



## stennack surgery patient participation group newsletter

SPRING 2012  
ISSUE 1

### New Patient Participation Group

We are pleased to confirm the launch of our new Patient Participation Group. Minutes and further details of the inaugural evening can be found on our **website**. Printed copies are available from the new **PPG Information Point** in the waiting room.

The Group discussed results of the recent questionnaire with clinicians and management staff. As a result of feedback received the children's area in the waiting room will be moved and improved.

The PPG will also be consulted on a practice-led review of the waiting area due in the next few months. Any suggestions or comments on improving this facility for patients will be welcome.

#### *Some of the issues raised at the PPG Meeting*

- ❖ Appointment availability including SDS (Same Day Service)
- ❖ Publicising the "Did Not Attend" rate and look at ways to reduce it
- ❖ Getting through on the phone
- ❖ Improving awareness of the services at the Stennack
- ❖ A PPG suggestion box and information area/display in waiting room
- ❖ Encouraging younger patients and families to join the PPG
- ❖ Patients made more aware of the GP "Buddy System" for continuity of care
- ❖ A microphone in the waiting room for calling patients.
  - This could also be used for other announcements and events

Some members felt quarterly meetings may not be frequent enough. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in two months time on Monday **28th May 2012 at 6.30pm**

We also have a Virtual Group.

**See page 6 for details on how to get involved or contribute to Your PPG**

## GP Buddy System

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The Stennack Surgery currently has 10 GP Partners and two salaried GPs looking after approximately 13000 patients. As well as offering routine GP clinics at the surgery, the GPs also look after the patients at several local nursing homes and the Edward Hain Hospital. Some of the GPs are also involved in running specialist clinics both in the surgery and across the County. Due to these and other personal commitments our GPs are not available at the surgery every day.

We understand the benefits of trying to see the same GP for the same problem and appreciate

the difficulty and frustration of trying to maintain continuity of care. We have therefore introduced a "Buddy" system. The GPs work in pairs across the week, not only covering each other's daily paperwork, prescriptions and pathology results, but also seeing each other's patients when necessary.

Perhaps when your usual doctor is not available for a while, you may ask to see his/her buddy. More information is available at the PPG Information Point or from Reception

## Missed Appointments (Did Not Arrive - DNAs)

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We would like to thank the 95% of patients who keep their appointments.

Unfortunately the 5% of DNAs amounts to approximately  
**45 GP appointments** every week.

**The equivalent of three whole clinics or nine hours of clinic time!**

E.g. For the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> April we offered just under 1000 appointments with GPs and the SDS.

We had 47 DNAs (Did Not Arrive). Some of these appointments were even booked on the day!

The PPG will be looking at ways to help the surgery utilise this wasted capacity. We will be putting up a poster each week at the PPG Information Point with the number of lost appointments and hoping to encourage all our patients to remember to cancel if they cannot make it or change their mind.

*Please try to think of others - only book an appointment if you really plan to arrive for it. If you need to cancel, let the practice know. Thank you!*

## Same Day Service (SDS)

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From the recent questionnaire and at the first PPG meeting, there was a great deal of confusion around the SDS. Some patients felt that when they were offered an appointment with

the SDS they were being prevented from seeing a GP. PPG staff members were able to reassure patients and clarify some common misunderstandings.

### *The SDS is made up of three elements*

- ❖ The Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) led by a specialist Nurse/Emergency Care Practitioner
- ❖ The Acute Illness Clinic (AIC) led by a specially trained minor illness nurse or a GP
- ❖ The Duty Doctor who handles all visit requests, urgent phone calls, on-the-day requests for GP appointments when all routine ones have gone and also supports the MIU and AIC if needed

Patients can be seen, assessed, treated quickly, and where appropriate, given prompt access to the Duty Doctor (Practice GP) or a prescription. It is ideal for conditions like sore throats, coughs, colds, sore eyes, urine infections, hay fever, rashes, abdominal pain or any new problem which has occurred within 48 hours, as well as treating wounds and minor injuries

*“The Same Day Service enables the surgery to maximise the resources and skills of all the clinicians to increase the overall level of appointments available to patients”.*

**Appointments can be made on the day and are available 8am to 8pm, Mon – Fri.**

**Our Minor Injury Unit is also open every Bank Holiday and at the weekends during the school summer holidays.**

## How is the Practice Run?

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The Practice Managers and administration staff undertake to keep the practice running smoothly. The receptionists deal with a constant stream of telephone calls and enquiries, so patience is appreciated.

The Doctor's Receptionist role is often misunderstood by patients. They are often portrayed as purposefully trying to delay patients' access to the healthcare they want, or trying to

deal with patients problems without having the necessary qualifications or authority.

This is an understandable misconception, as patients can often mistake the short supply of appointments for a receptionist being difficult. Patients also often object to being asked what their health problems are by a receptionist, as they would rather talk to a Doctor or Nurse about it.

The role of Receptionist in the modern surgery is actually quite complex. Receptionist is actually a poor description of their role. Meeting and greeting patients at the front desk is part of their role, and they are trained in customer service skills for this purpose, however, it's the tip of the

iceberg. It is probably more appropriate to describe them as members of a Patient Support Team, responsible for dealing with patients request for appointments, test results, patient transport, visits, prescriptions, registrations, and problem solving

### Other Receptionist Duties

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- ❖ Handling Doctors and Nurses telephone enquiries, finding out information they need to help patients, and contacting people on their behalf.
- ❖ Giving out patient test results.
- ❖ Dealing with prescription requests
- ❖ Making outgoing calls to patients to book follow up appointments.
- ❖ Looking after the patient flow and their welfare through the building day to day.

*“So why do Receptionists ask about my health problem when I request an appointment?”*

This is not because they are nosey or want to do the Doctors work for them. It is part of the essential process of making sure the most appropriate appointment can be made. As for all surgeries, demand for appointments outweighs the supply, so to ensure the right people get the right care at the right time we have a variety of Nurse and Doctor appointments.

### *The following appointments are available*

- ❖ A normal routine Doctor appointment, bookable several weeks ahead.
- ❖ A telephone appointment. In many cases the Doctor/Nurse can deal with your query over the phone. The Doctor can prescribe or give other advice without you needing to visit the surgery.
- ❖ A home visit, where the patient is housebound and needs urgent care that day.
- ❖ Same Day Service – Appointments offered on the day as described above.

## Some Surgery Facts

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- ❖ We have approximately **13000** registered patients
- ❖ We offer about **900 GP/SDS** appointments per week
- ❖ We have a nursing team which comprises of nurse practitioners, chronic disease specialist nurses, general nurses and health care assistants.
- ❖ Reception handles over **500 telephone calls** every day rising to **600 on Mondays** with requests for appointments on Mondays being three times higher than the rest of the week.
- ❖ On Monday mornings there are **six people taking calls**, but it is still very busy.
- ❖ If you can phone another day, or in the afternoon, you are much more likely to get through and not have to wait.



## Over to You

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We would welcome feedback on this Newsletter from patients, practice staff and clinicians.

Patient suggestions for future issues include...

- ❖ A-day-in-the-life of a GP (diary)
- ❖ Services at the Stennack
- ❖ Improving health/ healthy life style choices and improving self-care
- ❖ GP led Clinical Commissioning (KCCG)

What would you like to see in future editions? Please send your ideas and articles for consideration to Linda Petzing [lindapetzing@hotmail.com](mailto:lindapetzing@hotmail.com)

Contributions from the Practice team would be especially welcome.

We also attach a poster on the Same Day Service and Minor Injuries Unit.

Using these services where appropriate will improve access to medical help and avoid the need to travel to West Cornwall Hospital for minor injuries treatment.

Don't keep to yourself, please tell others who attend the surgery.

The Minor Injury Service is available to anyone in the area. You do not need to be a registered patient.

## Housekeeping

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The Agenda for our May meeting, including draft Terms of Reference will be published on our website and emailed to all members by 14<sup>th</sup> May. Copies will be available to collect at the **PPG Information Point** by mid May.



## View from the Chair

Welcome to our first PPG newsletter. I hope you found it interesting and informative.

I would like to thank all the patients, clinicians and staff involved in the newsletter and new Group. Fiona Vinnicombe and Chris Gendall deserve a special mention for supporting me in the brave new world of the complexities and demands in running a modern GP practice... including the acquisition of a new... and growing...vocabulary!

I would like "Our" PPG to work for the benefit of everyone. Patients, staff, clinicians and the wider community.

This hope was shared with the Reception team, following the PPG meeting in March. Staff asked if the PPG could help encourage patients to use the Same Day Service when offered. There was genuine concern many patients wait unnecessarily to see their own GP for an acute problem which if treated earlier, could result in less suffering, reduced anxiety and better outcomes.

Talking to other patients at the meeting confirmed my lack of understanding of the SDS was common and revealed other areas of confusion. I hope this newsletter goes some way to address and improve communication in these areas and enable us as patients to use the excellent services available at the Stennack better and more effectively.

I would value your comments and suggestions for future issues. Thank you.

*Linda Petzing*

Please visit the Stennack Surgery website for further information or follow the link [http://www.thestennacksurgery.co.uk/website/Y01922/files/Flyer\\_SPPG\\_patient\\_recruitment\\_200212.pdf](http://www.thestennacksurgery.co.uk/website/Y01922/files/Flyer_SPPG_patient_recruitment_200212.pdf)

Please leave any feedback on the comments tab of the PPG webpage or in comments box at the PPG Information Point in the waiting room

**Thank you for reading!**

*Linda Petzing*

PPG Interim Chair

*Fiona Vinnicombe*

PPG Surgery Lead

No need to go to West Cornwall Hospital. I got treated here!



Help us to Help You. Please Use Our...

# Same Day Service

## Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)

Walk-in 8am to 8pm

Monday to Friday

Plus weekends in Summer

Available to All

Run by Our

Emergency Nurse Practitioners

- Bleeding
- Cuts
- Burns
- Injuries

## Acute Illness Clinic (AIC)

Appointment "on the day"

8am to 8pm

Monday to Friday

Stennack Patients Only

Run by Our

Minor Illness Nurses

- Sore throat
- Cough
- Infections
- Rashes
- Hayfever

Fully Supported by The Duty Doctor

A Practice GP

mmm..I've had this sore throat for two days now. Should get it checked out. It'll probably take a week to get to see my GP, and I need time off work ...ahh.. I know. I'll make an appointment with the Same Day Service! At least there's a GP available if needed, and I can get a prescription.. Plus I can go after work. **RESULT!**



