

# Keeping Well?

The Newsletter of the Nuffield Patient Group

June 2013 Issue 1

## Welcome

A warm welcome to the first issue of *Keeping Well?* – the Nuffield Practice newsletter that is written by patients, for patients.

We aim to make every issue fun and relevant to you and your family. There'll be news and information about the practice, but also lots of useful stuff and personal experiences from other patients. We might even stretch to the odd cartoon to lighten the time while you are waiting in the surgery.

You will also be able to access these articles on the practice website:  
[www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk](http://www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk)

We are always pleased to receive feedback and suggestions, particularly when you are prepared to share your own experiences in a way that can help other patients like you.

Just ask at Reception about how to join our Patient Group.

## *New Patient Survey shows high patient satisfaction*

*by Virginia Bushell,  
Practice Manager*

**Over 90% of patients said they would recommend the Nuffield Practice to their family, friends and neighbours. This is according to our latest survey, which was completed by 296 patients attending the surgery in January and February this year.**



Thank you to all patients for filling in the survey, and to the Patient Group for providing the questions.

Other major survey findings:

- 86% of patients said they were satisfied with the practice overall
- 94% of patients said that it was easy to make an appointment
- 85% thought the time they had to wait for an appointment was reasonable given their circumstances.

We know that there are real pressures on the appointment system. There are no easy solutions – more doctors would be great, but there is no more money to pay for them. One new idea we are trying is 5-minute appointments on the day, so that fewer of you have to wait if you have something quick to sort out.

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### **Good patient information**

The survey found that 81% of patients regarded the information provided as good, very good or excellent. That's great, but we need to do more to explain our services. Thanks to the Patient Group, we now have posters designed to remind you of our services in a clear, eye-catching format. More information is available on the practice website, or ask for a practice leaflet at reception. We hope that this newsletter from the Patient Group will also help.

### **Preferred practitioner**

We were pleased that 75% of patients had seen their preferred doctor or nurse, given that Dr Boland was on sabbatical leave and Dr Carey is on maternity leave. You seem to have liked their locums.

### **Seen on time**

Having got your appointment, 50% of you were seen on time. It seems that waiting times were the biggest source of concern. We try to build in enough slack in the system, and fail. GPs are dealing with increasingly complex medical problems. Many of you have serious medical problems and over 800 Nuffield Practice patients are aged over 80 years. The demands on appointments are increasing. We are now producing monthly reports so that all the doctors can see what their waiting times are. You can help too - if you know that your problem will take more than 10 minutes, please book a double appointment.

*"Very happy with my doctor and the service she provides. Receptionists are also helpful when you come in"*

### **Waiting room**

Many of you told us that you find the waiting room a bit bland and unwelcoming. There were lots of comments about the arrangement of the

*When I suggested a CAT scan, Mrs Smith, that's not quite what I had in mind...*



*Tim Hughes*

chairs. We changed the seating arrangement because a chair slipped on the new floors and a patient fell. Fortunately no harm was done, but we cannot risk a more serious accident, so the chairs have been arranged so that they can't slip. We hope that plants and more pictures will make the area more colourful and interesting.

### **Overall**

There were lots of positive and some negative comments about the practice, its staff and services. As a result of what you told us, we have:

- added a third disabled car parking space; this will be available by July 2013
- recruited two additional receptionists
- changed the message on the telephone to explain that we have 30 lines
- changed our computer system - appointments can now be booked online.

A warm thank you to all who took part in the survey, and to the members of the Patient Panel for designing and supporting it, and for helping us with the actions which we hope will improve things for you all. The survey report is on the Practice Website:

[www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk](http://www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk)



## *Living with a stoma: a personal journey*

*by Sarah Squire*

**I had colostomy surgery in 2007, when I was 34 years old.**

A colostomy is a surgical procedure that pulls a section of the large intestine through an opening in the abdominal wall. This opening is called a stoma and waste matter then passes through the stoma into a pouch stuck to the skin.

Stomas are formed for a variety of reasons, but mine was due to a problem which is associated with childbirth. It's probably fair to say that more colostomies are formed later in life, but there are a lot of younger people with them too.

In fact, 6500 permanent colostomies are formed in the UK each year, and around 120,000 people in the UK are living with a stoma. But it's still easy to feel isolated and alone with a stoma. "Bowel business" is still a taboo subject – people are embarrassed to talk about it and often keep problems to themselves.

Importantly, there is support out there. The Colostomy, Ileostomy and Urostomy Associations are there to help people both pre- and post-op. These three main patient support charities offer advice and the chance to talk to other ostomates.



My family and friends have been a fantastic support, but there is nothing quite like talking to someone who has walked a mile in your shoes.

Stoma surgery is a shock to the system physically, but emotionally the challenge can feel even greater. At first it feels like your world has been turned upside down.

Someone told me early on I would be fine – I didn't believe them. But now I can honestly say life IS good with my stoma.

***Colostomy Association***

[www.colostomyassociation.org.uk](http://www.colostomyassociation.org.uk)

Lots of leaflets to download, a quarterly newsletter and a great Facebook page! To find us, search for "Colostomy Association" on Facebook, choose the "group" page, click on the "join" tab and one of us admins will add you as soon as possible. It's a closed group so comments are not seen by your other friends, making it a safe haven to discuss concerns, and chat with people who really understand.

***Ileostomy Association***

[www.iasupport.org](http://www.iasupport.org)

***Urostomy Association***

[www.urostomyassociation.org.uk](http://www.urostomyassociation.org.uk)

### *Some basic facts about the Nuffield Practice*

The practice is open from Monday to Friday, 8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

The telephone lines (01993 703641) are open at the same times as the practice, but closed from 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. (The practice remains open at lunchtimes.)

The practice is in the middle of Witney, on Welch Way, next door to the library and

opposite the new Marriots Way centre. The address is the Nuffield Practice, Nuffield Health Centre, Welch Way, Witney OX28 6JQ.

At [www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk](http://www.thenuffieldpractice.co.uk), you can request prescriptions and change your details online; there is also information about the practice's services.

You can also e-mail to request prescriptions: [nuffield.scripts@nhs.net](mailto:nuffield.scripts@nhs.net)

To find out more, please ask for a practice leaflet or speak to a member of staff.



## *Evidence Matters*

*by Sarah Chapman*

**Doing what we can to help ourselves stay well and to manage our health problems is important, but how do we know what's best?**

These days, we are encouraged to make decisions about our health with our doctors, not just do what they think is best for us! We all need to understand something about evidence.

Here's some recent health news, based on good evidence from "systematic reviews":

- Regular swimming is good for children with asthma, improving fitness and making their lungs work a bit better.
- Women who do perineal massage weekly from 35 weeks of pregnancy are less likely to need stitches after giving birth.
- Evening primrose oil and borage oil do not help relieve eczema symptoms.
- Doing exercises at home or in classes can help prevent older people from falling.

*Systematic reviews* bring together evidence from all studies of a certain type asking the same question, like "does evening primrose oil improve eczema?". This is great because we can see the results for many more people than in just one study, and because systematic reviews take account of all results, not just the ones we like the look of! They help us to be more confident about the evidence.

I work for the Cochrane Collaboration, an international network of people working

### *Did you know?*

There are over 12,400 patients in the Nuffield Practice, and they all seem to want to phone at half past eight in the morning!

If you need an appointment, it's easier to phone at a less busy time. We have 30 telephone lines but we don't have 30 pairs of hands to answer them!

together to help people make informed decisions about healthcare, especially through doing systematic reviews. There are over 5000 Cochrane reviews on all areas of health. The health news opposite comes from Cochrane reviews.

Cochrane reviews are free online in the UK, but they are long and hard to read (ask the doctors – they think so too!). We have a blog where we write about Cochrane reviews in a more friendly way, which you can find here:

[evidentlycochrane.wordpress.com](http://evidentlycochrane.wordpress.com)

You can also try Cochrane Summaries where reviews are summed up in a paragraph or two:

[summaries.cochrane.org](http://summaries.cochrane.org)

On Twitter, you can follow

@UKCochraneCentr for my daily tweets about evidence.

In each newsletter, I'll highlight good evidence and some sources that can help you make sense of it, because evidence matters!

*For further information about this newsletter, please contact.*

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