

Produced by
the Patient
Liaison Group

***NEWS* from Downing Street**

Your chance to join the Liaison Group

BIG CHANGES are ahead for the practice's Patient Liaison Group and there is an opportunity for more patients to join, meet with the doctors and other staff, and have a say in the surgery's future.

The Department for Health is promoting a new structure for liaison groups, which exist in various forms in many GP practices throughout the country.

Any patient of the Downing Street surgery is entitled to apply to join the liaison group to see how the practice works, discuss mutual problems and put forward suggestions and points of view.

Patients meet the health professionals in a friendly and informal atmosphere. Meetings are usually held quarterly in the early evening and last about an hour or an hour and a half.

The meetings give an opportunity to see how the practice works, hear about the day to day problems, and put forward the patients' perspective.

Surgery opening hours and difficulties with the telephone system (hopefully now being overcome) are among matters discussed at recent meetings. Changes introduced to make visiting the surgery easier or more comfortable have included higher chairs in the waiting areas, baby changing facilities and drinking water "on tap." Also on the agenda have been the changes taking place or on the horizon in the NHS. Currently, the Health Department is seeking to put all Patient

Liaison Groups on a more formal basis than the informal way in which many – including Downing Street's – work at present. Whitehall wants each group to adopt a formal constitution, a change which is not necessarily welcomed everywhere. The Downing Street Surgery and the Patient Liaison Group are considering the proposal.

SURGERY WITH LONG HISTORY

There has been a surgery in the present premises for nearly two centuries.

The fine old house has adapted well to its present role. Some of the rooms in use were originally the stables of the house.

Nowadays the building has been extensively enlarged and modernised by the practice, giving the present comfortable and pleasant environment.

The doctors and nurses enable the practice to offer a range of specialist clinics and services. The practice undertakes to see urgent cases the same day.

In the meantime, if you are interested in becoming a member of the Liaison Group contact the Practice Manager.

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SOME NEW FACES AT DOWNING STREET

Elderly care is Dr Ismail's speciality

Dr ZIVER ISMAIL, who has joined the team of doctors at the surgery, qualified in 2003 and also holds the qualifications of Member of the Royal College of General Practitioners (MRCGP) and Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCP)..

He qualified at University College, London.

He has been working at a practice in Camberley and was a locum at Downing Street between July 2010 and February of this year. He has a special interest in care of the elderly.

Dr Ismail has taken over the patients' list of Dr John Steed, who retired at the end of March.

Another newcomer to the practice this year is **Kay Lewis**, healthcare assistant and member of the nursing team.

Kay primarily carries out the health checks on new patients, blood tests, spirometry and dressings and generally assists the nursing team.

Over the past six months there have been several retirements from the administration and reception team. Four new members have been welcomed – **Helen, Carol, Jo** and **Rebecca**.

Later appointments on Mondays

THE SURGERY is now offering later appointments on Monday evenings.

All the doctors are working and the last appointments are at 7.50pm. The

surgery's Saturday morning opening is being discontinued.

NOW MEET US ON THE INTERNET . . . AND TAKE PART

FOR SOME TIME the Downing Street Practice has had its own website. You can find it at www.downingstreetsurgery.co.uk.

Now the surgery is setting up a Virtual Patient Group which will enable patients with computer access to take part in surveys about the practice's service which it is proposed to run from time to time in the future.

Everyone is invited to pick up a form, to register your interest, at the Reception Desk.

The painters are in

THE downstairs doctors' rooms and public areas are in the process of being redecorated during the next few months.

Says practice manager Lesley Barton: "We apologise for any inconvenience – and the smell of paint."

Vaccine time ahead

THE surgery will again be offering influenza vaccination in the autumn.

All patients over the age of 65 are eligible for the vaccine, as are diabetics, asthmatics, and anyone who regularly receives a 'flu vaccination.

It is anticipated that vaccine will be available in October. Nearer the time there will be notices in the surgery showing dates and times of the clinics.

THE SPECIAL CLINICS

THERE are a number of clinics regularly held at the surgery for patients with special needs.

These include clinics for asthma, child immunisation, diabetes, ante-natal, heart disease, and blood tests. There is also a "Quit smoking" clinic.

Clinics are held by doctors or specialist nurses as appropriate.

Inquire at Reception for details.