



Bassett Road Surgery Patient Participation Group

Newsletter Issue 10 - March 2023

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PATIENTS' SURVEY ACTION FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE IN OUR TOWN MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) at Bassett Road has worked tirelessly to highlight the difficulties the patients of Leighton, Linslade and surrounding villages experience in accessing healthcare services. Whilst we all appreciate our NHS personnel on the ground, the pressing need for sufficient GP and local services to avoid both long waits for appointments and the many challenges that unnecessary journeys to outpatient clinics bring, is finally being recognized nationally and by decision-makers at Central Bedfordshire Council and the NHS Integrated Care Board for Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes!

WE NOW NEED YOUR HELP to strengthen our campaign and help prioritise those services most needed. We would encourage **PATIENTS FROM ALL THREE LB SURGERIES** to get involved and to share their views and suggestions.

We've developed a short but vital survey by clicking:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/X3DVCYL> or scanning the QR code below. Please encourage local family, friends and neighbours to complete it too. For those who cannot get on-line, even with help on a supporter's computer, there will be paper copies in the surgery and at The White House.

The survey will run from 20th March until 30th April 2023. All survey responses are anonymous.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP YOU BY COMPLETING THE SURVEY NOW

Thank You

Edith Griffith, Bassett Road PPG and Town Network Chair



COVID VACCINATIONS

Covid vaccinations for patients over 75 years and the immunosuppressed, please look out for more information in late spring.

PATIENT NUMBERS AT BRS as at 24th March 2023 – 19,778

EVENING AND WEEKEND APPOINTMENTS

Do you know that you can now pre-book an evening or weekend appointment to see a GP or a nurse?

In addition to the early morning and late evening appointments at Bassett Road on Wednesdays (and monthly on Saturday mornings), there are additional evening and weekend appointments available to patients of all three practices. These include consultations with GPs, Minor Illness Nurses, Practice Nurses and Physios.

This is all part of a national initiative to improve patients' access to healthcare and appointments are pre-bookable via the reception team at the Bassett Road Surgery. Appointments are either face-to-face or by telephone and are available at these times:

• Monday	1830-2000
• Friday	1830-2000
• Saturday	0900-1700
• Sunday	0900-1300

Please note these appointments will usually take place at Leighton Road Surgery (by the Shell garage), though they may be elsewhere. Reception will advise you where to go when you book so please ensure you are clear where you need to go.

Although you may not see a GP from Bassett Road Surgery at these appointments, the GPs and nurses who see you will have full access to your medical records.

As these appointments can currently only be booked via reception, if you need cancel a weekend appointment, please contact the BRS team before 1830 on Fridays (or before 1100 on the second Saturday of each month when the Bassett Road Surgery is open for pre-booked appointments from 0915-1100). *Please keep an eye on the surgery website as we hope to make these appointments bookable online in the future.*

PRACTICE CLOSURES FOR STAFF TRAINING

We are grateful to our patients and Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) – formerly the BLMK CCG - for supporting protected time in which practice staff can undertake mandatory training. This does require the surgery being closed for a short period but there is always support available in the event of an emergency.

The next planned closures are from 1430-1830 on:

- Wednesday 26th April 2023
- Wednesday 24th May 2023
- Wednesday 21st June 2023

MINOR CONDITIONS? TRY A PHARMACIST

We're very lucky in Leighton Buzzard to have excellent pharmacies. They're very happy to suggest options for patients with early problems such as a sore throat or an upset tummy. A phone call or visit to one of our pharmacies might save you time and get you over-the-counter help quickly.

COMMUNITY PHARMACY CONSULTATION SERVICES (CPCS)

Three pharmacies in the town centre (**Boots, Lloyds and Peak**) are now offering the CPCS. This means that, when you visit them for help with a condition, if the pharmacist thinks you need to be seen by a GP urgently, they'll contact your surgery to arrange an appointment, if possible, for later that day. Our local Lloyds Pharmacy is in the process of changing ownership and, whilst it is unlikely this will affect their CPCS status, we will let you know of any changes in our next newsletter.

ESSENTIALS FOR YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Is your medicine cabinet well stocked so that you can treat yourself and your family for common ailments?

Ailments such as the common cold, chicken pox and indigestion, for example, can often be eased or treated with over-the-counter medicines.

Your pharmacist can advise you on how to treat minor conditions and common ailments.

(Approximate prices only due to rising inflation!)

What does it cost to get your medicines cabinet in good shape to self-care?

All of the recommended items can be bought at your local pharmacy or on the high street. Take a look at our medicines cabinet – we bought all of these for under £10!

Medicine	Price
Ibuprofen	25P
Junior Paracetamol	£1.90
Aspirin	30P
Paracetamol	25P
Lozenge	99P
Diarrhoea Relief	£1
Constipation Relief	£1.60
Antacid	99P
Antihistamines	£2.50

Total bill £9.78!

Some common ailments can't be treated with antibiotics and may take more than a week or two to clear up. Rest, drink plenty of fluids, take some painkillers and have a chat with your pharmacist for advice.



For a complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help visit the [NHS Health A to Z](https://www.nhs.uk/health-a-to-z/).

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS AT THE SURGERY

Physiotherapists are now available and share their time between the three Leighton Buzzard surgeries. They assess new complaints e.g. severe pain in back, knees etc. and are available in the day and also occasionally during evenings and weekends. Please ask at reception for more information.

LUNG CANCER CHECKS

Bedfordshire hospitals are currently taking part in a pilot in conjunction with Cancer Alliance to offer a free lung health check to anyone aged between 55 and 74 years of age. Anyone who smokes or who has ever smoked and is registered with a GP in Leighton Buzzard will have received a letter from the surgery asking them to call and make an appointment.

Bedfordshire has poor outcomes for lung cancer and some of the highest rates of smoking with a significant percentage of the local population labelled as smokers or former smokers. If lung cancer is caught early, curative treatment is possible, and people can go on to live life to the fullest. The difficulty has been finding it at those early stages. In the UK 20% of people still cannot name one symptom of lung cancer. This lack of awareness is one of the reasons why so many people with lung cancer are diagnosed at a later stage.

BLOOD PRESSURE MONITOR

This is now back in use in the waiting room, located by the nurses' room. There are instructions on the monitor. Once your blood pressure has been taken you will be issued with a paper slip giving the date, your systolic and diastolic pressure and your pulse rate. There is a space for you to write your name. You can either take the slip to your appointment, or if you wish, hand it to reception. This data will be entered on to your records.

It has been brought to our attention that a patient was told by a local pharmacy there would be a charge to have their blood pressure taken. If you are concerned about your blood pressure or need to monitor it, please use the BRS one for free, at the surgery.

COULD IT BE MENOPAUSE?

Did you know that anxiety, low mood, joint aches and pains, repeated symptoms of UTI, low libido, itchy skin, heart palpitations, changes to oral health and brain fog can all be symptoms, amongst around 30 others, of the menopause. It's not just hot flushes, night sweats and changes to your menstrual cycle.

If you feel you could be experiencing some of those and would like to know more, why not download our menopause checkers below. You can complete, then make an appointment with your GP to discuss the treatment options available and make an informed choice about how you want to manage your symptoms.

[MENOPAUSE SYMPTOM CHECKER](#) [GSM OF MENOPAUSE](#)

For more information see www.menopausesupport.co.uk

Making Menopause Matter Understanding Menopause – Your Questions Answered

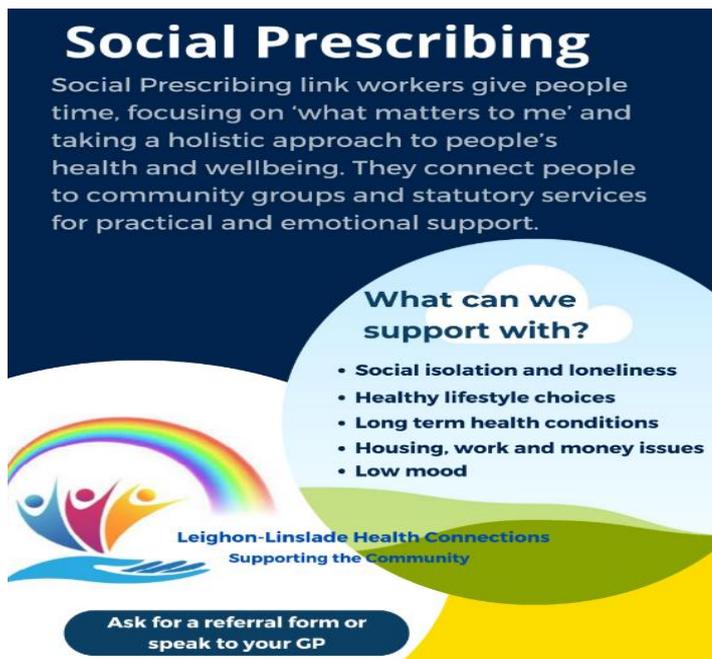
**Presentation by the Menopause Support Group
Speaker – Diane Danzebrink**

**Friday, April 21st 7-9 pm
St Leonards Church Hall, Heath & Reach**

To book a place visit:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/making-menopause-matter-understanding-menopause-your-questions-answered-tickets-525601045877>

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING



Social Prescribing

Social Prescribing link workers give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me' and taking a holistic approach to people's health and wellbeing. They connect people to community groups and statutory services for practical and emotional support.

What can we support with?

- Social isolation and loneliness
- Healthy lifestyle choices
- Long term health conditions
- Housing, work and money issues
- Low mood

Leighon-Linslade Health Connections
Supporting the Community

Ask for a referral form or speak to your GP

You can also self-refer to this service by calling – 01525 300780

- **Not sure if we can help?**
- **Not sure if you are eligible?**
- **Just give us a ring - we can have a chat!**

DISABILITIES AND ACCESSING INFORMATION

A couple of points that you might not be aware of:

- Firstly, should you have a disability, such as difficulty hearing or perhaps remembering things, if you tell the receptionists they will put it on your medical records so that staff are aware when they look at your notes.
- Secondly, if you would like a friend or family member to have access to your medical records you can send a signed letter to the staff and this will be arranged.

TIBBS DEMENTIA SUPPORT



Tibbs is a local Bedfordshire-based dementia support charity which offers a range of activity and support groups for those living with dementia and their carers. Leighton-Linslade currently has a weekly Cognitive Stimulation Group on Monday mornings at St Georges's Court supported living scheme. For further information or to join the group, please contact Louise on 07483 951733 or via email at louise.evans@tibbsdementia.co.uk . You can also call or email the Tibbs head office on 01234 210993 or email them at contact@tibbsdementia.co.uk



Patient feedback on the newsletter

We would love to hear your feedback on the newsletter. Did you find it useful and informative? Is there something you would like us to cover in future issues? Do you have a non-clinical question that you would like answered? If so, email us at bassetroadppg@gmail.com or leave a comment in the PPG Comments Box in the waiting room with your contact details and we will get back to you.