

AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP: <https://www.avisford.co.uk/>

YAPTON SURGERY : **01243 551321**

MIDDLETON SURGERY: **01243 583596**

FRIENDS OF AVISFORD PPG: **web:** <https://avisfordfriends.co.uk/>
Email: avisford.friends@gmail.com

Newsletters are available in each surgery & on both the Practice and Friends' web-sites - www.avisford.co.uk or www.avisfordfriends.co.uk If you would prefer to receive a copy by post, please complete the details below.

I would prefer to receive a copy of the Newsletter by post.

Name.....

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**AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP
PRACTICE NEWSLETTER**



Sponsored by The Friends of Avisford PPG

Charity No: 1074882

Issue 4

AUGUST 2023

AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends

I hope this finds you well and welcome to the new format newsletter.

Over the years, the Friends' have always found it difficult to find an efficient way to communicate with all our Members. We set up a Friends' website, and produced newsletters - distributing copies at 'flu clinics and posting to those patients requesting it. However, this is expensive and reached but a few of you.

Due to rules on privacy and use of patient's email addresses, as 'The Friends' we were unable to email the newsletter to everyone. These rules have now been clarified and provided it comes from the Practice, and contains no marketing or fundraising information, an email copy of the newsletter can be sent to all patients

This change of emphasis is not a problem for the Friends' since in the past most of our newsletter has been about the Practice – staff changes, plans for the future, how to access services, etc. with a short report on the Friends activities at the end

Patient engagement is very important for the Friends as we play a significant part in developing primary care locally and within Sussex Healthcare by ensuring the voice of the patients – your voices – are heard.

Come and join us at our **AGM**, which will be on **Wednesday, 11th October 2023** at **2.30 in the Pavilion on Shrubs Field, Middleton on Sea**, where we will be serving tea and cakes and you can learn more about the Friends' and how we work.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and please do get in touch if you have ideas, suggestions or concerns that you wish to share or if you would like to help the Friends.

With best wishes

John Thompson MBE

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FRIENDS OF AVISFORD MEDICAL GROUP
CHARITY NUMBER: 1074882
SUPPORTING YOUR SURGERY

Originally a members' organisation with patients wishing to join paying a small subscription, in 2016 membership became free with all patients automatically becoming members when they joined the surgery. At this point the Friends became the Patient Participation Group. Information on the Friends' contact details and activities can be found on our noticeboard in each surgery or on our website www.avisfordfriends.co.uk

If you have ideas for talks or events you would like us to consider arranging, for equipment you think would benefit patients, or if you have any concerns, please drop a note into either surgery or email us on: avisford.friends@gmail.com

GIFT AID

From time to time, patients like to make donations to either the Friends' or the Practice – to purchase much-needed items for the Practice. If you do wish to donate, please consider **Gift Aid!** If you are a UK tax-payer, the Friends can claim back the tax you pay from HMRC. If you are eligible and you would like us to claim Gift Aid on your donation, please sign below – and be sure to enter your address as required by HMRC.

I would like to make a donation of £....to the Friends of Avisford Medical Group

Signature.....Date.....

Address.....

Please return completed forms (ideally in an envelope) addressed to Friends of Avisford Medical Group to either surgery - or place in the book money honesty box. **By completing this form, you are agreeing to the above information being held on paper and/or electronically by the Friends' committee. It will not be shared with any other organisation, company or person unless required by law.**

PATIENT FEEDBACK

A big thank you to all patients who continue to provide feedback through the feedback forms (otherwise known as Friends and Family forms).

We always receive a lot of positive feedback through the forms, which is obviously great to receive, but equally - if not more important - are those thoughts on what you, our patients, feel we could do to improve the service. Be assured that all feedback is considered and some, such as the cancellation text service, is implemented for the benefit of all.

Over the past few months responses have continued to show a steady improvement with more than 80% of patients rating our service as 'very good' or 'good'. Of the 20% of patients rating as 'neither good nor poor' or 'poor' only one related to the surgery – the others concerned car parking.

Feedback from these forms is vital not only because it highlights any area where we may be able to improve our service to you but also because it gives us the opportunity to explain why some processes are necessary or why some things cannot be altered.

The more detail provided with feedback the better, and if you consider there is an issue that needs attention it is particularly important that contact details are included so that we can have further discussions on the matter.

DNA's (DID NOT ATTEND APPOINTMENT)

Our DNA level for August was 2% which, although a lot better than it was still means that 96 appointments were not used – that is 96 more patients who could have been seen.

To help improve this still further, as well as ringing the surgery to cancel an appointment, you can now cancel by text on **07598 115351**: Simply text your **name, date and time** of appointment and the word **CANCEL**.

We do not accept incoming calls to this number and do not make call-backs based on messages received. We hope this will improve interaction with the surgery for those with mobile phones & will free up telephone capacity for those that do not.

LATEST PRACTICE NEWS

It has been some time since our last update and a significant amount has happened at the both surgeries.

Some of the changes, such as alterations to the buildings, are clear to all whilst others are less so, as they are 'behind the scenes' improvements. Although they are not obvious, they are making a notable difference to the efficiency of the Practice.

These are some of our major changes, and although the physical changes are the most noticeable, probably the most significant from a patient's point of view is the introduction of the Active Signposting Initiative.

BUILDING CHANGES

Recently both sites have been undergoing a process of development, with new clinical rooms being provided at Middleton. These are now fully operational and are heavily utilised by the surgery team.

Following the move of the pharmacy to new premises, further significant changes have been made to our Yapton site, including the alterations to the reception area, making it a more open and welcoming area.

Also, the provision of two new clinical rooms and additional office space are helping to house services provided by both the surgery and the local PCN (Primary Care Network).

These include Mental Health Support for both adults and children, musculoskeletal health, additional pharmaceutical support team members and social prescribers – to name just a few.

STAFF NEWS

Since the last newsletter we have seen a significant number of staff changes with people both leaving and joining the team. All who have left us have done so with our best wishes for the future and our thanks for their service to our patients.

Doctors who have now left the surgery include: **Dr Margaret Mansi** and **Dr Heather Beaumont** - both of whom still provide locum support to the surgery - and **Dr Jamie Wood**, who finally managed to get back to Australia with his family.

Dr Georgeta Miu joined the surgery last September, has settled in very well and is now providing much needed support to our patients.

Finally, **Dr Lisowski** has made the leap from a Salaried GP to become our newest GP Partner, working alongside Dr Bansil and Dr Sidney in leading the surgery.

OTHER CLINICAL STAFF

To provide a greater level of support to our patients, various new clinical roles have been introduced at the surgery, including:

Advanced Nurse Practitioners to ease the workload of primary care physicians. They work in acute care settings dealing with minor illnesses within a GP surgery. They are able to work closely with patients and educate them on managing their health more effectively.

Paramedic Practitioners support the GPs through holding clinics, triaging and visiting patients in their own homes. Under the supervision of the GP they will also provide general medical care, assessments, evaluation, referral and treatment for patients in clinics and in the community.

Paramedics - although traditionally more associated with emergency care - have many skills are equally transferable to GP patients with acute needs. Paramedic training allows them to quickly but thoroughly assess the situation with which they are presented. This, combined with their clinical judgement, means they can make decisions on the most critically important actions that need to be taken.

GP Assistants work as part of the wider team in general practice and provide a support role, carrying out administrative tasks, combined in some areas with basic clinical duties. They help to free up GPs time and contribute to the smooth running of appointments, improving patients' experience in the surgery.

If you hadn't entered medicine, what might have been your career choice?

I have often thought about this and I genuinely do not have an answer!

The South Coast is very different from Wales, do you prefer the 'softer' landscape of the South, or the more rugged one of Wales?

We are lucky to live in the beautiful South Downs but there is something about the rugged landscape of the hills and mountains of Wales, as well as other areas I have visited in the Lake District, Scotland, the Tatra mountains in Poland and the Alps that I just absolutely love.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I was brought up on a farm and have always loved spending time outdoors. At university I did a lot of kayaking and hill walking. Since moving to Sussex, I have taken up Orienteering using map reading skills to navigate round a set course in all sorts of terrains from woodland to mountains whilst trying not to get too lost! My husband also orienteers and now our two daughters have started so in summer we join in large multiday orienteering events across the country. I also enjoy skiing, spending time in my garden and walks in the countryside with my family.

Do you keep any pets?

No, unfortunately as both my husband and I work we don't have the time, although our girls keep nagging us to get one!

Are there areas of medicine that are, or you would like to, make your speciality?

I don't have a particular area of speciality, but do especially enjoy doing Mother and Baby checks and supervising/teaching students

Avisford is a very busy Practice, and this must lead to considerable pressure on all staff, particularly Doctors, how do you cope with this?

Yes, sadly general practice, indeed the whole NHS, is currently under immense pressure. The main challenge in general practice is rising population coupled with decreasing numbers of GPs leading to increasing work load. It also makes it harder for patients to access our services. As a practice we have tried to manage this by recruiting allied health practitioners such as Clinical Pharmacists, MSK practitioners, Paramedics, Mental Health Liaison practitioners and social prescribers. We are fortunate to have such a large multidisciplinary team at Avisford

STAFF FOCUS**DR KASIA LISOWSKI**

Firstly, congratulations on becoming our newest Partner. I'm sure we all wish you a long and, hopefully, fulfilling stay at Avisford.

I'm Dr Kasia (short for Katarzyna) Lisowski and I have been a GP at AMG since 2018, becoming a Partner in September 2021. I was born and brought up in Wales but my family are originally Polish hence the long and unpronounceable name! I do speak a little Polish but not very well. I am married and have two daughters and have lived in Sussex since 2010.

What made you choose medicine as your career

At school biology was by far my favourite subject, especially learning how the body works (it's fascinating!). This led me to initially study for a degree in physiology at the University of Bristol. But I wanted to apply my knowledge in a practical way so medicine was the perfect career choice for me. I also like how medicine is constantly evolving and there is always something new to learn/new skills to develop so your job is always progressing.

Why did you decide on the GP path?

During my medical training and early career as a junior doctor I could never settle on one speciality that I liked more than any other. General practice gives you experience in the whole breadth of medicine and for me the variety of work that we see in general practice is what I particularly enjoy about the job. No two days are ever the same in general practice!

I believe you graduated from the University of Wales, what brought you to this area?

Yes I did. I met my husband whilst we were both in Bristol. After he graduated, he moved down to Sussex (he is originally from this area) whilst I went on to study Medicine. Once I graduated in 2010, I moved to Sussex and have lived here ever since with my husband and our two daughters, now aged 7 and 10.

OUR SURGERIES

When you ring for the surgery and it takes a while for the phone to be answered, or when you are unable to get the appointment you want, we would ask you to bear in mind why it takes so long, and why we sometimes have to say 'sorry, no'

As outlined in our last newsletter, the Practice is registering more patients every week – we currently we have around 11,780 patients registered. This increase is largely due to the amount of new building in the area, and means a much greater work load on doctors and ancillary staff with more patients chasing the available number of appointments.

The Practice has 3 Full Time GP Partners, along with 2 part time GP's & 2 locum GP's who are available to help occasionally. We also now have Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Paramedic Practitioners and a number of Nurses, Phlebotomists etc. who deal with a wide range of routine and follow up appointments as well as holding various clinics.

Of our 11 Receptionists, mostly part time to give the range of cover needed, in peak times around 7 are available to answer telephones over the two sites. They not only deal with the telephones, but also handle a range of administrative tasks, patient queries and personal visits to the surgery. On most days they answer more than 250 calls – just in the 'rush hour' (8am – 10am) period alone

In addition to the staff that you see, we also have a team of administrators who handle all the necessary paperwork, referrals, documentation etc. as well as a dedicated medical secretary.

If just 1% of our patients needed to see a doctor, that would take more than the available daily appointments, and that does not take into account previously booked repeat and follow-up appointments, which reduces the number available still further. This increasing pressure - is the main reason for the Signposting Initiative being introduced throughout the NHS.

SIGNPOSTING

Following guidance from the NHS, we have introduced Signposting - which simply means that when calling to arrange an appointment, you will be asked a few, brief questions. This is to make sure that you see the most appropriate person and receive treatment as quickly as possible.

This initiative is in response to the high GP workload – not just in our Practice, but all over the country - and is designed to make the very best use of all the other services available. Recently the NHS took out full page advertisements in daily newspapers highlighting the range of services, not just at GP Practices, but also within the community, with a view to helping people understand that professionals other than doctors can deal with their needs.

As outlined in the article on the previous page both of our surgeries offer a whole range of professional expertise and on many occasions the problem can be dealt with as quickly and efficiently by a nurse, paramedic, etc. and will not need the presence of a doctor.

However, if necessary, all our additional staff will, of course, refer to a doctor.

FLU CLINIC DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Yapton Surgery	Saturday 23 rd September
	(AM) over 65's
	(PM) Under 65's at risk only.
Middleton Surgery	Saturday 30 th September
	(AM) over 65's
	(PM) Under 65's at risk only.

YAPTON SURGERY BACK DOOR

This is one of two perennial issues that crop up and we have had several requests to reopen the back door to Yapton surgery over the past months.

Unfortunately, at present this is not possible. Now that the reception area has been changed to face the main front door, there would be no supervision of people coming onto the premises from the back. We have had issues in the past, even when the receptionists could see who came in and out, with children coming in to use the toilet. Now that there is no visibility on who comes or goes, it presents a risk that obviously cannot be permitted.

We are continuing to monitor the situation, and although we have investigated several other possibilities, at present we have not found an acceptable solution to the issue of access from the footpath.

YAPTON PARKING / DISABLED PARKING

The other perennial issue is the parking at Yapton Surgery.

As patients will be aware, we are severely limited by access and the area available for parking and there is no way to increase the space available. There are 17 parking spaces in the main car park, 5 of which are allocated to Staff Parking.

In addition, there are two clearly marked disabled parking places available directly outside of the doors to surgery. The other parking spaces in the area around the surgery building are available and when needed are used for additional staff parking and the delivery of goods.

The problem is sometimes made worse when people park directly opposite the entrance to the car park, making both entering and, in particular, leaving the car park more difficult than it needs to be. For this reason, we would ask that if patients choose to park in the road, they are considerate to other users and do not park directly opposite the entrance.