



The latest news from *Mid Essex CCG*

Engage



NHS
Mid Essex
Clinical Commissioning Group

April 2017

What's inside?



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Welcome...

Welcome everyone to April's edition of Engage.

I recently had the pleasure of attending the police and crime commissioner's conference – a fantastic event which highlighted some of the very positive work being done with our "urgent care concordat" group around mental health, including street triage pilots and preparation for the new Policing and Crime Bill.



Dr Caroline Dollery Chair, MECCG

Lots more is being planned, in partnership, to help people Live Well – in particular what can be done to share information between fire, ambulance, police and health services so that more support can be offered to vulnerable people in the community.

The CCG is currently awaiting news on becoming an innovator in this area and so I'll keep you posted on any developments in future editions.

Caroline Dollery

Chair Mid Essex CCG



Bowel Cancer Awareness – don't be embarrassed to visit your GP

This month, the CCG has been supporting the national Bowel Cancer Awareness campaign to encourage those with symptoms to make an appointment with their GP.

We want to get as many people as possible to check for symptoms and make sure those aged between 60 and 74 years old, who are automatically invited to a screening every two years, attend their appointments.

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Those who have a higher risk of getting bowel cancer can have the test at a younger age. Check out <http://bit.ly/1TRvJgV> for more information on screening.

Figures show that bowel cancer incidence rates have increased by 14 per cent in Great Britain since the late 1970s but bowel cancer is very treatable if caught in the early stages. Those who display any symptoms should visit their GP as soon as possible – and although some patients may feel embarrassed, GPs are used to seeing people with bowel problems.

[Click here](#) to read my latest blog on bowel cancer.

The latest on waste medicines



Every GP surgery in mid Essex is now aware of the Waste Medicines Toolkit we created with patients' help. Momentum is really picking up as more of our GP practices put the toolkit to work. Here's some of the recent efforts being made to support medicine users to get the most from their prescriptions:

- The patient group at Fern House Surgery in Witham has been busy holding lots of conversations with patients about the toolkit
- Kingsway Surgery in South Woodham Ferrers has drawn up its action plan for using the toolkit and patient representatives will be talking to their local community pharmacy, while the practice sends out specialist leaflets from the toolkit with all repeat prescriptions
- Melbourne House in Chelmsford put together a great display board for patients about waste medicines and the toolkit
- Baddow Village Surgery, in Chelmsford are getting ready to run their campaign and have worked out what materials they plan to use.



To find out more about the Waste Medicines Toolkit please speak with your practice or contact Paul at Mid Essex CCG on Paul.Gilham@nhs.net. And if you're wondering how the toolkit might be of use in your community, here's Marian Redding, who chairs the Fern House patient group, talking about how they've been using the toolkit to generate conversations and raise awareness of waste medicines with patients. View her video at <http://bit.ly/2o6t2Pu>.

Why we engage

with Anne-Marie Garrigan, Lay Board Member – Patient and Public Engagement, Mid Essex

It's been a busy month as usual here in the CCG with lots of important events taking place – many of them involving patients and users of health and care services across our mid Essex patch. More than 130 parents, grandparents and carers came along to the second phase of our workshop events offering practical advice and tips on some of the most common childhood illnesses and how to cope with them.

Those attending gave great feedback on our speakers and topics and many parents and grandparents shared their experiences of local services, talking about some of the practical ways they have coped when their children have been ill. Find out more about these events and other engagement and patient involvement news in the [CCG's latest report to Board](#). I also chaired the latest of our

regular Patient Reference Group meetings – which sees patient representatives from a fair number of our GP practices get together every two months with Healthwatch Essex, local hospital trust and community and voluntary sector representatives. This time around, we focused on a really robust conversation between the group and the CCG's managing director and chief pharmacist on savings plans for the coming year.

All of our agendas and notes from the meetings are available for the public to read on our website here – including details of how to get more involved if you would like to.

Separately, the Service User Advisory Group, made up of residents and patients from around mid and south Essex, met at the Marconi Club in Chelmsford to offer



their thoughts on the current plans for our three acute hospitals that form part of our area's Sustainability and Transformation Plan. Their views will form part of the plans' development.

Have a great Easter and see you next month.



Improving mental health services for veterans and armed forces personnel

NHS England has launched improved mental health services for veterans in response to a national engagement undertaken last year. The views of veterans and their families have helped

to inform a service that builds on the success of previous provision and seeks to provide increased access to local care and treatment across the country in a more uniform manner.

This includes recognising the early signs of mental health problems and providing access to early treatment and support, as well as therapeutic

treatment for complex mental health difficulties and psychological trauma.

Available across England, the service works closely with the wider NHS, local authorities and third sector organisations to ensure the appropriate care is in place for veterans and their families. Find out more information at <http://bit.ly/2o1yE00>.



GP Blog with Dr James Booth

Immunisations – protect your child now and in the future



The 24th-30th April this year is European Immunisation Week, and an opportunity for me and my colleagues to emphasise the importance of the vaccinations that we offer all children registered at our surgeries.

It's an unusual day when my practice nurses aren't seeing a baby or two for their immunisations, and out of all the many services I offer at my surgery, I don't believe there is anything safer and more beneficial to my patients.

The GP of two or three generations ago would commonly deal with some truly awful infections in babies and young children: illnesses like diphtheria, polio and whooping cough that caused untold misery and indeed cases of lasting disability and death.

Thanks to the immunisation programmes of the last decades, these illnesses are now either very rare, or extinct: the whole of Europe was declared polio-free in 2002. More recently, we

have seen newer vaccines become available for children – we now vaccinate children against viruses that cause diarrhoea and sickness, and against some of the bacteria that can cause meningitis.

"Some immunisations have had some controversy around them in the last several years. However, the scare stories around immunisations such as the MMR are exactly that – stories."

The safety of all of these immunisations, and especially the MMR, has been demonstrated time and time again through studies of huge numbers of children. My own daughters have had all of their immunisations according to the schedule that all of your children will be offered, and I don't know of a single health professional with children who hasn't done the same.

On the noticeboard above my desk, I have a picture of my medical hero – Dr Edward Jenner, the Gloucestershire doctor who invented the first immunisation, for smallpox, in 1796. He is the only doctor in history who can claim that

his work has completely eradicated a disease from mankind, and millions of people since owe their lives and wellbeing to the work that followed from him.

Each immunisation that we offer is a small medical miracle, and I still find it remarkable that something that has become so commonplace is still saving the lives of children on a daily basis.

More information on protecting your child now and in the future with immunisations can be found in Mid Essex CCG's [Common Childhood Illness and Wellbeing handbook](#).

[NHS Choices](#) also has a useful series of pages about the immunisation schedule and this also includes some frequently asked questions. Your GP, practice nurse or health visitor would also be happy to answer any questions about them.

The vaccination of every child is absolutely vital to prevent diseases and protect life; I believe that it is the single most useful and important service I offer as a GP.

Easter Pharmacy Opening Times



Traffic on the roads at Easter can be challenging to say the least and the same can be said for A&E over the Easter period. So why not be smart and beat the queues in mid Essex this Easter Bank Holiday weekend (14-17 April 2017) and visit your pharmacist instead?

Patients can save time in the waiting room by visiting their pharmacist for quick, confidential advice on a range of common illnesses.

Community pharmacists are experts in the use of medicines and can clinically check, prepare and dispense prescription medicines for you. You do not need an appointment to see a pharmacist and they can offer professional healthcare advice and support to maintain and improve your health and wellbeing.

Pharmacy opening hours in Essex over the bank holidays can be found at <http://bit.ly/2pps4hA>.

Community transport – available to all!

Chelmsford Community transport are running an alternative transport option to help people in the community overcome loneliness and social barriers.

The service is available to all and an annual membership fee is £12 for individuals and £15 for couples and families. The service is up to a third cheaper than local taxi firms and for some trips to Broomfield Hospital, you can use your concessionary bus pass. Call 01245 477750 or visit www.chelmsfordct.org to find out more.

PARKINSON'S AWARENESS WEEK

What support is out there?

Parkinson's Awareness Week runs from the 12th-16th April and it's a great opportunity to highlight the support available for those suffering from or caring for someone with Parkinson's disease.

To put the disease into numbers – one person in every 500 has Parkinson's. That's about 127,000 people in the UK.

Parkinson's is a complex condition that affects different people in different ways, so the signs and symptoms can vary. Find out more about these at <http://bit.ly/2ooCKNt>.

Here in mid Essex there is specialist support available via the Parkinson Disease Service led by Provide. The service is available to all adults (18+) registered with a GP in the mid Essex area who have a confirmed medical diagnosis of Parkinson's disease or Parkinsonian syndrome.

Clinics in the community are available at:

- St Peter's Hospital, Maldon
- St Michael's Hospital, Braintree
- Springfield Green Clinic, Chelmsford

Talk to your GP about being referred to the service – this is your first step to accessing one of the specialist clinics. You can also find out more information at <http://bit.ly/2nRRhnc>.

You can also access local support groups and help via Connect Well's 'social prescribing'. Find out more at <http://connectwellessex.org.uk/>.



"Get up offa that thing..."

The 28th April is the On Your Feet Britain Challenge which dares people to take Godfather of Soul, James Brown at his word and convert 'sitting time' to 'standing time'. It's reported that British people sit for 8.9 hours each day on average and in recent years research has produced evidence that sitting for more than 4 hours each day can lead to a host of health problems.

So Friday 28th April 2017 is your chance to encourage your friends and colleagues to 'take a stand' – and see how much 'sitting time' you can cut down during the day.

Try simple changes such as standing during phone calls, taking a break from your computer or TV every 30 minutes, using the stairs instead of a lift, or having walking meetings or standing presentations at work. Find out more at <http://onyourfeetday.com/britain>.

As we mentioned in our previous edition, the CCG is currently undertaking something quite similar over a 100-day period, our virtual 'walk the world in 100 days' challenge, encouraging members of staff to up their step total as much as possible to 'walk us home' from New Zealand.

So far we have collectively walked 22 million steps and have already passed Turkey! What's also been really encouraging is that our average weekly step total for all participants has been going up. In week 1 we were walking 38,000 steps per person – by week 4 it had increased to 54,000 steps each!

Let us know if you're planning anything for On Your Feet Britain and we'll share it on our social media. Contact us on MECCG.ppe@nhs.net

Stress awareness month – what help is available?

April is officially Stress Awareness Month and has been since 1992. One in four people will experience problems with their mental health at some point during their lives, often stress-related.

For some this may come from stress at work, money worries or relationship troubles and can leave people in need of help. Others may suffer from ongoing and complex mental health conditions that require long-term care. If you're experiencing the kind of feelings that make it difficult for you to get on with living your life, it's important to talk to someone.

There is also a 'mood self assessment' tool available from NHS Choices at <http://bit.ly/1FHuUlk> which can help you to identify if you're suffering from stress.



Here in mid Essex there are various ways of getting the help you or your loved one may need. Visit our website to find out more about the services available <http://bit.ly/2nm4i4r>.

Stay connected ...

As always, we want to hear your views on the work we do here in mid Essex, so please continue to share ideas and thoughts with us. To submit a story for Engage, please email jennaward@nhs.net. To get more involved with local healthcare, contact paul.gilham@nhs.net.

