

# Bishop's Castle Patients Group

*working for patients*

Newsletter 5 – December 2014

Keeping you up to date with Bishop's Castle Patients Group

## BCPG

### *New members*

BCPG Steering Group has had a busy few months since our last newsletter. At the Annual Meeting held in June, those present advised us that they would like us to appoint new Steering Group members through a process of application and interview. This we did: we had five very good applicants to fill our two vacancies and we have now appointed the two who seemed most likely to help us in the areas of our own perceived weaknesses. So we have been joined by Pat Morrison and Karin Johnson who have already attended our two most recent Steering Group meetings. The other three candidates were invited to join one or more of the Task Groups because we were sure that they also had a lot to offer us. So, thank you to those who applied and we can report that we are now up to full strength and keen to make good progress.

The Community Services Task Group is delighted to have at last started working with patients under the Compassionate Communities project and is currently providing support to several patients. This Task Group is also taking part in an initiative being run by Shropshire CCG to encourage young people to get involved with health matters. The Group is also looking at ways to help single pet-owners to look after their pets during emergency hospitalisation.

*Nick Hutchins, chair, BCPG*

### **Future Fit – major healthcare proposals**

Since October 2013, BCPG Steering Group has had an active involvement in the Future Fit Project which is looking at hospital and healthcare provision in Shropshire with a view to making it fit for purpose for the next 20+ years (see Newsletter 4 for further details, or visit [www.nhs-futurefit.co.uk](http://www.nhs-futurefit.co.uk)). The most

reported of the possible outcomes is the merging of the current two Accident and Emergency Centres into one located in either Shrewsbury, Telford, or somewhere in between. What is less well reported is the vital introduction of Urgent Care Centres around the county and these are the places we will go to when we have an urgent medical problem – not the new Emergency Centre which will only be accessible via an Urgent Care Centre, 999 or the GP surgery. The main thrust of Future Fit is to bring more patient care closer to home – which sounds like it could be a good thing.

The BCPG NHS Changes Task Group, led by Gren Jackson, is scrutinising developments very carefully and will be campaigning in support of an Urgent Care Centre in Bishop's Castle. To date this Task Group has briefed the Town Council on the situation, and has had meetings with Philip Dunne, MP, and Glyn Davies, MP (as Powys patients will also be affected by the changes in Shropshire). Several other meetings are scheduled for the coming weeks. BCPG is represented on one of the 'workstreams' associated with the Future Fit project and is in communication with project leaders such as Caron Morton, responsible officer for the CCG.



### **New Partner in Bishop's Castle Practice**

We have been delighted to welcome a new partner to the practice: Dr Paul Gardner who joined Dr Adrian Penney at the beginning of October. Dr Gardner says that he has really enjoyed his first few weeks in Bishop's Castle and that the reception from patients and staff alike has been wonderful. Dr Gardner has already attended a couple of Steering Group meetings and we look forward to working even more closely with him in the future.

### **BCPG Task Groups at work**

The NHS Changes Task Group has been realigning its brief to allow it to focus more on issues of importance to Bishop's Castle: see the entry later in this newsletter with details of our progress to date.

### **Public update meeting**

*BCPG has organised an explanatory, update meeting at the Public Hall, Bishop's Castle on 3rd February at 7:00pm. By this time, the shortlist of options will have been published. Our key speaker will be Dr Bill Gowans who has led the clinical design team in developing the Future Fit model. Dr Gowans will explain the proposed new arrangements and will answer any questions any of us may have.*

BCPG is also looking at the ambulance and out-of-hours services available in the region as these are vital elements in emergency response.

## **Bishop's Castle Medical Practice**

### **'Flu clinics**

'Flu clinics for those eligible for free vaccinations are continuing until the end of November: the clinics take place every Monday and Thursday between 4:00 and 5:00pm: no appointment is necessary. For further advice or information about the 'flu clinics or vaccination, call the surgery on 01588 638285. 'Flu vaccinations are also available at the pharmacy.

### **Appointments**

If you need a same-day appointment, you will be offered an appointment with one of the nurse practitioners who have more availability than the doctors at the moment. Both Sr Isobel Sawyer and Sr Claudia Brown are prescribing nurses and are able to deal with a wide range of medical problems.

### **New Practice website**

The new Practice website is now live: visit [www.bishopscastlemedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.bishopscastlemedicalpractice.co.uk) where you'll find lots of useful information including surgery opening hours, links to Patient Access (where you can book appointments and order repeat prescriptions), details of Practice staff, contact details – and much more.

## **Do you know about the PEARS emergency eye assessment service?**

If you are worried about an eye condition, the free Primary Eye-care Assessment and Referral Service (PEARS) has been established. Anyone who has an urgent eye problem can see a locally-approved PEARS optician for assessment, treatment or referral to a specialist unit. Both Bishop's Castle opticians are accredited for this service: contact Paul Cottrell at Bishop's Castle Eyecare which is located within the pharmacy on 01588 630542 or Sarah Banks at

The Optician, 25 High St on 01588 638833. For major problems, you should go straight to the closest Accident and Emergency dept. – the optometrist can advise if you are unsure.

Full details of the scheme are available online at [www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk/pears](http://www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk/pears)

## **New information pamphlets**

You may be aware that BCPG publishes information pamphlets on a number of subjects of interest to patients: the latest titles to be published are 'Nurse appointments' and 'Internet appointments'. Both are available to pick up in the surgery waiting room and online at [www.bcp.org.uk](http://www.bcp.org.uk)

## **BCPG Patient Survey 2014 update**

Almost 200 patients completed the BCPG survey back in February and we'll be shortly working on the new one for next year. Last year's results are still available on our website at [www.bcp.org.uk](http://www.bcp.org.uk)

As a result of feedback from the survey, the following points should be of interest:

- We are looking into an online version of our next survey to attempt to reach a wider audience;
- Our next survey will repeat several questions from the last two years' surveys in order to ascertain trends in consultation times;
- Saturday morning surgeries are still being considered by the Practice;
- Drop-in surgeries have been discussed at length with the Practice. At present it is felt that the issue of waiting room space and unpredictable numbers of patients may outweigh any advantages. The Practice is focusing on the provision of adequate numbers of appointment slots and if this works well, the need for drop-in sessions is diminished. We will continue to monitor;
- The surgeries and waiting room have all benefitted from improvements and redecoration;
- BCPG has worked even harder to improve its profile: we hope that more patients are now aware of our existence and what we do;
- We have published an information pamphlet to encourage the uptake of making appointments online and also placing repeat prescriptions;
- BCPG is very active in monitoring NHS changes and is actively involved in Future Fit as explained elsewhere in this newsletter.

By the way, the survey generates a meaningful extra income for the surgery in the form of additional money paid by NHS England: some of this money then comes through to BCPG which helps us to fund our activities – such as publishing this newsletter.

## **Contact details**

[www.bcp.org.uk](http://www.bcp.org.uk)

- In writing – to the Bishop's Castle Patients Group, c/o Bishop's Castle Medical Practice
- By telephone – 07967 306615 (office hours, M-F)
- by email – [BCPatientsGroup@gmail.com](mailto:BCPatientsGroup@gmail.com)