



# What's up Doc?!

## The quarterly newsletter for Bentham Medical Practice Summer 2015

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### Welcome to the latest edition of What's Up Doc?! The Bentham Medical Practice Newsletter.

Well, summer is upon us! You can tell it is summer by the amount of rainfall. Apparently on Wednesday 29th July the A65 was almost blocked due to flooding and yet there were reports of people playing golf in the sunshine at Bentham at the same time! What typically glorious English weather!



Regular newsletter readers will notice that I have included quite a bit of the information from the last edition. This is partly due to the fact that it is summer and we have a lack of contributors but also because some of the information about the surgery needs repeating for those who have missed it so far.

If there are any articles in the newsletter that you would like more information about or if you have any news that you would like including in the newsletter or if you have any feedback then please do not hesitate to contact me by my email address [jonathan.scott@gp-B82061.nhs.uk](mailto:jonathan.scott@gp-B82061.nhs.uk) or by writing to me at the practice.

Best regards

**Jonathan Scott**

**Practice Manager**

### Practice News

#### Staff Changes

Dr Chris Coldwell, our GP Registrar left the practice at the end of July after a year at Bentham and having fully qualified as a GP. It was a pleasure to have Chris with us and he became a key member of staff respected and liked by both patients and colleagues. He has now taken up a GP position elsewhere and we wish him all the best in his future career. Also at the end of July our foundation year 2 doctor, Chris Jacobs left after three months training at Bentham. Again, Chris was a valuable member of the practice team and we wish him all the best in his future studies. We will have a new registrar join us in September, Dr Cess Sibanda. Cess will be with us for about 7 to 8 months and we hope he enjoys his time at Bentham. Unfortunately we have no FY2's this coming year. We will have a couple of university students at the practice for one day every other week during Autumn. As a training practice Bentham provides an extremely important service in helping to ensure that there is a continued supply of clinicians and GPs in the future, particularly at a time when the number of clinicians available is in jeopardy. We thank all our patients for their support in this.

One of our Medical secretaries, Sarah Mulliner, left the practice in August to spend more time with her young family and to pursue other career opportunities. Sarah had been at Bentham for five years, latterly working part time. We wish her all the best for the future. The remaining secretaries are Sue Jenkins and Marie Godson.

One of the Bentham counsellors, Angie Pedley will be retiring in September. Thanks to Angie for all her work over the years and all the best for a long and happy retirement. Another counsellor will be joining perhaps in October. More details on this later.

### Charity News

In the Spring edition of the newsletter we mentioned that Dr Morgan was completing a cycle ride in aid of the brain tumour charity, Headcase. This was along the East coast from Newcastle to Edinburgh. She successfully completed this in spite of terrible wet and windy weather and her group managed to raise £5000. Thank you to all those who generously contributed.

As many of you will know we have a second hand book stall in the waiting room at Bentham with all the proceeds going to charity. We change the charity every year. This year we collected a total of **£480**. Following discussions with Bob Lister we decided to donate this to Phoenix, a charity which aims to provide peer support to vulnerable people who have experienced catastrophic, life changing injuries.

This coming year we have decided to support Longstaffe's Educational Foundation which provides funds for young people of High and Low Bentham up to the age of 25 years to assist them in their educational endeavours. The charity issues grants to assist students with their educational costs. In the past it has assisted individuals with purchase of books, IT equipment, music and dance lessons and other essential equipment. We hope you will support the foundation through continued use of our book scheme. Many thanks to all those who have purchased or donated books in the past.

### Prescription Collection Points

As many of you will know there are a number of local businesses who take in packaged medications for distribution to our patients. This is an invaluable service particularly for those who find travelling to Bentham difficult. Unfortunately, one of these collection points, The Spirit of the Andes at Hornby closed down recently with very little notice. We approached Hornby Institute and they very generously offered to take on the service from their. Medications are available for collection there from 9.00am to 12.00 noon on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays, 10.00am until 12.00noon on Wednesdays.

Thanks to Gill and all at the Institute in helping with this and a big vote of thanks to Spirit of the Andes for the service they have provided in the past and also to Wray Post Office, Burton Post Office, Clapham Shop and Austwick Shop for their support. Thanks also to all the drivers who collect items from Bentham and drop them off. If you want to know more about this scheme please call the surgery on 015242 61202.

### Staff Training

The practice is closed one afternoon per month to allow for training of both clinicians and administrative staff. This is vital for us to keep up with the pace of change in the health service. This is something that all GP practices in Cumbria do and is common nationwide. On training afternoon the practice is closed from 1.00pm until 8.00am the next day. If you call the practice on a training afternoon with an urgent problem you will be asked to re-dial and call Cumbria Health on Call (CHOC), our Out of Hours Service, who will deal with your problems. Alternatively you can call CHOC direct on 03000247247. If your call is of a non-urgent nature you will be asked to call back on the next day. Dates for upcoming training afternoons are Thursday 17th September, Wednesday 21st October and

### GP Problems

As many of you will know and as reported in our Spring Newsletter Dr Rigg left the practice at the end of May. We have since Dr Coldwell and Dr Jacobs also come to the end of their terms here with us. We have not got a full complement of training doctors for this coming year. We have been actively trying to find a replacement for Dr Rigg and have spent a small fortune in advertising doing so but, to date, we have been unsuccessful. There is something of a national crisis in the recruitment of GPs and in getting young doctors to join GP training schemes and it appears that we have become a victim of this crisis.

We are confident that we will fill the vacant position in the near future but it will mean that the summer period and over the few months into Autumn we are going to have a doctor shortage. We are addressing this by employing more locums. Dr Sullivan will be coming out of retirement to run some surgeries, Dr Thomas will be doing some more surgeries and we will have some new GPs Dr Kew and Dr Rhodes starting here soon. We would ask for your understanding and support at this rather difficult time as we want to ensure that we continue to give the best possible service that we can to the community. One way that you can help and support us is to think carefully before accessing your GP. That way we can make sure that we are there for when you and your loved ones really need us. Below are some suggested alternatives to contacting your GP which you may find quicker and just as effective.

- ◆ **Self-care** – can your symptoms be managed at home? Could you ask advice of a family member or friend? Access on-line information about managing common illnesses at [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

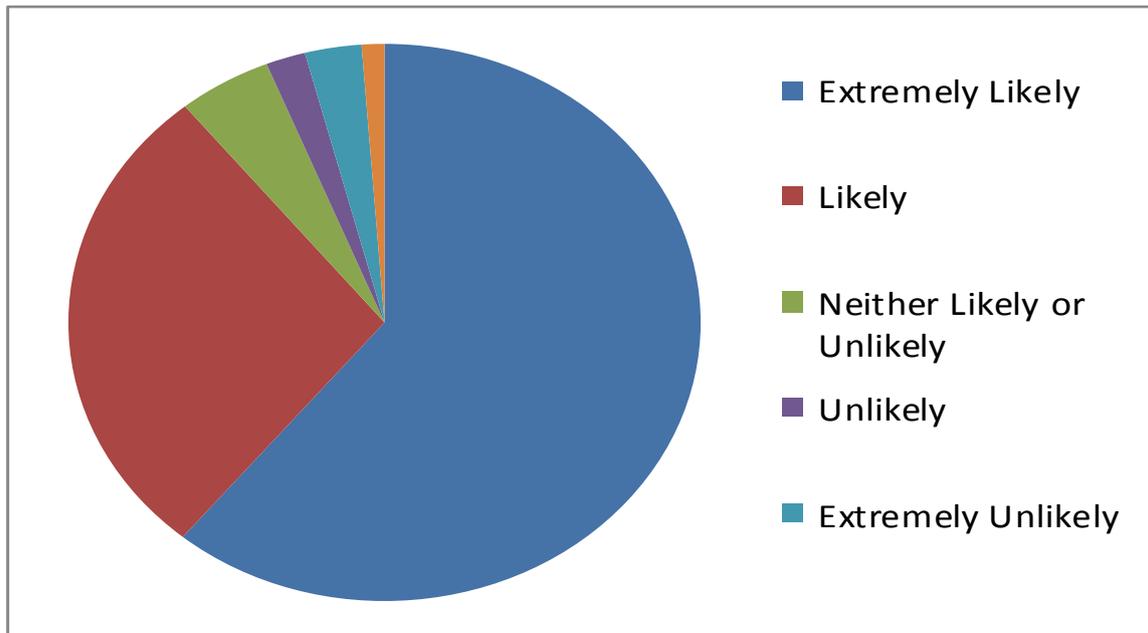
- ◆ **Visit the chemist** – pharmacists are trained to diagnose minor ailments and advise on treatment. Under the new ‘Minor Ailment’ initiative, **pharmacists can provide many over the counter medicines free of charge without a prescription, to patients who are eligible for free prescriptions** (see details on minor ailment scheme further on in this newsletter). Unfortunately, Ingleton Chemist is not able to be part of this scheme.
- ◆ **Dental problems** – please contact your dentist. GPs have no significant dental training. If you are not registered with a dentist and have an urgent dental problem then either visit our website [www.benthamsurgery.org.uk](http://www.benthamsurgery.org.uk), click on the Medical Services Tab then select find services from the drop down box. Alternatively you can call NHS 111 service.
- ◆ **Foot problems** – consider seeing a chiropodist. These are highly trained professionals who can deal with many foot problems and will advise if you need to see a doctor.  
<http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Podiatrists%20and%20chiropodists/LocationSearch/343>
- ◆ **Back problems, sports injuries, repetitive strain type injuries** – a chartered physiotherapist is able to diagnose and treat many problems with muscles and joints. They are highly trained professionals who can identify when medical advice or treatment is needed.

You may be charged for some of these services

Thank you for cooperation and patience.

### Friends and Family Test

Many people will know that, as from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014, all GP practices throughout England have to ask patients to complete a ‘Family and Friends’ test. This is a contractual requirement imposed by government. The test is very simple in that it just asks how likely you are to recommend the practice to family or friends with the set answers being; extremely likely, likely, neither likely or unlikely, unlikely, very unlikely and don’t know. There is also facility to add a personal comment to the form. The test has been conducted in the surgeries plus you are able to complete on line through our website [www.benthamsurgery.org.uk](http://www.benthamsurgery.org.uk). The responses we have had have been overwhelmingly positive with some very encouraging and supportive comments even at difficult times. Thank you. A summary of responses is below. We will actively work to improve the results in future.



Extremely Likely	Likely	Neither Likely or Unlikely	Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Don't Know	Total
421	194	33	14	20	8	690
61%	28%	5%	2%	3%	1%	100%

## Triage System

I know that this article was printed in the last newsletter but, for the benefit of new patients and those who have not visited the practice recently, please find below an explanation on how our triage system works. With the triage system, if you feel that you need to speak to or see a doctor urgently, then you can. Just follow the following steps;

Call into the surgery on 015242 61202. Your call will be answered by a voicemail system and you will be asked to press the number that most suits your needs;

- ◆ 1 for an urgent call
- ◆ 2 to order a repeat prescription. Please do use this if you can as it then frees up the phone for people with urgent problems.
- ◆ 3 to arrange to speak to triage doctor. Please note that this will not connect you to a doctor
- ◆ 4 to speak to a receptionist about a more routine appointment or matter

Once you are put through to a receptionist and inform them that you want to speak to or see a doctor urgently you will be put onto the triage list. During the course of the conversation you will be asked a few questions;

- ◆ Who you are calling about, yourself or someone else?
- ◆ A number that the doctor can call you back on. Preferably this should be a landline number as mobile reception can be poor. The number that you give needs to be one that you will be available on. The receptionist can try to give you some indication about how busy triage is but they cannot guarantee when the doctor will call back. We regularly get well over 50 triage calls in a morning alone and they can take a long time to deal with. Also some calls can be dealt with in minutes whilst other take much longer. The receptionist has no way of knowing this. If you can't be available to take a call at the time then you may be advised to call back when you can.
- ◆ The receptionist may then ask you if you would like to explain briefly what the reason for your call is. This is just the same as receptionists in A&E departments will do. You can decline to give a reason but if you do give a reason then the doctor is better able to prioritise his/her list into the most urgent cases first.
- ◆ The doctor will then call you back to discuss your problems and take the appropriate course of action. If the doctor can't get through they will try again but cannot do this indefinitely. The main thing to understand about the triage system is that **IF YOU NEED TO SEE A DOCTOR THAT DAY THEN YOU WILL.**

I hope that makes things clear but if you do have any queries then please call or email me at the surgery.

As a footnote, if you are calling about a non urgent matter then please try not to do so at peak times of day such as first thing in the morning when people with urgent problems may be trying to get through. Please try late morning or mid-afternoon when the phones may be quieter. Better still enquire about our online access service (see article later in the newsletter) where you will be able to post queries, order prescriptions, book appointments and even view your medical record on line.

## Missed Appointments

You may have seen that the Patient Representative Group (PRG) has started recording the number of appointments where patients fail to turn up. This is because the availability of appointments was high up on patients priorities on the patient survey. In the period 1st January to 31st July 2015 we had 724 cases where appointments were missed without notice. **That is 24 per week or the equivalent of 6 hours of surgery time a week, every week.** If you cannot make an appointment please call us to let us know so we can give it to someone else. Better still join our free text reminder service (see below)



## Long Term Condition (LTC) Review Clinics

A number of our patients attend one or more LTC clinics per year, e.g. Heartbeat, Diabetic, Asthma etc. These work very well for patient care as regular reviews help to keep people stable and well. However, we have found that some patients with more than one LTC were being called in more than once a year which was wasteful of both patient and GP time. Also, the date of recall was not easy to remember as it was often set arbitrarily based on the date of the first clinic. We have been looking at a better solution and hope that we have now come up with the answer. We have invested in some computer software that will help us to search our patient database and allow us to invite patients in to a "One Stop Shop" review clinics where all conditions can be dealt with at the same time. Also, the review date will be changed to coincide with the patient's month of birth which will be far easier to remember. Changing people over to the new system will take some time as we do not want too much time to elapse between appointments so for some patients it may take a couple of years to get them onto a month of birth system. Below is a copy of a letter that will be sent out to all LTC patients explaining the change. If anyone has any queries then please do not hesitate to contact the surgery.

**Our Ref/**

**Mr**

**LA2 7**

**10/04/2015**

**Dear**

We are changing the way we run our system of recall appointments for patients with Long Term Conditions (LTCs).

In the past we have held clinics for particular conditions. This has meant that patients with more than one condition have sometimes had to come in several times. The month of recall has been based on when the condition was diagnosed, which again has increased the number of visits for some patients.

We want to make our recall system as simple and least time consuming for our patients as possible. As a result we are trying to ensure that patients with more than one condition get everything checked in one set of appointments (a nurse initially and then a doctor if needed). This should save time. Also, we are aiming to hold appointments in the patient's month of birth which will make it far easier for patients to remember when they should be seen.

Transition over to this new system will take some time. We don't want patients to wait too long between appointments. For some patients the transfer to month of birth recall may happen very quickly, for others it may take a few years to fully transfer over. This will mean that, for the next few years, some patients will end up with just nine months between appointments and some patients may wait fifteen months between appointments.

We will write to you again when we want you to make an appointment but in the meantime if you have any queries about the new system then please contact our practice manager, Mr Jonathan Scott, who will be happy to discuss it with you.

Yours sincerely

**Bentham Medical Practice**

## Communications

### Make Better Use Of Your Practice Services

At Bentham Medical Practice we have a number of services that are designed to help you get the most out of the practice and to communicate with us more easily.

#### 1) Online Access

You can now get online access to you medical record. This allows you to;

- Send in queries and communicate on line
- Order Repeat Prescriptions on line
- View details of your medical record such as consultations, reports, results etc.

All this can be done in your own time and at your own convenience without the need to call the surgery. Please ask at reception for details.



#### 2) Receive Text Reminders Of Your Appointments.

Remembering appointments can be difficult. If you miss an appointment not only will you need to make another one but valuable appointment time at the surgery is lost. If you have a mobile phone we can send you a text reminder of the date and time. If you cannot make the appointment just text **CANCEL** back, **FREE OF CHARGE**. To register for the Text reminder service please complete the tear off section below and hand in to reception.

#### 3) Twenty Eight Day Repeat Prescription Service

If you are on repeat prescriptions and get your medications from the surgery you can join our 28 day repeat prescription service. This means that you do not need to place an order every month. We will sort it for you and it will be ready for you to collect on the same day every month. Please ask at reception for details.



## Minor Ailment Medications and Gluten Free Products

You may have seen in recent press and television adverts that the health service is changing the way medications for minor ailments and gluten free products are provided.

If you have a minor ailment that requires a standard over the counter medication your doctor may now advise you to visit the local chemist instead of issuing you with a prescription. You can also choose to go straight to the chemist yourself. The chemist will then ask you about your symptoms and if they feel that a standard over the counter medication would be ok they will recommend that. If you currently are exempt from prescription charges you will get the medication for free. If you usually pay for prescriptions you will be asked to pay the over the counter price (which is usually cheaper than the £8.05 prescription charge). If the chemist feels that you symptoms are more serious they will refer you to your GP or to A+E. If you go to the chemist for repeats of the same medication they will refer you to your GP. This scheme only applies to Bentham Chemist, not Ingleton.

If you currently get gluten free products these again will be taken off monthly prescription and a monthly order form will be made up for you. We will be writing to all patients on gluten free products shortly. Again, this only applies to Bentham chemist and Bentham surgery pharmacy, not Ingleton. Patients on gluten free products who coollect from Ingleton pharmacy will continue to do so on prescription.



## Patient Representative Group

Your PRG has been very active this year meeting on a regular basis and organising a number of things including the latest practice questionnaire. The group has studied the results of the questionnaire and the comments received and has now formed a working group to discuss with the practice what can be done to improve the levels of service that the practice provides. Already a number of changes have been made. Areas that the group are currently looking at are;



- Going into the surgeries and helping complete the annual patient survey with patients.
- Helping to obtain signatures on the BMA and RCGP petitions concerning reduction of funding planned in surgeries.
- Review of the Website
- Discussion around the number of missed appointments the surgery has and development of a notice board to publicise this. Suggesting how to collect patient details to enable more mobile phone reminders of appointments.
- Review of forward booking of routine appointments and suggestions on improvements.
- Review of how GPs arrange future appointments and suggestions on how this could be improved.
- Looking at ways privacy could be improved at reception desk.
- Better use of notice boards for communications and updates.
- Synopsis of relevant minutes to local papers and village newsletters, communicating what PRG and surgery are doing.
- Contributions for "What's up Doc" surgery newsletter.
- Ensuring outreach delivery services for prescriptions are to continue following GPO re-site in Bentham.
- Communication with MP re continuation of Rural Practice and Ambulance Services.
- Negotiations with Craven District Council to improve access to both surgeries. This includes dropped kerbs at both sites for better wheel chair access, review of ramped access at Bentham and improved prominence of disabled parking bays.
- Discussion and review of facilities in waiting rooms including information available, correct location of hand sanitisers, etc.

The Group are planning to run the patient questionnaire again in the Autumn and will be spending time in the waiting rooms of both Bentham and Ingleton handing these out and canvassing for opinions and feedback

**Anyone wishing to get involved with the group should ask for details at reception or contact Lorraine Crossley (Chair) on 015242 61700.**

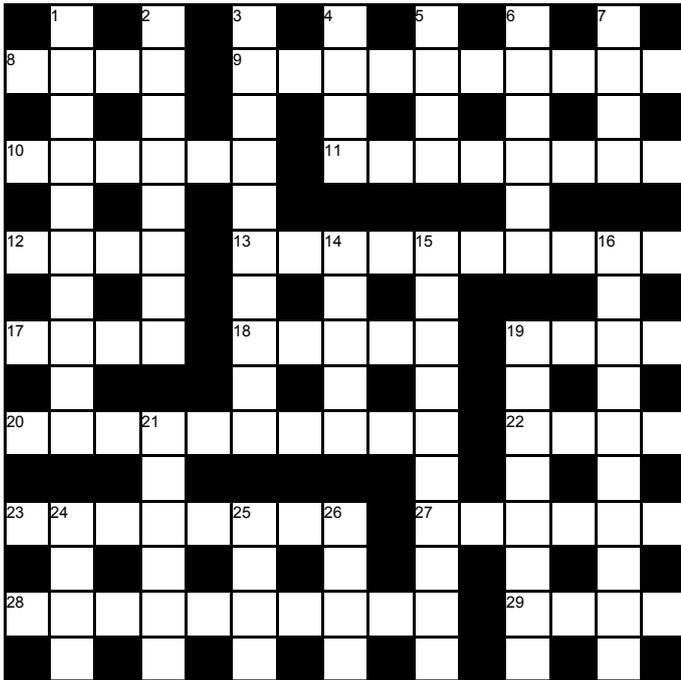
## Productive General Practice

As reported in the Spring edition of the we have recently embarked upon a program of continuous improvement within the practice. Results of our recent practice survey and recent Friends and Family Test show that although many of our patients are happy with the service we provide there are areas that we could improve. We have been working closely with your PRG on this. Initially we looked at reception as this is effectively the 'Front of House' area of the practice with most patient contact. On the back of our investigations a number of changes have been made to how reception operates and we hope that these have had and will continue to have positive beneficial effects. We have now switched attention to more 'back office and administration work and we are starting the process of fully reviewing and analysing this to see where further improvements can be made. As always we are very happy to receive any constructive feedback you may have by phone, in writing, email or through our website.

## Lunchtime Opening

We have recently had some comments from patients who think that reception is closed at lunchtime. This is not the case. Reception is open over the period between 1.00 and 1.45 but with a reduced staffing so we ask people only to call at this time on the phone or in person if they have an urgent problem.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 8 Cobbler them. A nasty bump. (4)
- 9 Beheading offence is fair enough. (10)
- 10 Men have fun about nothing. (6)
- 11 Father's weapon perhaps gave him access. (8)
- 12 Paramilitaries returned after first stage dress. (4)
- 13 Not an inhabitant of Trafalgar Square (4,6)
- 17 Alright, alright! Always.(4)
- 18 Train to get herb about right. (5)
- 19 Sealant a bit short to get in the hole. (4)
- 20 Row about Eldroth being a fantastic place (10)

- 22 No two points amount to zero. (4)
- 23 Repeated type of tea tried (8)
- 27 Type to appear in Capital iconography (6)
- 28 Get fit! It's possible (10)
- 29 Payments not started for years (4)

Down

- 1 Animal shop where stock was dropping (4,6)
- 2 It is very bad to confuse Glastonbury perhaps with a more developed place. (8)
- 3 She was abandoned by dope over woman whose husband was late (5,5)
- 4 Last one perhaps before being late (4)
- 5 Sort of stick was an idol. (4)
- 6 Facial hair perhaps can make some people scream. (6)
- 7 It is an insult to speak badly. (4)
- 14 Rosie is mad about a tree (5)
- 15 Strengthened foundations built on water. (4,6)
- 16 Repeatedly fashioned fine totems (10)
- 19 Animal train Bobby drove (5,3)
- 21 Aware about ten protective secretions. (3,3)
- 24 Sounds like a potato you can blow (4)
- 25 Part of cutlery Martin Edwards held. (4)
- 26 Bad sort could cost you money (4)

Answers to Autumn Crossword

- 8a. Loam. 9a. Effervesce. 10a. Starve.
- 11a. Yielding. 12a. Rags. 13a. Go for broke.
- 17a. Lava. 18a. Apart. 19a. Chin. 20.a Periodical.
- 22a. Achy. 23a. Sawdusts. 27a. Touchy.
- 28a. Chinchilla. 29a. Look
- 1d. Soft palate. 2d. Ambrosia. 3d. New England.
- 4d. Iffy. 5d. Tree 6d. Tender. 7d. Scan. 14d. Franc.
- 15d. Rattletrap. 16d. Knighthood. 19d. Chasuble.

Feedback

I hope you have found this instalment of the newsletter informative and useful. Please feel free to comment on anything within it or to suggest what you would like to see in future editions.

If you have any other feedback that you would like to pass onto the surgery then please write to me or email me at [jonathan.scott@gp-B82061.nhs.uk](mailto:jonathan.scott@gp-B82061.nhs.uk)

Thank you

