

A Message from The Grove Medical Centre

Chairman of the Grove Patient Participation Group Roger Marsh introduces the latest report to patients by Dr Rob Childs, Sherborne Area Primary Care Network lead.

“On behalf of all Sherborne patients I wish to congratulate and thank the staff at each of the Sherborne area practices; The Grove and Apples Medical Centres, Yetminster Health Centre, and all of the volunteers, that came together to create a great team to successfully combat the Corona and Omicron viruses and at the same time maintaining all patient and pharmacy services despite the additional demands on them.

Update from Dr Rob Childs – Senior Partner The Grove Medical Centre

At the time of writing, the Covid pandemic would appear to be receding. The Omicron variant whilst much more infective would appear to be weaker in the respect of causing serious illness and death, especially those who have been vaccinated. Hospital numbers continue to fall despite high infection rates and the majority of those who are unwell in hospital are unvaccinated. Modelling of pandemics tells us that we would expect a long tail in the case numbers. That is to say numbers will reduce slowly over a couple of months. The government is planning to stop all restrictions related to Covid in the near future. So more than ever it will be up to individuals to decide on the risk they want to take, whether to be vaccinated, or wear a mask or visit busier areas.

It is now over 2 years since the first cases of Covid were detected. It is hard to remember the timeline of everything that has happened over the various lockdowns. The virus has brought people together in all sorts of ways that reflect well on our local communities, such as Sherborne Viral Kindness or the Vaccine delivery from the Digby Hall. The numerous volunteers who have stepped forward to help their communities in so many ways, is genuinely heart-warming.

The other great success of course has been the vaccine itself. The science to create these new vaccines has opened up many new areas for treating, not only infectious diseases (such as a new malaria vaccine) but also the possibility to create vaccines to target cancer cells as well.

From the first vaccination against smallpox demonstrated by Edward Jenner in 1796 to the current day with our new mRNA vaccines against Covid, vaccines themselves have shown huge health gains and the saving of many lives. Whilst there will be resistance by some groups to vaccination the future of vaccination and this new vaccine technology is exciting.

Let us hope that the next pandemic is many years away and that we will be more prepared and have vaccines and treatments ready to prevent a repeat of the last 2 years.

The final report for 2021 from your Patient Participation Group Chair:

It has been six months since our last newsletter produced by the Grove Medical Centre Patient Participation Group during which time we have been active on many fronts including; Macmillan Cancer Support, Sherborne Military Veterans, Public Health Dorset and Sherborne Town Council.

Since the onset of the Covid pandemic we have increased our use of social media to communicate with patients. We now have a large number of patients with whom we send messages by email. In addition information is posted on 11 Facebook Groups and sent to 17 Parish Councils. If you would like to be included on the email circulation list please contact: grovesherborneppg@gmail.com

We met with the Practice four times, one being our Annual Meeting that we held in October, and to move forward two new projects with the Practice to improve patient services.

Together with Macmillan Cancer Support we have been working to establish a local Cancer Support Group in Sherborne. To gauge support required for those and their families who are affected by cancer we held an open meeting in the Guest Lounge, at Manor Court, Retirement Housing in October. We are now taking this forward and intend to establish a local Macmillan Cancer Support group in the near future.

Many of you may already know that the Grove Medical Centre was the first in Sherborne to be receive accreditation from the Royal College of General Practitioners as a 'Veteran-Friendly Surgery', look at the website: <https://www.thegrovemedcentre.co.uk/armed-forces-care>

Following this, we produced a 'Grove Military Veterans Directory' that can be accessed from the website through the page link above. In addition, we have formed a 'Sherborne Veterans Support Group' for former members of the military to help them adjust to life after the military. It held its first meeting in September attended by 30 military veterans, two subsequent meetings were held and I'm happy to say that attendance has increased.

Healthy Living is just one of the many aims of the PPG we promote in conjunction with Public Health Dorset. One unique project was to set up an orienteering course around Sherborne. It is our intention to establish a permanent orienteering course in our locality, designed to encourage all ages and ability to take part in an outdoor healthy activity, be that to create "healthy competition" or a relaxed stroll, while finding markers, like a treasure hunt. Funding for the project has been provided by Sherborne Town Council, Sherborne Market and Public Health Dorset. Orienteering courses have already been set up in Sturminster Newton and Gillingham with support from Public Health Dorset and the local communities.

As your Chair I attend the monthly meetings of Sherborne Town Council to update the councillors on health related issues in Sherborne. This has become ever more important as we wait the introduction of the 'Health and Social Care Bill' presently working its way through Parliament. It is due to come into force in July 2022, with both health and social care working closely together as part of the Integrated Care System (ICS).

In addition to meeting Sherborne Town Council the Grove PPG meet with the Chairs from other PPGs within North Dorset. This important group has full support from NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). We discuss and act upon issues that are common to all of us, by learning from one another; how each of our PPGs react to the needs of our Practices with positive ideas on how to offer support.

Don't forget, if you would like to be included on the email circulation list please contact: grovesherborneppg@gmail.com

Roger Marsh

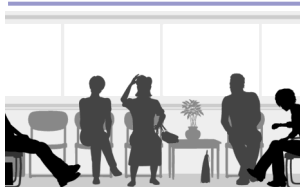
Chair – Patient participation Group

Our Patient Participation Group Welcomes Student Members

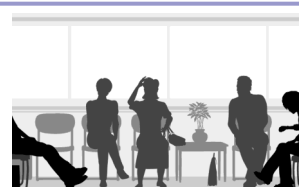
Sherborne Girls School students Maira and Poppy were both welcomed as new members of the PPG at its January meeting. Prior to the meeting both students had been asked to review the Grove Medical Centre website from a younger persons aspect. Subsequently, they have produced a comprehensive analysis which has been passed to the Practice for consideration.



IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT PLEASE PHONE THE SURGERY TO CANCEL



A View from the Waiting Room



Just what is the Patient Participation Group?

What is this group, who are they, how often do they meet, and what exactly do they do? Does one have to be a certain age or have a certain background to join? How demanding would it be if I took part?

All of these thoughts were in my head when curiosity took me to a meeting five years ago which was held in an upstairs room of the Grove surgery. There were 14 in all: the Chairman, the Managing Partner, one of the Doctors, various peripheral medical workers, two delightful students from Sherborne Girls School and the rest were patients. The topics covered ranged from progress reports on the local 'Help for Carers', for dementia patients, for those with mental health problems and many more issues that had cropped up since the last meeting. It was immediately obvious that the whole group were totally committed to maintaining and improving services to the Grove Practice patients. It was hugely impressive!



Four years, and a lot of hard work later, the subjects are even more diverse. A very helpful directory has been written and produced by our Chairman Roger Marsh entitled 'WHO CAN HELP IN THE SHERBORNE AREA' which is available at the surgery and online, and is invaluable as a directory for many medical and social issues.

The Grove Patient Participation Group with other volunteers have been active in helping at the many Covid and flu clinics held at the Digby Hall. More recently they have established a successful Armed Forces and Veterans Support Group. In October a Repair Café was started which is open once a month and located at the side of Cheap Street church. They would welcome practically minded volunteers with handyman skills ... I'm sure that many households could keep them busy all winter! The email address is repaircafesherborne@gmail.com

Patient Participation Groups were established to discuss practical practice issues. Our individual experiences matter as they result in the different ideas we bring to the surgery.

There is no age limit though younger members are particularly needed. The group meet at the surgery about six times a year, usually about 5.30 pm, though in the past 18 months we have met on Zoom due to Covid.

You are most welcome to join a meeting to see exactly what we do and how we work, with no obligation.

A warm welcome awaits!

Joan Cooper
Patient
The Grove Medical Centre

The Grove Medical Centre is reducing its carbon footprint

The Grove Medical Centre is delighted to be signed up to the Green Impact for Health Toolkit and is actively taking steps to reduce our carbon footprint.

The climate emergency is also a health emergency, and health care in the UK contributes 5.4% of the UK's carbon emissions. We need to enhance the health of our current population without compromising the health of future generations, and this means operating within the sustainable boundaries of the planet.

Fortunately most of the solutions for the planet also make our health better - for example eating a mainly plant-based diet, engaging in active travel and exercise in nature, avoiding smoking, reducing pollution etc all enhance our health and reduce our need for medications, with further benefits to the NHS, your health and the carbon footprint of healthcare. Take a look at www.greenerpractice.co.uk to learn more about this.

As part of our drive, we are trying to minimise the number of paper letters sent out by, or on behalf of, the practice.

Using email or phone text alternatives is a less resource intensive alternative than sending letters with plastic window envelopes in the post.

Tens of millions of envelopes are sent to landfill each year because they contain plastic windows. While these can be recycled through some recycling schemes, some schemes do not accept them.

Apparently, the carbon footprint of a delivered letter is about 20 grams of carbon dioxide, whereas an email (without big attachments) uses 4 grams, an 80% reduction!

Therefore, where we can we will email or text any letter to you as an attachment in future. You can help us by making sure we have your up-to-date email address and mobile number if you don't think we already have it, please email us with your details:

reception@thegrovemedcentre.nhs.net – **(this email address must not be used for medical questions).**

We appreciate that not all our patients will have email addresses or mobile phones and please be assured this will not disadvantage you, however, where we can, we must start to make this change.



Become an embedded digital champion



Do you work with Dorset residents?

If you do and would like to become a digital champion and help them become more confident online please see the link below.

You will receive free training from Dorset Council:

<https://news.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/digital-first/2022/01/31/become-an-embedded-digital-champion-and-help-our-residents-get-online/>

Send any comments regarding the newsletter to: grovesherborneppg@gmail.com

#LetsTalkWinter

– some top tips on helping you keep safe and well this Winter

Gill Foott, the Engagement & Communications Co-ordinator (PPGs) at NHS Dorset, shares her top 9 tips for keeping safe and well this winter.

“All of my top 9 tips are common sense and are things you can do now to prevent and avoid illness later, being in bed or in hospital is the last thing you need at Christmas. Take care of yourself – it’s your life”

Boost your immunity with your flu and Covid-19 vaccines to protect yourself, your family, and the people you love.

- ◇ Covid-19 is still with us so we should all carry on protecting ourselves and those around us. You can do this by testing regularly, meeting outside if you can, washing hands, letting in the fresh air when you’re inside and wearing a face covering in busy places.
- ◇ Get repeat prescriptions in plenty of time and have a well-stocked medicine cabinet, including a thermometer.
- ◇ Help and support relatives and friends to leave hospital so that they can be more comfortable and recover more quickly at home.
- ◇ Get help early before your condition worsens – speak to your GP surgery, contact NHS 111, or speak to your local pharmacist.
- ◇ Avoid slips, trips and falls by taking extra care in bad weather.
- ◇ Keep an eye on elderly or frail friends, neighbours and relatives.
- ◇ Try to heat your home effectively and safely – heat your home to at least 18 degrees Centigrade and take advantage of financial schemes and discounts to help you pay for heating.
- ◇ Remember the five steps to wellbeing to stay well mentally and physically:
 - ◆ Connect with others
 - ◆ Be active as much as possible
 - ◆ Keep learning new skills to boost confidence and mood
 - ◆ Take notice of your surroundings and be in the present moment
 - ◆ Give your time and support to others
- ◇ Be kind and compassionate to those you meet, including hard-working staff who are supporting others.

Gill Foott

Engagement & Communications Coordinator (PPGs)

NHS Dorset CCG

Do we have your correct details?

You can update you details on the Grove Medical Centre website

<https://www.thegrovemedcentre.co.uk/>



JOIN OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP – THE GROVE PPG – ONLINE INFORMATION

Opening Times

Monday	08:00 - 18:30
Tuesday	08:00 - 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 - 18:30
Thursday	08:00 - 18:30
Friday	08:00 - 18:30
Weekend	closed

Ways to contact us:

You can book an appointment by:

Calling the practice to speak to a Patient Services Adviser between 08:00 and 18:30 Monday to Friday.

Online booking is available for routine appointments with your GP using the new NHS App or your current online login. If you don't have a login or have forgotten your login details, then please speak to the patient services team.

Using the 'e-Consult' service for advice, administration queries or to have an online conversation with your GP.

If you need to contact a doctor outside these hours then you should ring the Out of Hours Service on 111, unless it is a medical emergency then dial 999.

Dispensary open for prescription collections between 08:30 - 18:30. If you want to order repeat medication by telephone please ONLY call between 08:30 - 12:00 daily.

The Practice Team

Dr Aimee Barnes

Dr Lucius Covell

Dr Liz Long

Dr Katie Thomas

Dr Nick Berry

Dr Sally Dangerfield

Dr Charlie Middle

Mrs Alex Kimber (Managing Partner)

Dr Rob Childs (Senior Partner)

Dr Ruth Lawes

Dr Matt Phelan



Dr Lucius Covell

The Grove Medical Centre welcomes a new GP

Dr Covell has joined us from a doctor surgery in Notting Hill, London and has moved down to be closer to his family. He has been a GP for 12 years and is particularly interested in men's health and palliative care. He studied at Imperial College School of Medicine. He looks forward to meeting his patients in the weeks and months ahead and getting to know Sherborne, and the surrounding area.

Sherborne Health Walks

Free, friendly group walks on a Friday afternoon around the town on paths and pavements of between 45—60 minutes. Optional refreshments at the end!

Meet at the Paddock Gardens, Newland (opposite the Manor House Council Offices) at 1.45pm for 2pm start, no need to book, just turn up.

Well behaved dogs welcome and walks will usually be buggy and wheelchair friendly.

PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN WAITROSE CAR PARK UNLESS YOU INTEND TO USE THE STORE.



Your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Interested in finding out how your GP practice works and about the health services it delivers? Your practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) could be for you. See: <https://www.dorsetccg.nhs.uk/involve/ppg>