyes staring at me and feeling total love for him.

I met some amazing people through my pregnancy/birth experience who shared one of the most intimate moments I'll probably ever have. On reflection, the end of pregnancy, with a hospital admission and an emergency operation, was quite an ordeal but I feel wholly positive about the experience, which in part I attribute to the second-to-none care I received.

### *Witney's helping raise awareness of Polio*

*by Susy Brigden*

A total of 30,000 purple crocus corms were planted in Witney in the Autumn of 2016.

As a result, Witney town will enjoy a purple hue in the early spring. This was part of a national planting scheme aimed at raising awareness of Rotary International's battle to rid the world of polio.

The purple crocus is the symbol of Rotary's worldwide campaign, the colour representing the purple dye used to mark the little finger of every child as they are immunized. It is a vital tool to ensure no-one is missed. This has been achieved by administering vaccine to over 2.5 billion children. A mammoth task, often undertaken in territories in the throes of conflict. Over 30 years Rotarians around the world have worked

tirelessly to reduce the number of polio-endemic countries from 125 to just 2.

Members of Witney Rotary, together with members of Witney Horticultural Society, the local RHS group, have planted 15,000 of the corms around Witney.

Look out for them outside The Nuffield and Windrush Medical Centres, Witney Hospital, and the raised beds outside the District Council Shop in Welch Way, and Langdale Gate.



## Well done Nuffield Practice

by Robert Owen

With over 11,000 patients to serve, managing the Nuffield Practice is a challenging job. We try really hard, and it was a real boost for us to receive a uniformly 'Good' rating in our recent CQC inspection, but it doesn't always go without a hitch. So we were very pleased to receive this unsolicited commendation from one of our patients just before Christmas.

"We are living in a time of cutbacks, and health centres are not always given adequate resources to do the amount of work that comes their way. Often we criticize the waiting times to see the doctor and other support staff, but we are very bad at thanking staff when we have good service.

A few months ago I had to contact the Nuffield Health Centre on a couple of occasions due to unforeseen medical issues, and on each occasion I received excellent treatment. The receptionists



were kind, caring and listened and helped in directing me to the appropriate persons.

The asthma nurse, prescription team and two duty doctors provided me with support and appropriate treatment. This was backed up by a visit from the practice's paramedic who again in a friendly yet professional way treated me and in consultation with my GP arranged for me to receive some medication.

I want to thank all the staff at the Nuffield Health Centre for the treatment I had from them."



### Coming Soon to Witney

**FREE training opportunities for informal carers**

**Wellbeing and Coping Everyday  
Monday 13th March 2017  
13.00-15.30**

**Held at the Congregation Church, Welch Way**

**About you  
Good and bad stress, breaking the cycle  
Getting the balance right and protecting your own health  
Where to get help  
Emergency Carers Support Service**

**To register your interest or to find out more  
please contact Tracey  
Telephone: 01235 520463  
Email: [training@careresoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:training@careresoxfordshire.org.uk)**



### *CQC Inspection*

On the 22nd August 2016 the practice was inspected by the CQC. The CQC are in the process of visiting all GP Practices to consider whether they are providing care that is safe, caring, effective, responsive to people's needs and well-led.

We are pleased to say that The Nuffield Practice was judged to be 'Good' in all areas. If you would like to read the full report, please look at our website: [www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk](http://www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk).

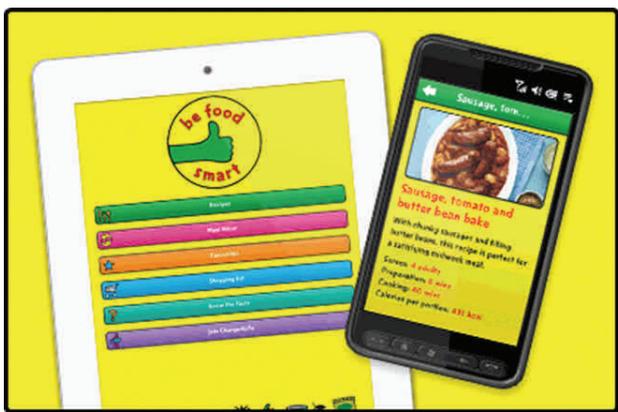


### *Be Food Smart - How much sugar are your children eating?*

Public Health England (PHE)'s new Change4Life campaign is encouraging parents to 'Be Food Smart' and take control of their children's diets.

This follows findings that children in England consume half the daily recommended sugar intake before the morning school bell rings. They consume more than 11 g of sugar at breakfast time alone, equivalent to almost **three sugar cubes**.

The recommended daily maximum is no more than five cubes for 4 to 6-year-olds, and no more than six for 7 to 10-year-olds. By the end of the day, children consume more than three times these recommendations. For anyone aged 11 years or over, the daily recommended maximum is seven cubes.



Latest figures show that childhood obesity in England has reached alarming rates with 21.9% of 4 to 5-year-olds in the South West overweight or obese, increasing to 30.3% in 10 to 11-year-olds.

Some of the main sources of sugar at breakfast time include sugary cereals, drinks, and spreads. Away from the breakfast table, children are also consuming too much sugar, saturated fat and salt in items such as confectionery, biscuits, muffins, pastries and soft drinks, which all contribute to an unhealthy diet.

PHE's new Change4Life campaign urges parents to 'Be Food Smart' and take more control of their children's diets. The new Be Food Smart app has been developed to highlight just how much sugar, saturated fat and salt can be found in the food and drink that their children consume.

The free app helps and encourages families to choose healthier options. It works by scanning the barcode of products to reveal the sugar cubes, blobs of fat and sachets of salt they contain.

This allows parents to compare brands as well as featuring Food Detective activities for children and mini-missions which the whole family can enjoy. The new app builds on and expands PHE's successful Sugar Smart app launched last year.

You can download the new free 'Be Food Smart' app from the iTunes Store or Google Play to get hints and tips to cut down the amount of total sugar, saturated fat and salt in your family's diet.

## Oxfordshire's Health and Care Services—The Big Consultation

Back in June 2016, NHS organizations across Oxfordshire launched 'The Big Health and Care Conversation'. This was an opportunity for NHS staff to discuss with the public, the voluntary sector and patients about the opportunities to improve health care for patients, challenges facing the NHS, and what they are doing about this.

The NHS launched a public consultation in January and proposed changes to:

- The way we use our hospital beds and bring more care closer to home in Oxfordshire
- Planned care at the Horton General Hospital in Banbury (planned care includes test and treatment planned in advance and not urgent or emergency care)
- Acute stroke services in Oxfordshire
- Critical care at the Horton General Hospital (critical care helps people with life-threatening or very serious injuries and illness)
- Maternity services including obstetrics, Special Care Baby Units (this also affects emergency gynaecology surgery).

### How to get involved

The NHS will be holding consultation events across the country, at which you will be able to talk to clinicians and senior NHS leaders. You will be able to share your views about the



proposals. The consultations were launched in January and will continue until Thursday 23rd March 2017. Places are limited according to venue, so booking is recommended.

For more information, including their proposals and events dates, can be picked up at your local GP practice or on their website:

[www.oxonhealthcaretransformation.nhs.uk](http://www.oxonhealthcaretransformation.nhs.uk)

The Witney meeting will be held on Thursday 16th February 2017, 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm at an undisclosed venue.

To request a hard copy of the consultation document, book a place on an event, call 01865 334638 or email [cscsu.talkinghealth@nhs.net](mailto:cscsu.talkinghealth@nhs.net).



**"Just make it up as you go along, like everybody else!"**

## *Evidence Matters*

*by Sarah Chapman*

*I work for Cochrane UK, the UK hub of an international network of people working together to help people make informed decisions about health care. It does this through doing systematic reviews, which bring together the results of clinical trials to answer questions about what helps or harms in health care.*

### **Nine things people take to relieve cold symptoms – but do they work?**

My grandmother, who lived a long and healthy life, had a dread of getting a cold. At the first sniff, she would throw as many menthol products at it as possible, in the hope of reducing the misery of 'sinus trouble'. We probably all have our favourite remedies for a cold, but is there evidence to tell us whether they are likely to work?

I've had a look at the evidence from Cochrane systematic reviews, to see what they can tell us.

### **Antihistamine–decongestant–painkiller combinations**

Lots of people buy over-the-counter preparations that offer a combination of two of these or all three. They may offer some benefit for adults and older children, especially antihistamine-decongestant preparations, but it's common to get side-effects such as dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth and trouble sleeping.

### **Nasal decongestants**

There may be a small improvement in a blocked nose after multiple doses, but it isn't known whether a single dose does any good, or how topical (in the nose) and oral decongestants compare. It is not known whether they work, or are safe, in children.

### **Antihistamines**

In adults, there is a small improvement in overall symptoms on the first one or two days only. Forty five percent of people in the trials felt better with antihistamines, and 38% felt better with placebo (fake medicine).

### **Paracetamol**

It is not known whether paracetamol works for relieving cold symptoms.

### **Antibiotics**

Antibiotics are not effective for the common cold, or for persisting runny nose in children or adults. They are known to cause side-effects in many people.

### **Heated, humidified air**

Steam inhalation has not shown any consistent benefits for treating colds.

### **Vitamin C**

Unless you're doing extreme physical exertion, like marathon running, or working in subarctic conditions (not likely in Witney!), it seems that taking vitamin C supplements regularly won't cut your risk of getting a cold. It's not clear whether taking them can help once you've got a cold.

### **Garlic**

There is a lack of evidence on the effects of garlic for preventing or treating colds.

### **Echinacea**

Echinacea products have not been shown to be useful in treating colds. Most haven't been tested in clinical trials and the products vary a lot.

NHS Choices gives the general advice to drink plenty of fluids, rest and eat healthily. Here's hoping you stay well this winter!

You can find Cochrane evidence on the common cold and much more at [www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)

You can see the review in full at [www.thecochranelibrary.com](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com).

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