



The Abingdon Surgery Newsletter Spring 2018

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Welcome to another edition of our newsletter. I think spring has arrived – although it may be only for this week. It seems to have been a long and dreary winter which impacts on everyone both physically and mentally, so this weather is a welcome change. I saw my first swallow two weeks ago and shouted my usual ‘Welcome!’ greeting to it much to the bemusement of my two work colleagues, but for me this is a true sign that summer is on the way.

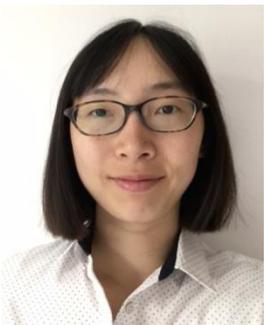
Once again we have new staff to welcome to the surgery – Qi Huang, will be our Registrar for the next 18 months, and Sarah Preston started with us on the 30th of April as a Nurse Practitioner. Helen Harmsworth will also be starting in May as a Nurse Practitioner, but working for the GP Federation as a whole.

We welcome them all and wish them good luck!

Terry Cornford, Care Navigator - terry.cornford@nhs.net

In the Surgery

Staff Changes



***Dr Qi (pronounced ‘Chee’)Huang** joined us as Registrar in February*

I’m in the last year of my GP training and joined the Abingdon Surgery in February 2018. I enjoy working here with the whole team and will be here for over a year.

I completed my medical degree at University of Birmingham in 2012 and obtained my bachelor’s degree at Kings College London. Then I worked in the East Midlands before moving to Oxford to start my GP training.

I’m originally from China and I speak Mandarin Chinese.

In my spare time, I enjoy walks in the beautiful countryside with my family. Now the weather is getting warmer, I plan to cycle more regularly. I like houseplants and I am learning how to look after them. You may spot a few plants in my room.



***Sarah Preston** has joined us as Nurse Practitioner*

I was brought up in Luxembourg. I have a husband, two children and two cats. I’ve been a nurse for more years than I care to remember and a nurse practitioner for the last 6-10 years (with a break to live in the Falkland Islands and see lots of penguins).

I will be seeing patients with urgent on-the-day problems such as infections and rashes, I will also

see aches and pains, lumps, bumps etc. - anything that isn't an ongoing problem really.

I have a special interest in sexual health and contraception and I can offer implant and coil insertion and removal.

I've lived and travelled lots of places and my interests outside of work include reading, baking and adventure racing (very slowly!)



Helen Harmsworth
*will be employed as a
Nurse Practitioner from
May*

Helen will be employed by the Abingdon Federation of GP surgeries:

The Abingdon Surgery
Malthouse Surgery
Marcham Road Family Health Centre
Long Furlong Medical Centre
Berinsfield Health Centre
Clifton Hampden Surgery.

Helen will be assisting in the delivery of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's *proactive GP support to patients in Nursing & Residential Homes Scheme*

The aim of this scheme (in OCCG language) is to

address the specific additional primary healthcare needs of patients in nursing and residential care homes, recognising the benefits of working in partnership with the home, and noting the additional input required from GP practices to ensure the highest quality of care and to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions. The project will work alongside the Care Home Support Service (CHSS), who work in partnership with care home staff in all care homes – nursing and residential, with the main focus of supporting care homes to improve the care of their residents.

The OCCG will fund this service providing for the employment of a team of clinical staff, Helen being one of them.

The new team will also be providing a primary care home visiting service for the surgeries within the Federation.

Dr Fran Fieldhouse



Some of you may have recently read about Dr Fieldhouse in the Oxford Mail, heard her on BBC Radio Oxford, or seen her on the TV discussing her fund-raising run for Virtual Doctors.

Here's her story:

'This month, I am running the length of the Oxfordshire way (67 miles) to raise money for a charity I volunteer with called the Virtual Doctors.



The Virtual Doctors charity saves lives in rural Zambia using mobile phones. How? By providing a 'virtual doctor' volunteer to give medical advice via a mobile phone app. This advice allows the local healthcare worker to give correct and immediate treatment on site and often prevents hospital admission.

We know this saves lives. We have so many positive stories to tell.

Like a 9 year old with shingles affecting her eye, who received up to date advice about anti-viral medication and eye drops to prevent blindness.

Like the women in premature labour who received steroids in time to help her baby's lungs develop.

Like the boy with a long standing bone infection who had been from clinic to clinic getting partially treated until a team at Virtual Doctors understood the severity of the infection and risk to life and managed to organise treatment at a charity orthopaedic hospital in the capital.

This week a healthcare worker wrote: 'Thank you for your generosity. The advice saved a life'

My ambitious run has so far raised £3,000 which will go towards our expansion into Malawi. Thank you to those who have kindly donated so far. We are a small charity and every penny counts! Donation boxes will be at reception until my run is complete.'

Blood tests

A plea from our nurses – if you are coming to the surgery for a blood test, please ensure that you are fully hydrated before you come, and take a brisk walk beforehand to warm yourself up - this makes it much easier to get the blood out!



Urine Infections

According to the British Journal of General Practice, urinary tract infections (UTIs) are one of the most common conditions seen in female patients within primary care.

Community pharmacists are familiar with symptomatic UTI management and supplying antibiotics could therefore improve patient access to treatment.

To this end, the OCCG has agreed that women aged between 16 and 65 years old, presenting with 3 or more of the following symptoms can now obtain antibiotics from certain pharmacies *without a prescription and without having to provide a urine sample*:

- painful urination
- increased urinary frequency and urgency of recent onset
- pain in the central lower part of the abdomen
- passing abnormally large volumes of dilute urine

The local pharmacies are **Lloyds Peachcroft, North Abingdon Pharmacy and Tesco** although this list may well increase as other pharmacies join the scheme.

Other News

Prostate Cancer

From the BBC news web site – 10th April 2018

Four in 10 prostate cancer cases in the UK are diagnosed late, a study suggests.

*The report by charity **Orchid** found a "worrying trend" of late diagnosis with 37% of prostate cancer cases diagnosed at stages three and four.*

It comes as ministers announced extra funding for prostate cancer research.

*In **February figures showed** the number of men dying from prostate cancer had overtaken female deaths from breast cancer for the first time in the UK.*

With an aging population, the charity has called for urgent action to prevent a "ticking time bomb in terms of prostate cancer provision".

Orchid chief executive Rebecca Porta said: "With prostate cancer due to be the most prevalent cancer in the UK within the next 12 years, we are facing a potential crisis in terms of diagnostics, treatment and patient care. Urgent action needs to be taken now." The report canvassed the opinion of the UK's leading prostate cancer experts and looked at previously published data to get a picture of the prostate cancer care across the UK.

The data came from organisations such as NHS England, charities and the National Prostate Cancer Audit.

The report says that 42% of prostate cancer patients saw their GP with symptoms twice or more before they were referred, with 6% seen five or more times prior to referral.

News such as this has resulted in an increase in patient requests for PSA (prostate specific antigen) testing. However, as Dr Fieldhouse explains below, this is *not* a definitive test for the condition:

Should I get a PSA test for cancer?

PSA is not a reliable cancer test. This is why there is no PSA screening program available in the UK. In men under 50, with no symptoms or risk factors (black race or family history), research has shown that testing PSA alone does **NOT** save lives.

What is more important is to be alert for urinary symptoms and visit your GP if you notice any of the following. They will organise a urine test, prostate examination plus PSA test which together help decide the likelihood of cancer:

But remember the symptoms are similar to those of other prostate conditions so do not necessarily mean you have cancer.

Passing urine more often

You might find you need to empty your bladder more than normal during the day.

Getting up in the night

You may be getting up a few times in the night to empty your bladder.

Difficulty passing urine

It might be harder to empty your bladder than normal. This is called urinary hesitancy.

It might be difficult to start emptying your bladder or the flow might be weaker.

You might be straining to pass urine. Or it might stop and start when you do go.

Urgency

You might often have a sudden strong urge to empty your bladder. And you may need to rush to the toilet.

Leaking urine

You might find that you leak a little after passing urine.

If you're worried about your prostate cancer risk – for example, because you have a family history of it – talk to your GP about your individual risk.

Public Health England urges vigilance in spotting signs of scarlet fever

Public Health England (PHE) advises parents to be aware of scarlet fever symptoms following a substantial rise in reported cases across England in 2017 to 2018.



The latest [Health Protection Report](#) (13 April 2018) shows 20,372 cases of scarlet fever have been reported since mid-September 2017, compared to an average of 9,461 for the same period over the last 5 years. There were 1,180 cases reported for the most recent week (2 to 8 April 2018).

Dr Nick Phin, Deputy Director of National Infection Service at PHE, said:

'We are urging parents to look out for the symptoms of scarlet fever such as a sore throat, fever and rash after seeing a significant upsurge in cases this year. The good news is that over the Easter holidays we have seen a slight decline in cases, which may indicate that activity has peaked.'



Scarlet fever, which mainly affects young children, is not usually a serious illness and can be easily treated with the appropriate antibiotics. We encourage parents to contact their GP or NHS 111 if they spot symptoms of scarlet fever or have concerns.



Mens Sheds

A few newsletters ago I included an article about Mensheds:

'The Mensheds movement began in Australia with the aim of bringing men together to help improve their health and boost social inclusion, and now the idea is taking off in the UK.'

There is now a local group in Sutton Courtenay calling themselves Shed Oxford:

We are a group of like-minded individuals who follow our own hobbies, as well as undertaking jobs and tasks for others in society, whilst gathering together for a few hours a week enjoying the social aspect of the shed whilst being productive.

We work, rest and play enjoying each other's company in a wonderful location in the grounds of the Abbey, surrounded by greenery – check out their website www.theabbey.uk.com

We perform various tasks for the Abbey in lieu of paying rent.

Visitors are welcome to have a chat over a cup of coffee, and see what we have to offer. New members and volunteers always welcome. The Shed is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:30 to dusk.

Members' interests include crafts, hobbies, pottery, wood working, metal working etc. using, whenever possible, recycled materials. We have equipment and tools for some and look to expand in the future.

Pick up a flyer in the waiting room or contact them on shedoxford@gmail.com

How to treat hay fever yourself



There's currently no cure for hay fever and you can't prevent it, but there are things you can do things to ease your symptoms when the pollen count is high:

Do

- put Vaseline around your nostrils to trap pollen
- wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting into your eyes
- shower and change your clothes after you've been outside to wash pollen off
- stay indoors whenever possible
- keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
- vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth
- buy a pollen filter for the air vents in your car and a vacuum cleaner with a special HEPA filter

Don't

- cut grass or walk on grass
- spend too much time outside
- keep fresh flowers in the house
- smoke or be around smoke – it makes your symptoms worse

- dry clothes outside – they can catch pollen
- let pets into the house if possible – they can carry pollen indoors

Transport to clinic appointments



Here at the surgery we are able to book patient transport with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) by phone or online for patients attending clinic appointments (not for walk-in clinics where you do not have a timed appointment). Patients can also book transport themselves by phoning 0300 100 0015. Please note however there are strict criteria governing who is eligible for transport. If you call SCAS to book transport you will be asked if there is a diagnosed medical reason that prevents use of public transport and which falls within one of the following categories:

- partially sighted or blind
- suffers from severe mental difficulties, e.g. dementia, long-term confusion
- needs medical intervention on route
- attending for active treatment likely to cause severe physical side effects
- cannot stand unaided

If you *are* able to book transport, you will need to be ready for collection by the crew 2 hours before your appointment time.

If you are not eligible for hospital transport, Abingdon & District Volunteer Centre Care Scheme may be able to help. There is a charge for the service but this will be less than the cost of a taxi. You can call them on 01235 522438 – the office is open from 10 am to

12.30 Monday to Friday. (Wheelchair access vehicles are not available).

The Oxfordshire Comet is a new bookable transport service from Oxfordshire County Council. If you are an Oxfordshire resident and don't have access to suitable public transport, the Oxfordshire Comet can transport you from your door to any destination in the Oxfordshire. The service is also open to wheelchair users and those with mobility issues.



There are leaflets in the surgery waiting room or check out the information on the Oxfordshire County Council website.

Our Patients

This is Jason Southgate, a patient at The Abingdon Surgery and his story is an inspiration to anyone trying to lose weight and improve their health.

'I am taking part in the 100 mile RideLondon for Diabetes UK because as a former diabetic I would like to help others'



Diabetes has always been a common word in my family my mother is type 2 and my brother is type 1, I however up until where my story starts was clear of the condition. So back in 2013 I was 34 years old and weighed nearly 30 stone, up until this point I was relatively fit despite my size. However, my health was also beginning to see the effects of years of weight gain and I had developed a number of conditions including high blood pressure and then type 2 diabetes. Despite best efforts to lose the weight prior to this I knew I had to look at more effective ways to

lose the weight, not just for me but so I could be there for my wife and children. Help from the team at Abingdon Surgery and the Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology & Metabolism (OCDEM) and support from the Oxford Bariatric Support Group (OBS) guided me towards Gastric bypass surgery, and in 2013 I underwent the procedure.

Today 4 years on I am 13 stone, I require no medication and my diabetes has gone into remission. I

am very thankful for the years of support from my GP at Abingdon Surgery and the OCDEM team and gastric surgery patient support group (OBS) for those living with obesity, as diabetes and obesity are very closely linked. However I am one of the lucky ones that the central funding of the NHS has helped tackle my diabetes, my mother and brother and many others out there are less fortunate and still have to live with the condition. I would really like to show my appreciation and help raise both awareness and funds for the charity, as the good work it underpins could help my mother and brother one day as well as the wider population.

In terms of my lifestyle now, I try to be as active as I can and encourage my children to do the same. I am a regular cyclist both road and mountain bike, I'm part of a local cycling club (Abingdon Freewheeling) and regularly go out on club/solo rides. I have also completed a number of sportive events including 100 mile based distances but never taken part in the RideLondon event, so I would like to do this as part of something that is close to my heart. I also hope to inspire others who suffer with weight problems to get more active and prevent the onset of diabetes where possible.

Long Service Claims!

After the last newsletter, Barbara Townsend e-mailed me 'I have been registered at the surgery for 57 years, apart from 3 years when I was at university, and even then I used the surgery as a 'visitor'. Always happy with the treatment and service I receive. My mother, now 97, has also been with the practice for 57 years – and without the 3 year gap!

Another patient (who did not want her name included) also e-mailed me 'Many thanks for the latest newsletter. I see Pat and Frank Blake will have been with the Surgery for 50 years in January. I can beat that as I am now 73 years of age and can remember being treated by Dr Barwood as a very young child. As a teenager I did leave the Surgery for a year or two as I travelled, but after marrying and settling in Abingdon, I re-registered with you and the Surgery (I think it was actually Dr Vivian - I know he looked after me when my second son was born) saw me safely through my pregnancy with my first son who was 50 earlier this month. I have been with the Surgery without any breaks since then - different doctors but the same Surgery.'

Any views or comments on the newsletter, the surgery or any other medical issues in the news? Any of your own news which would be of interest or help to other patients?

E-mail me at terry.cornford@nhs.net

Regular Surgery Opening Times

Monday	8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Tuesday	8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Wednesday	8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Thursday	8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Friday	8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

Reception is open from 8.15 a.m.

The extended hours service in the evenings and at weekends is available for pre-booked appointments **only**.

Telephone Appointments

You may request a telephone appointment with your GP or one of the Practice Nurses and they will call you on the contact number provided at or around the appointed time.

Prescription Requests

These cannot be accepted over the telephone or by e-mail. They must either be in writing (forms are available in reception) or via patient online access for which you will need to register. Please ask at reception.