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Chairman's chatter

Welcome to the summer edition of the PPG newsletter.

Hello everyone, and I hope you enjoy this Summer/Autumn edition of the PPG newsletter. As new chairman I thought I would begin by telling you a little about myself.

I grew up in a mining town a few miles north of Nottingham. After studying electrical engineering in Liverpool, I moved to the North East to work in the heavy engineering industry. Later after moving to the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, my career took me to a great many locations both in the UK and abroad. Eventually, I ended up retired in Westhoughton close to my wife's family home.

But that's enough of ancient history! At present we are all aware that the surgery buildings at Peter House are a little cramped for a practice with so many patients, amazingly across here and Blackrod it's 20,500... However, the practice management are working hard to make life a little more comfortable for us all so please be a patient patient while the current improvements to the waiting area are taking place – they really do want to make the surgery a pleasant place to visit.

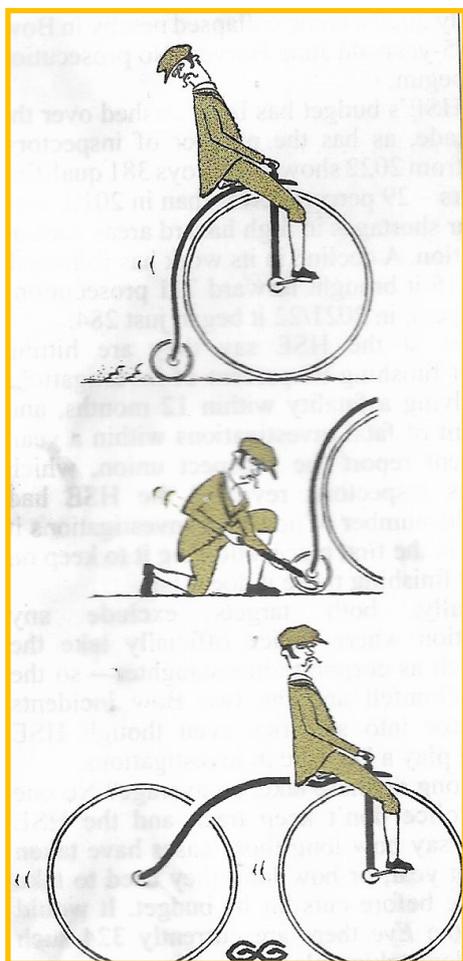
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Although winter still feels a long way off, the practice management team is currently planning the winter flu vaccination clinics. So that with the help of the fantastic volunteers, all can go smoothly when the time comes. It will certainly creep up on us... You can help with this by please only coming at the time of your appointment.

We would like to remind everyone that the PPG will be holding an Open Meeting for all patients registered with the practice at Peter House Surgery on Wednesday 20th September from 7pm till 8:30pm.

Please come along and tell us what YOU want from the PPG in the future. Plus, why not join us if you have not already done so... We are a really friendly group!

John Strawbridge (PPG Chair)



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“Hellos and Farewells”

Like lots of organisations, people move for all sorts of reasons. Unsworth Group is no exception. There are 114 members of staff across both surgeries at Peter House and Blackrod. So, as you can imagine there are quite a few Hellos and Farewells every year.

You may be interested to learn that across both surgeries there are a total 29 GP's, Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Trainee GP's. There is a total of 50 Nurse and Allied Staff Like, Practice Nurses, Health Care assistants, Phlebotomists, Pharmacists and Mental health Practitioners, and a total of 35 Admin staff. That includes Receptionists, Secretaries, and the management team.

So, in this newsletter we say farewell to Linda Baugh, a senior nurse who has been with the surgery for many years and has decided to retire. Aleshia who has left to take up a new career, Andrea who has moved to a surgery closer to her home, and Lucy one of our Health Care assistants.

We are very pleased to welcome and say Hello to. Dr Kauser who is returning to the surgery after leave. Hello and Welcome to Jo Lynsey who has taken on the role of reception Manager.

August is also the “changeover” month for our training GP's. We are very lucky here at our surgeries to be a training practice for doctors who are looking to do advanced training as a GP. Our Training GPs are fully qualified doctors who have gained their degree and doctorate in medicine, plus had extensive hospital training. They are now looking to specialise in General Practice, so you may be seen by one of them should you come into the surgery for an appointment. They are supervised by one of the Practice partner GP's, so there is no less care given than you would normally receive.

The practice regularly gets very complimentary comments from patients who have an appointment and been seen by a GP in training, so please. if you are offered an appointment with a training GP, please consider taking it, as your standard of care will be exactly the same as if you had been seen by any of the clinical staff.

Chinese Tales to “Take away”

All of us, have from time to time, had something wrong with us that would just not go away or clear up. We have been to see a doctor, taken the tablets, drank the medicine, still, whatever ails us just stays stubbornly put... Then all of a sudden, we start to feel well again, and we are on the road to recovery. Was it one of the tablets, was it the medicine or whatever it was just cleared up of its own accord?

But sometimes, especially if you are in a far-off country, you do not speak the language, or know what to do, then you have to rely on those around you who know the best route to take....

Our former Chairman, Chris, spent a few years working away from home, and he has sent in three instances of things that happened and what the result was... Just goes to show with even the best medical care in the world, you just cannot know everything:

The tales of a traveller... Part One

Before joining the Unsworth Group Practice I went to live in China for a couple of years.

My GP at that time was supportive and administered all sorts of injections to ‘protect my health’.

But there was a problem. One of the injections had to be in two parts four weeks apart. So, I had the first part at the surgery and was given detailed instructions on how to administer the second dose myself.

The vaccine was to be kept cool, so it was stored in the fridge whilst I was at home, then wrapped in lots of bubble wrap for the journey to Shanghai and finally stored in the fridge in my apartment. I was shown exactly where to inject myself (in the leg) and how to make sure that all the air was expelled from the syringe after filling it with the vaccine,

Hesitate, try again. Hesitate, try again. Hesitate, try again. Encouragement over the telephone from home, try again. Let us count down together. Three, two, one and stab.

The vaccine was administered. What was all the fuss about?

Sharp scratch, Chris!

The tales of a traveller. Part two.

To obtain my work permit, I had to undergo a medical in China to say that I was fit to work in there.

This medical went well, until the last section of the eyesight test which was to identify the numbers hidden amongst many different coloured circles. After successfully identifying several numbers, I struggled with the very last one. I just could not see any number. After a few moments of hesitation, I asked if there really a number was there. The lady doctor smiled and said of course there was – it was between number six and number eight.

I said ‘oh, is it number seven?’

I passed the medical!

The tales of a traveller... Part three

“When I lived in Shanghai, a few years ago, I just had to build a factory and start production. My American colleague, John, had a much more challenging job – as Sales and Marketing Director, he visited real China and stayed in strange hotels and ate in restaurants that I preferred not to think about.

After one of his trips John developed a fever. It lasted a few days and eventually disappeared. After a few more visits the fever returned and lasted a little longer. Then, again and again. John and I had a long discussion – his health was more important than sales! We agreed he would return to the USA and not come back until he was well.

After several weeks and after seeing several clinicians, specialists and experts and having almost every test that was available, John returned to Shanghai – fit and well. But none of these tests or discussions had identified any problem.

Cont...

After a few weeks the fever returned, worse than ever and John was quite ill. Our Chinese secretaries had compared notes and came to ask me if we could persuade John to visit a local Chinese doctor. After some discussion, John agreed and one evening four of us went to visit the Chinese doctor.

In a small dark room, the elderly doctor asked all sorts of questions and then concluded that John had picked up a parasite on one of his visits – undetectable to modern tests! He gave John five very small white tablets to be taken over the next five days.

After the five days, John was feeling better, and the problem had disappeared and never re-occurred over the next two years whilst we lived in China.

The moral of the story is that however good our doctors, consultants or specialists are and however technology is helping them, we must accept that they do not know absolutely everything.”

Thanks, Chris... Interesting tales... Just goes to show, none of know everything.... but as long as some of us know some things!

Have you any odd medical tales? Printable ones only please... Drop us a line, and we will do our best to get them in our next newsletter.



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Are you “Appy” with the NHS?

It seems there are many and various ways to communicate nowadays... Only just a few years ago, the way to get a prescription or see a doctor required to you either, (a) telephone the surgery for an appointment to see your doctor, or (b) visit the surgery in person to make an appointment. Well, things these days have moved on a bit... There seems to be more and more ways of communicating with your G.P surgery, and all of them are by using technology.

Now, not everyone is “Tech Savvy” and at home using the many and various ways to request either a prescription or maybe you need to see or have a telephone conversation with a clinician. But lots of people are, and for those who wish to use it the NHS now has an “App” that can be put onto your mobile “Smart” phone.

You can download the “App” via the NHS website or search for it on your phone, once installed it will allow you do, and show all sorts of information, Like your Covid vaccination or Flu vaccination status, you can request medication, you can see the results of tests, like blood tests, you can even see you medical history, if the surgery has given you access to that information.

What you can access is shown on an excellent guide produced by NHS Digital and can be found at this link <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/nhs-app#top>

The website is easy to navigate, and all the information is well laid out and in plain language, (even I could understand it) It might not be for everyone, but it is well worth a look...

To help people to get started with the app, we have put together a quick pull out and keep guide on how to use the basics of the NHS App.

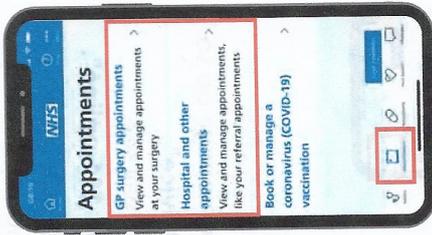
NHS App GP appointments / COVID pass



Appointments

GP appointments

You cannot book urgent GP appointments in the NHS App. You can only book appointments made available online by your GP practice. At the moment not all GP practices have online booking services on the NHS App.



Your health

Get your NHS COVID pass

to show your coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination details or test results. Show your pass if you are asked for proof of your COVID-19 status.



5

NHS App

Why use the NHS App

The NHS App gives you more control over your health and care:

- Order repeat prescriptions.
- Book and cancel appointments.
- View your health records and test results.

Secure access to NHS services:

- Find reliable information on hundreds of conditions and treatments.
- Access services on behalf of someone you care for using linked profiles.



NHS APP

Quick guide to the NHS App services

A guide to the key services provided by the NHS App

The NHS App is NOT intended for emergency use

To use the NHS App you must be aged 13 and over and registered at a GP practice in England

Version 2, March 2023

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NHS App logging in / use NHS 111 Online

This is the login page for the NHS App

To login click **"Continue with NHS login"**. You will be asked to enter your email and password to login

This is the homepage for the NHS App



Advice

On the homepage go to **"Advice"**.

You will see **"Use NHS 111 online"**. This helps you check if you need urgent help and find out what to do next.



2

NHS App order your repeat prescriptions / your nominated pharmacy



Prescriptions

Prescriptions

If you receive medication on repeat prescription you can order this on the NHS App.

You can only order what is available on your NHS App.

Repeat prescriptions require approval from your GP practice or hospital.



Your nominated pharmacy

You can nominate a high street pharmacy to collect your prescriptions in the NHS App.

The pharmacy may deliver to your home - you need make these arrangements directly with the pharmacy.

3

NHS App linked profiles / view your GP health record

Linked profiles

Where you can add a family member, or someone you care for, and use certain NHS services on their behalf. This is only available if:

- you are both registered at the same GP practice
- the GP practice registers you to access medical services.

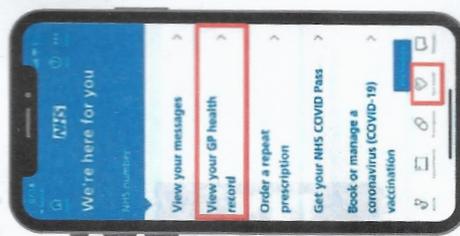


Your health

View your GP health record

This is usually a summary view.

To see more information such as your test results and immunisations, contact your GP practice and request access to your detailed coded record.



4

Dedication to 'Doody'

Now, I am quite sure that we are acquainted with stories of the dedication of medical staff in situations around the world.

We must never forget the sacrifices made during the Covid pandemic and the ongoing struggles due to lack of staff, funding and space that are faced every day.

So...when you hear of medical staff making sure they are giving the correct advice, it is good to know.

Bearing this in mind a group of six paediatricians took it upon themselves to check if they were correct in giving the advice to concerned parents whom had brought a child to the hospital after swallowing a small object, (a Lego brick, small coin,) to just wait and it would 'pass'.

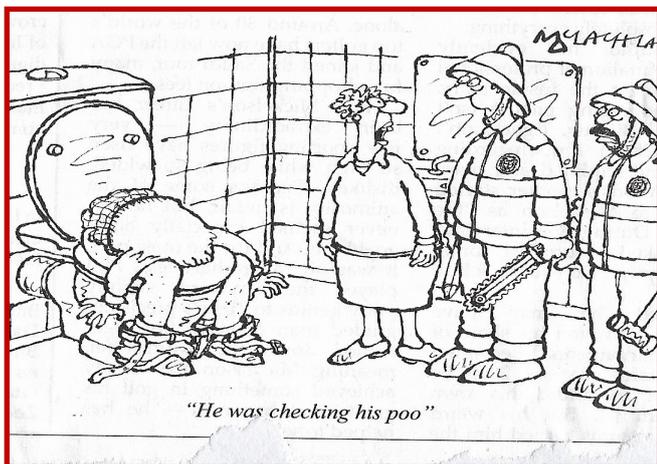
The intrepid six from various hospitals, decided to check if this was true and proceeded to each swallow a small Lego figure head, apparently this is one of the children's favourite 'snacks'.

The report of this 'experiment' were published in The 'Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health Care', under the title "An Oral History Of The Time Six Doctors Swallowed Six Lego Heads To See How Long They Would Take To Poo"

As reported in the article, each of the Doctors swallowed the Lego head and devised a method of 'retrieval'.

One of the participants 'mashed' it up in a cardboard box another pushed it through a sieve, one of them never found it!

So, these brave souls who were prepared to make personal sacrifices purely to be able to say to parents with confidence. Yep, I have done that, and I can tell you that it will make a reappearance in a couple of days, so no worries.



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There is a serious exception to this and that is the little button batteries, such as you use for watches, small toys etc...

If you suspect that a child has swallowed one of these

You Must Get Them To a Hospital Immediately.

Do Not Wait As One Of These Batteries Can Burn Through An Oesophagus Or The Lining Of The Stomach In A Couple Of Hours, So Time Is Of The Essence.