

Waterhouses Medical Practice Newsletter

ISSUE 12

Winter 08

Staff News

We welcome Dr Natasha Beardmore to the practice. Natasha is a qualified junior doctor who will be with us for four months to gain experience of working in a general practice as a part of her post-registration training. Natasha completed a degree in genetics at Sheffield University before undergoing her training at Warwick University Medical School. She is interested in a career in either Rheumatology or General Practice. Natasha will run her own surgeries at Waterhouses and Alton, with advice always available from the other doctors.



Dr Natasha Beardmore

The practice was also be joined in January by another final year medical student, Alexandra Giffen, on an eight week full-time placement. Alexandra is doing joint surgeries with each of the partners, gaining vital experience to help her through her final exams in the spring. Our last final year student, Fran Fitton, contributes her thoughts on working in the practice on the next page .

Congratulations to Helen Smith, Assistant Practice Manager, who has gained NVQ level 2 in Pharmacy Services.

And finally, practice nurse Ann Strang, returns to work following surgery; we are all pleased (and relieved) to see her back!

Waterhouses Medical Practice

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Waterhouses
Stoke-on-Trent
ST10 3HY

Phone:01538 308207

Fax:01538 308653

Primary Care Centre
Hurstons Lane
Alton

Stoke-on-Trent
ST10 4AP

Phone:01538 704220

Fax:01538 703345

Website:www.waterhouses.net

Surgery Opening Times

Waterhouses surgery:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and
Friday

8.00am-1.00pm and 2.00pm-
6.00pm

Thursday 8.00am-1.00pm

Alton surgery:

Monday-Friday 8.30am-12.30pm

Out-of-hours Emergency Treatment

North Staffs Urgent Care
01782 719100

Repeat Prescriptions

Phone 308207 between 9.00am
and 1.00pm

Fax: 01538 308653

Email:

prescriptions@waterhouses.net

Awards for Cottage Ward & Dr Moody

Cottage Ward at Leek Moorlands Hospital has received an award as "Clinical Team of the Year" from the North Staffordshire Community Health Care (PCT). In the nomination speech at the awards ceremony the staff, led by Liz Gouldsmith, were praised for devoting "the highest standards of care to each and every one of the patients on their ward". The nomination went on to say "their hard work and dedication are reflected in the bright and optimistic atmosphere that prevails on the ward....In the last 12-18 months the positive and dynamic attitude of the team, and its willingness and ability to engage with new challenges, has enabled

the consolidation and expansion of intermediate care services on the ward, as well as the development of exciting new day case services. These services illustrate the great strength and potential that community hospitals have to offer, when a fine team of staff such as this are given the opportunity to show their talents and enthusiasm to be involved in bold new developments."

Our own Dr Dawn Moody also received recognition for her hard work on the ward, being given the Medical Director's Special Award for an "outstanding personal contribution" to medical services in the community hospitals.



The Patients' stories

Four third year medical students come into the practice on placement every Thursday morning for 13 weeks, to gain experience of talking to patients, to develop their clinical skills and to study particular conditions and treatments. Every week two 'expert' patients are invited into the surgeries at Waterhouses and Alton to give the students an account of their experiences. Below, two of our 'regulars' write about their contact with the students. (Their names have been changed)

"As a patient of Waterhouses Medical Practice I have been invited over the past few years to talk to groups or pairs of medical students while they are on placement in the practice.

These meetings are informal and last about an hour. I am able to explain in detail the symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of my medical condition, and also how these impact on my way of life. In addition I am able to point out not only the good service I have received from the NHS, but also areas

where it could possibly be improved.

By having the opportunity to talk to medical students like this I believe that when they qualify as doctors they will not only have the clinical knowledge but also appreciate the effects their actions can have on lives of their patients."

"Peter"



the

"When I was first approached by Clare to talk to the medical students in one of their training sessions I was thrilled to bits to be able to give something back to the people and the practice that have looked after me and my husband so well during the past ten years. I felt a little apprehensive as the day of the first session arrived as I did not know what to expect, but I need not have done as everyone was so nice.

I have been very impressed by the knowledge and commitment shown by

all these lovely young people, but no matter how technically brilliant they are, a vital part of being a great doctor is having a really good "bedside manner". I believe that the sessions involving volunteer patients are a great opportunity for the students to gain vital experience in developing their "people skills". The feedback I have had from the medical students is that it is so helpful to them to have the chance to consult and interact with real patients, who all have such different medical conditions, concerns and questions.

I feel proud that I have been involved in the training and development of some of our future young doctors, and have really enjoyed the experience."

"Anne"



Doctor, doctor, I think I need glasses.

"You certainly do sir, this is Waterhouses chip shop"

Fran Fitton, final year medical student, writes....

As a final-year medical student, I was delighted when I found out I would be spending my eight-week GP placement here at Waterhouses. I had spent some time here previously during my third and fourth years, and I enjoyed both experiences so much that I opted to return once again this year. And I am not alone in this - several of my fellow students at Keele University Medical School have done just the same.

On this placement, my days here are spent mainly at the surgeries in Waterhouses and Alton, where I have been seeing patients with supervision from Drs Angris and Artus. I have also been able to spend one day each week at the Leek Moorlands Hospital with Dr Moody. I am learning so much from my time here, and I would like to thank everyone - those who work here and those who have allowed me to see them as patients - for the time they have given me and the welcome I have received.

Fran Fitton

Medication reviews



The dispensers cannot give you a repeat of your medication if you are overdue for your review. Please check on the white prescription sheet put in with your last lot of medication to see if you are due for a review. If you are please make an appointment with a doctor or the nurse practitioner as soon as possible.



Waterhouses Community First Responders

It's been quiet recently, not just for our group, but all over the Moorlands area. I have just spent three weeks on call, more or less all day every day and my bleep didn't go off once (then we got three in one day) and so the Ambulance Service tells us, this has been typical of the whole region. This is good news, as it means that very few people in our community have been taken seriously ill or had a bad accident.

However, readers shouldn't worry that while we are sitting around we are losing touch with our skills ~ all Community First Response teams have a programme of ongoing training and revision of critical procedures such as resuscitation.

Our group has a regular monthly meeting at which we discuss

training needs, and two of our Responders who are now qualified resuscitation trainers take us through this vital drill. In addition, the Ambulance Service provides regular training evenings that we are all encouraged to attend, and every First Responder has to undertake mandatory full day Post Qualification Update training at least once a year in order to remain qualified.

On the subject of training, we are now required to take a course leading to an Advanced Driving Test. All our members are booked in with the Institute of Advanced Motorists to do these courses, after which some of us will go on a specialised Blue Light Driving course.

As always we are looking for new

blood. In addition to lay help with fundraising, there is a need for more trained Responders so that we can increase the amount of cover we provide. The next training course starts in January, and the course is now run over a number of consecutive weekends, rather than the previous six month, one night a week system. This means that newly trained Responders will go live far sooner than before. No previous medical experience is required, so if you would like to know more about what it takes to become a Waterhouses First Responder, look on our website, or give our Co-ordinator Tim a ring on 0796 732 5352.

www.waterhousesfirstresponders.org

Wilson Young

Start digging.....

Would you like to grow your own vegetables and keep fit at the same time? Waterhouses Parish Council wants to know if you are interested in having your own allotment in the village.

If so please contact the Parish Clerk, Jason Buxton, 01538 308977/07526513192

email waterhousespcclerk@yahoo.co.uk



Doctor, doctor, how do I stop my nose from running?

"Stick your foot out and trip it up"

Moorlands Community Minibus

The committee and volunteer drivers of the Minibus wish to thank everyone who has supported them this year.

New drivers are always needed to keep this valuable service running.

Caroline Highton

Secretary

Post Office re-opening

Waterhouses Post Office will reopen on February 11th; please support your local post office, they are a rare breed!

HPV Vaccine

You may have heard about this new vaccine which is being offered to girls in year 8 at school

Human papilloma virus (or HPV) is passed on through sexual contact, and many women will be infected with this virus at some time in their life; often this virus causes no harm and can go away without treatment, but it can increase the risk of developing cervical cancer.

The vaccine is being given to girls aged 12/13 at school and consists of three injections over a six month period. It is also being given at the surgery to 17/18 year old girls, and all those eligible will have now received their letters of invitation - some have already received their first dose. For girls in between these two age brackets there will be a 'catch-up' programme over the next few years and you will receive information on this if you/your daughter is eligible. The vaccine does not eliminate the need for smears, these are still essential as they can pick up cancerous changes which occur in the cervix; however it is estimated that the vaccine can prevent 7/10 cancers of the cervix and possibly more in the future.

For any further information on this please contact any of the doctors or nurses at the surgery.

Alison Hawley, Nurse Practitioner

This newsletter will be issued quarterly, in March, June, September and December. If you have any comments or suggestions about the newsletter, or would like to contribute an article or information which would be of interest to other readers, please contact Clare Cooper at the surgery or email

clare@waterhouses.net.



Elderly Health Checks

Barbara Williams, Health Care Assistant, is doing annual elderly health checks during January at Waterhouses surgery. If you are over 70 Barbara will check your general health and your blood pressure to find out if you have any health problems that need help now. If you would like to have a health check ask at reception for a 20 minute appointment with Barbara in one of her clinics (Tuesday to Friday).

WINTER HELP FOR COPD SUFFERERS.

Patients at Waterhouses Surgery who suffer from a chronic chest complaint called COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) will be amongst the first in the UK to hopefully benefit from an early warning system developed jointly by weather experts at the Met Office and the NHS.

COPD is a debilitating lung condition (traditionally known as emphysema or chronic bronchitis) affecting mainly smokers. It is very difficult to treat and is made worse by infections and cold weather so winter times are often hard for those affected by it. However, it is hoped that this innovative, fully automated "early warning system" will give sufferers appropriate, advance advice of adverse conditions so that they can take the necessary precautions to avoid catching infections or being taken by

surprise by a cold snap.

Any sufferer volunteering to be put on the scheme will have their contact details stored on a computer. If the Met Office fear a cold snap is on the horizon, or the NHS predict an epidemic of chest viruses or bacteria, people on the computer will be automatically contacted by phone, at a time of their choice, and given early warning of the problem. They will also be given advice on sensible precautions to take to minimise the possibility of their COPD worsening.

At the same time, we at the surgery will also be notified of the warning so that we can ensure people can get appointments at short notice and access to medications such as antibiotics and steroids quickly.

Trials of the system in a few places in Cornwall and Wales have shown that

the system has resulted in fewer emergency admissions to hospital and quicker access for sufferers to the medical advice and medications they require. Feedback from both patients and surgery staff in these areas has been overwhelmingly positive. I'm confident the system will work well here too and urge all Waterhouses Surgery patients with COPD to join the scheme; letters about it, together with advice packs should have reached all of you and once we get your replies back I can put you onto the system.

Winter months are usually a time that COPD sufferers dread but I'm sure this scheme will go a long way to improving the quality of life and confidence of those affected.

Dr Sunil Angris (COPD advisor to the health authority)