

Welcome to our Winter edition

Well what a year we have just had! If I hear in the media 'we are in unprecedented times' one more time I will have a meltdown!



I'm sure you feel the same, and it's been a long nine months. It's not over yet, and though we have a vaccine for the virus causing COVID-19 on the horizon, it's still a little way off for most of us. Hopefully 2021 will see brighter times for everyone.

In 2020 I've been especially proud to be part of the practice's team. I have to thank all the staff for the remarkable ways they've confronted the pandemic and adapted to make sure the health of patients continues. They quickly moved from face-to-face consultations to telephone and online appointments, only seeing those who needed a physical examination or tests. This kept actual contact to a minimum. Even the flu clinics took on a new format. Those of you who took part in the 'Drive Through' flu clinic in October will have seen something very different. What an experience! Just under 800 patients were vaccinated in just two days...in a car park. You can read more about this elsewhere in this newsletter. The PPG and I would like to congratulate all the practice staff and express our thanks for being there for us all throughout this global crisis.

Christmas will be a welcome distraction from the pain and suffering this difficult year has brought. But it's still important to take a leaf out of the practice's book and adapt. We need to be realistic about how we celebrate. We should follow the guidance of scientists about how we can spend Christmas safely with our loved ones. We have five days of respite from the strictest infection control measures, but we must remember the coronavirus hasn't gone away. It won't be taking five days holiday! We must all keep ourselves as safe and well as possible, even if – just for this year – it's completely different from the 'normal' Christmas we're used to.

I wish you all a truly safe, peaceful and healthy Christmas and look forward to a healthier 2021 for all.
Jill Wadsworth, Chair, Patient Group

Vaccine major development

A lot has happened around COVID-19 since the beginning of the year. One major recent development is evidence that not one, but two vaccines have emerged that seem successful in protecting people against the virus causing COVID-19. One of these has already been approved for use in the UK and will be rolled out over the coming months once it arrives from the manufacturers in Belgium.

Research to find a suitable vaccine has been intense in 2020. Nearly 200 are currently being tested and a smaller number now in human trials. Doing vaccine research isn't easy. It moves through three phases to make sure a possible vaccine causes no undue harm, actually works against a particular virus, and produces the longest possible protection. It's not yet clear how long the new vaccine will protect a person from coronavirus. Some vaccines offer less than a year of viral protection. But even this makes a real difference. It can prevent outbreaks, keep people healthy, and bring a virus under control.

Finding a vaccine that actually works is also not easy. Though viruses are quite simple organisms, how they latch themselves onto the 'host cells' in our bodies, using stalks of protein, is complicated (different viruses use different proteins with different stalks).

The vaccines that seem most effective against the COVID-19 virus work by teaching the body's immune system to reject this particular virus's protein stalks.

So, there is hope. What's important now is that as many people as possible are vaccinated to prevent them catching the virus and spreading it to other people. This vaccine will save lives, as vaccines have for many other diseases through the 20th century such as diphtheria, whooping cough, and measles. It's our community responsibility to protect ourselves and others by being vaccinated.

For information on how the vaccine will be given in Bingley, follow information on the Bingley Medical Practice website. We recommend that you don't call the practice directly at the moment. Patients will be contacted when the time comes to commence the vaccination programme. Certain groups will be prioritised to receive

the first doses, but eventually there will be enough people protected to control COVID-19 in 2021. There is indeed hope.
Ian Hodgson



How we have faced COVID-19

In November 2020, Carey Dowson, Practice Manager, kindly shared responses to questions posted by the PPG on behalf of patients. Here are Carey's responses.

1. Compared with before the pandemic, what's the process now if a patient wants to see a GP? Is there a delay? What happens if someone is really concerned?

Our GPs are still available for our patients. Things will be different but if anyone has any concerns about their health or well-being they should call the practice.

The **appointments process** has changed, in line with NHS England and government instructions to reduce the number of people entering the surgery. Pre-pandemic, a patient would book to see a particular GP in their consulting rooms. Now, all our appointments are initially via a telephone call. The GP will then decide if an examination is needed and, if so, make a convenient appointment, usually on the same day. The GP will wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), usually an apron, gloves, face mask and, on occasions, a visor or safety goggles. We do ask that all patients attending the practice **wear face masks** to protect staff and other patients.



As to a delay, I would say not. But it is different. The GP may use video consultations, ask for pictures, or use text or AccuRX (software GPs sometimes use to communicate with patients). The advantage of AccuRX over standard texts is that patients can respond immediately via text, making the whole process quicker. We've also introduced the eConsult concept which is another useful way to communicate with the practice.

We are still operating our **telephone triage system**, but we do ask that patients kindly call between 8.00-10.30am. We've created an Urgent Care team for the morning surgery which seems to work well dealing with the increased telephone demands. We do ask that for repeat prescriptions

or enquires about test results, patients call after 11.00am to help smooth out the telephone demand.

One positive from the pandemic is that these new ways of working have been rapidly introduced after many years of just talking about them. Hopefully, we'll be able to continue in the future, in conjunction with face-to-face appointments.

2. What non-urgent services are available now, or will be available soon? (E.g. screening, blood tests.)

Most services in the practice have returned to some form of normality, within the constraints outlined above. The most recent is the introduction of **dedicated coil clinics** for our three GP family planning specialists. **Blood clinics** have been running for some time, but the challenge is that treatment rooms need cleaning down after each patient. This reduces capacity so we've trained another phlebotomist, Claire. Some may recognise Claire as she's from (and still is) part of our telephone and front desk reception team. **Long-term disease management reviews** are still on-going but, like other appointments, these may not be face-to-face unless absolutely necessary. We'll need to continue some of these new ways of working post-pandemic, as we've found them to be of real value to patients. We also had some real success with our drive-through and walk-through flu clinics this year, and we're seriously considering the same for 2021.

3. Since the beginning of the pandemic, how many Bingley Medical Practice patients have been diagnosed with COVID-19? How many have died as a result of COVID-19?

To date, we've had 302 patients, or 2.3% of our population, testing positive for COVID-19. It's also with incredible sadness to report that we have had some deaths. The practice feels that each and every death is a person taken before their time, especially during this pandemic. We're not happy to present data or numbers as this seem impersonal to grieving relatives and friends. We don't wish to cause any more upset and we hope you understand.

4. Anything else you think it's important for people to know?

It's been an incredibly tiring and stressful time for the practice team. Staff in the back office needed to change work patterns and

adapt quickly to meet demand. They've performed marvellously, taking everything in their stride. I'm really impressed with their approach and abilities. The doctor and nurse teams have also been under strain, having to change how they consulted with patients and the new ways of working. I'm super proud of everybody in the practice, how they've worked together as one team, and continue to deliver first class care to our patients in Bingley.



This last lock-down has been particularly tough. We're 'tired and COVID fatigued' and, like everyone else in Bingley, the 'tiered' restrictions apply to us. We also struggle to see grandchildren and friends. We understand and appreciate that many of our patients may well be furloughed or have businesses that can't operate. Our heart goes out to these people during these very trying times.

We've been conscious of the need to look after the practice team's well-being and mental health, so we've organised various morale-boosting activities. Currently, we're mid-way through a Practice Bake-off, where nearly everyone in the practice (even me) brings in unmarked tins containing our attempts at baking. This week, it's small cakes or buns! We've also organised individual exercise logs or runs in place, and we encourage everyone to take a breath of fresh air during a busy and hectic day. This can be simply walking around the car park and up the entry ramp.

Finally, I do need to acknowledge the PPG and staff for one particular thing. Back at the start of the pandemic there was a scarcity of PPE. At one point, we only had enough masks for a little under two weeks of normal operating. Nothing was available in the supply chain and I was really worried that we would need to shut the practice down. A request for help was shared by the PPG and staff on social media and, as a result, masks soon began to flow in. This filled the gap until government stocks finally kicked in.

Carey Dowson

Drive through flu clinic

As most of you are aware, the annual flu clinic took place on 17th and 18th of October 2020. This year's clinics were very different due to the COVID-19 restrictions, meaning the practice had to create a way of giving the vaccine outdoors in such a way that crowds were avoided, and social distancing maintained. This presented many challenges, so the practice came up with the idea of a drive through flu clinic.



This turned out to be a huge success! There were almost no queues and everyone needing the vaccine received it within the allotted weekend. The whole process was impressive and efficient, so much so that I was able to record some of the times it took people to receive the injections. The average time for someone to go from the administration booth to vaccination booth and then to the bottom of the hill at the end of the car park was 97.96 seconds.



The fastest time was 53.35 seconds. This is considerably faster than the usual method. The whole event received much well-deserved praise from people stopping by to tell us how impressed they were, or people mentioning it on social media. A number of PPG members volunteered over the weekend, tasked with offering an extra pair of hands to make the whole event run smoothly, for example welcoming cars or directing traffic. We also provided refreshments for practice staff.

I think it is safe to say that the flu clinics were a great success. Hundreds of people received the vaccine in only two days whilst conforming to social distancing rules. I can personally say that I found volunteering at the clinic interesting and rewarding. If anyone is interested in helping in the future or in joining the PPG, I would recommend emailing our chair Jill. I can safely say that being a PPG member is, for me, extremely stimulating.

MEET THE STAFF



Meet Janet Menebhi, our Well-being Worker here at Bingley Medical Practice.

Janet works on Thursdays and can help with those non-medical issues that are important to you. These can include:

- Meeting new people and getting out more
- Feeling healthier
- Support with weight issues
- Building confidence
- Improving low mood

Janet joined Bingley Medical Practice at the beginning of October 2020. At the moment, all appointments are via telephone, but hopefully we will soon get back to face-to-face meetings. Janet has many years' experience working in the NHS and with community groups. Any member of the practice can refer you to Janet, or you can self-refer – just ask reception staff to book you an appointment.

We know that things are very different and difficult at the moment, but please don't struggle alone. Janet is here to help you. She's very approachable and easy to talk to, so please get in touch if you would like some help.

ACTIVITY CHALLENGE

Keeping practice staff fit in winter

Bingley Medical Practice staff are taking part in a physical activity challenge in the few weeks before Christmas.

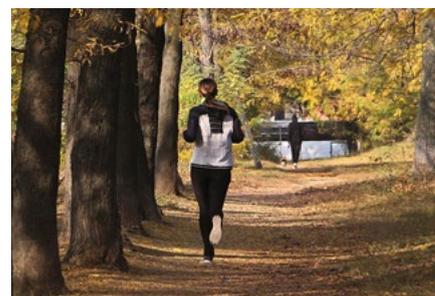
There are two teams involved who are competing to see which one can clock the biggest distance by running, walking, cycling (or their preferred method!) over the five weeks leading up to Christmas. Twenty-eight members of staff have taken up the challenge and we've just passed the halfway point. Each week, team members submit their weekly kilometres

(cycling kilometres are divided by three!). Both teams had clocked at least 1000km by the end of week two! Team 'Run Direction' took an early lead over 'Cool Runnings,' but competition is tough!

The challenge is a fantastic opportunity to be physically active, which has huge benefits on our mental and physical health. With the increase in remote working, it's also been a great team-building activity and motivational boost in the cold and dark winter months, with the added challenge of COVID-19 restrictions. The challenge will end the Sunday before

Christmas, when the winning team will be announced. Well done Team BMP!

Dr Yasmin Small



Hello - my name is Peter Home. I'm your elected public Governor representing Bingley (Central) ward within Airedale Hospital for a three-year term.



I'm one of 21 Governors; 21 having been elected to represent the council wards that Airedale Hospital covers, 4 elected staff, 4 nominated by key partners and the Chairman.

The Trust is run by a Board of Directors, with a majority of non-executive directors (non-execs), who make decisions about the Trust's strategies and plans. The Governors approve the appointments of non-execs who report to and are challenged by the Council of Governors on the services provided by the Trust including performance, quality and safety. Governors do not have a role in running the Trust, but they do inform the Board's decision making by telling them what local people think about the Trust's services and plans. This is achieved by attending the Council of Governors meetings and numerous sub committees of the Board.

I am a member of Bingley Medical Practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) as are many of my fellow governors of their local PPGs. I have also attended the PPGs at Springfield and Oak Bank surgeries. We

consider that it is vital that close contacts are maintained with the patients and those groups. This provides that current views are fed back into the end to end process to inform and ensure that all treatment is successfully delivered to the required standards to meet the patient's expectations. In the current 2nd phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, Airedale has reached a daily higher peak of admitted patients than in the 1st phase. They're accommodated on three 'hot' wards with a further one on standby. The outcomes from treatment are far better in this 2nd phase with a higher percentage being discharged home after shorter stays. This is mainly due to changed ways of working based on lessons learnt from phase 1, including a better understanding of the best medicines to fight the virus, and how to treat older patients and those with other underlying health conditions.

In recent weeks, we have just started hearing of positive initial outcomes from research into effective vaccines against the virus causing COVID-19. The time taken to reach this stage is nothing short of miraculous, and the government plans to begin providing the vaccine in December 2020. But it will take some time to provide country-wide cover.

In the meantime, we should still keep safe and follow the rules of washing hands, wearing a mask and social distancing so we can find a safe way through these most trying of times. Should you wish to become a member of Airedale NHS Foundation Trust (it's free and you are kept updated with what is happening) or have a question/feedback concerning Airedale's services and plans, you may contact me by emailing governors@anhst.nhs.uk

Take care, remember others, and have as good an Xmas together as you can.
Peter Home

World AIDS day

December 1st was World AIDS Day. Much of the talk during 2020 has, understandably, been around COVID-19. But there is another virus still causing problems, HIV.



It's nearly 40 years since HIV first appeared. Figures from 2019 confirm that around 38m people live with HIV globally, and there are about 1.7m new infections per year. In adults, the number of new infections is roughly the same for men and women. In children, the number of new infections in 2019 was 150,000, though this is down significantly from 2010.

Great progress has been made in bringing HIV under control, especially access to treatment. Whilst this doesn't cure a person of HIV, it does mean they can live healthy lives and – equally important – prevents them being able to spread the virus to another person. This is critical when the person can't take the usual precautions to prevent onward transmission.

In all our talk of COVID-19 in 2020, we should appreciate the serious impact of the coronavirus on HIV services across the world. With many clinics and community services closing to protect staff and patients, hospitals in some countries filled to capacity with COVID-19 patients, health staff diverted to COVID-19 care, and the need for everyone to socially isolate, the mental health of people living with HIV has taken a real blow. This applies to many others with a pre-existing disease, so it's important to appreciate the collateral damage a disease like COVID-19 has on people and communities.

So, whilst COVID-19 continues to dominate the headlines, let's spare a thought for people with other diseases, and how their world has been turned upside down perhaps in different ways to ours. For people living with HIV, remote consultations via computer or phone and, in some countries, treatment deliveries to the home, have helped during 2020. But let's hope that in 2021 we can all benefit from moving from this stage of crisis to something resembling normality.

Ian Hodgson

Public access defibrillators in Bingley

If there is ever a time you have to make a 999 call for an ambulance, depending on the emergency, they may tell you where the nearest public access defibrillator is located. They'll give you a code to open the cabinet and give you instructions on how to use the defibrillator.

There are a few defibrillators dotted around Bingley. One is just outside the main door at Canalside Health Centre, installed with support from the Patient Group. This year it was taken to patients seven times during the first lock-down, and twice more recently. Once the defibrillator is returned to its cabinet a member of the patient group is alerted via text. This is so they can make sure it's ready for the next time it's needed.

Sadly, due to COVID-19, we've had to pause the CPR training sessions, but we hope that at some point in 2021 we'll be allowed to start again. We will let you know as soon as they become available.

Three Wise Women

Would have asked directions

★ Arrived on time ★

Helped deliver the baby

Brought practical gifts

★ Cleaned the stable ★

Made a casserole

and there would be

★ peace on earth! ★