



A big welcome to our first PPG Newsletter since Spring 2014!!

In conjunction with the Surgery, it was felt that its 'revival' would provide a good platform to re-engage with the Patients, provide information and nurture communication.

It is hoped that the Newsletter will be produced twice a year....in Summer and Winter.

To begin, we feature again, Dr. Buckley's article on Dementia and 'highlight additional Staff and roles at KWS as follows:

Paramedic..... Mon. - Fri.

Pharmacy Technician.....Mon. - Fri.

Physiotherapist..... Tues /Weds /Fri.

Social Prescriber..... Tuesday

KWS is a parkrun Practice, and the PPG is hoping to become involved with establishing uptake and providing support.

The PPG has also been active in hopefully mounting monthly national Health Promotion campaigns on their notice board. Their frequency is dependent on the availability of free literature.

The PPG continues to, with the invaluable help of the Surgery staff, offer wheelchair hire for a small fee. The income this generates is vital to the general upkeep and annual service of the wheelchairs. More broadly we've included items felt worthy of 'reiterating', that are already available to the general public and thank those responsible for it being so.

DEMENTIA (with thanks to Dr Buckley)

I know that the word 'dementia' might stop you reading this article, but please do not, even if you are young, because this might help you or someone you know and, this might be a surprise, young people also get dementia.

There are many types of dementia, and they have different causes and sometimes slightly different symptoms, and I will look at three of them. All three lead to a loss in cognitive function. Cognitive function is the mental processing that includes memory,

understanding, reasoning, language, calculating, problem solving and decision making. With dementia you lose these abilities.

I will start with the one everyone fears... Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's disease is, unfortunately, the most common form of dementia. It is named after Alois Alzheimer, who first described it. In Alzheimer's the loss of cognitive function arises because brain cells are eventually killed by plaques or tangles made of protein that builds up in the brain and also because of the loss of message carrying in the brain. Because Alzheimer's is a progressive disease, gradually, over time, more parts of the brain are affected and so the symptoms become more severe.

Another form of dementia is vascular dementia. This is caused by a reduction in the supply of blood to the brain and this arises when blood vessels become blocked or narrower and as a result some brain cells in the brain become damaged or even die. The reduction in the blood supply can take place over a period of time or suddenly by, for example, a serious stroke. If you have a yearly health review with a nurse it is important to attend it. Good control of blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, weight and exercise all help prevent and slows progression of vascular dementia. Quitting smoking is very vital too, because smoking damages the small vessels in the brain. Finally, but, as I have stated, not by any means the last type, is dementia with Lewy bodies. It is caused by tiny, abnormal structures ('Lewy bodies') that develop in a person's brain, and which disrupt the chemical signals and cause the death of affected brain cells.

While the early symptoms of dementia can include what most of us expect, such as problems with memory, thinking, concentration and sometimes hallucinations and the ability to judge distances it is very important to not treat an isolated event, or even a series of similar events, as evidence of dementia if there is another plausible explanation, such as stress, tiredness, or alcohol. But if you have been having problems with your memory or other cognitive function the first step is to discuss this with your GP. There isn't a single 'off-the-shelf' test to diagnose dementia. If your GP feels the matter needs investigating further then she or he will arrange for a review by one of the of the surgery's Health Care Assistants who would take a blood test and ask some simple screening questions. If these show a problem, you could then be referred to the Memory Service who would undertake a more comprehensive assessment of the problem and, if necessary, advise on medication, and support for your family as well as yourself. When I was young (I haven't always been old) dementia was barely mentioned and anyone diagnosed with it would usually keep the diagnosis quiet, and so usually would their families but those attitudes have, thankfully, changed. My view is that the more open we are talking about 'it' and its effects, the better we will be as a society, and as individuals, to care for those with dementia and their families.

Help and advice are available:

National Dementia Support Line:	Singing for the Brain
0333 150 3456	Dementia Cafes
7 days/week:	Alzheimers Society [Bristol]0117 961 0693
Mon. - Weds. 9 am - 8 pm	AGE UK South Glos. 01454 411707
Thurs - Fri. 9 am - 5 pm	Carers Support Centre. Bristol and South
Sat./ Sun. 10 am - 4 pm.	Glos. 0117 965 2200

NHS App.

Local people are being encouraged to join 500,000+ other people in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire using the NHS App. to manage their health from their smartphone or tablet.

Recent figures have shown that 61% + of people registered to a GP surgery in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire have downloaded the NHS App.

Dr Andrew Appleton, local GP and Digital Health Consultant at One Care, the GP federation that represents and supports practices in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire has said:

‘There are many people in our communities who would benefit from using the NHS App. to manage their health.’

The NHS App. is a simple and secure way for people to access a wide range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet - including ordering repeat prescriptions, checking health records and receiving update messages and updates from your GP.

He especially urges everyone to turn notifications on to get the most out of the app. This enables you to get messages from your GP or other trusted healthcare providers without having to repeatedly check the app. for updates.

As well as ordering repeat prescriptions and checking health records, you can also use the NHS App. to book and manage vaccinations and use NHS 111 online to answer questions and be guided to the right care for your needs.

Fire Safety Checks

You or the person you care for, may be entitled to a free Fire Safety Visit. Avon Fire and Rescue offer these visits to people:

Aged 65 or over

- With sight and hearing loss
- Have mobility concerns

Have mental health and/ or memory issue
Are unable to escape unaided in the event of a fire. Are a family with children under 5 years of age.

To find out more call 0117 926 2061 or go to the website www.avonfire.gov.uk

Scam Alert

Beware of being drawn in by the promise of a guaranteed win!! Be wary of letters, emails or texts asking you to send money or provide personal information. You could be told that you have won a prize for a competition you have not even entered. You could be told that you have been specially selected and that you are a guaranteed winner! You will be asked to send a small fee to claim your prize! You cannot win a competition that you have never entered...so, if you are asked for an upfront payment

DO NOT PAY, because the scammers will then have your personal information.

To report a scam contact Action Fraud online or call 0300 123 2040 or forward the scam as a text message to 7726.

About Carers Support Centre Do you care for someone who could not manage without your support? If so, you are a carer. Caring can be rewarding but also very challenging, both mentally and physically. Whether you're caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or is affected by mental ill health or substance misuse, caring is very demanding. But fortunately, help is available. Carers Support Centre is a charity offering a range of services to help improve life for carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Here's some of the ways we can help: Carers Line: A confidential phone and email information and support service for carers in Bristol and South Gloucestershire to ask questions or discuss concerns about their caring role - 0117 965 2200/ carersline@carerssupportcentre.org.uk Carers Emergency Card: If a carer has an accident or is taken seriously ill, carrying this card will ensure the person they care for continues to receive the support they need. Carers Assessments: Help with getting and completing an assessment. This allows carers to get help and support for themselves and the person they care for. One-to-one support: Advice and information. Help with filling in forms and applying for benefits such as Carers Allowance. Help with communicating with health and social care professionals. Parent carers: Supporting parent carers with a child under 18 who has disabilities/ additional needs. Carers support groups: A safe, confidential space to meet with other carers to share information and give support to each other. Young Carers: Supporting children under 18

years old, including individual and family support, activities, groups and outings etc. If you'd like more information visit our website at www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk or call Carers Line on 0117 965 2200.

We, the PPG, hope that you have found the Newsletter a good read and will look forward to future editions!

If you have suggestions for possible topics to be covered then please let us know.

Your PPG is eager to recruit new members. One of our aims is to work with the Surgery to identify if the services that our practice population receives can be improved.

Contact: Liz Wilkie, Chair PPG...liz.wilkie50@aol.co.uk / 0759 398 0538/ 01454 319886

Thank you.