

The GP Direct Journal



Keeping you informed

October 2019 — Volume 13 Issue 2

Editor's Column

Have you had your flu vaccine yet?

The Bowel Screening kit just got a whole lot easier

Harrow Health - your local community provider

Congrats to Dr Merali for running the Harrow Half Marathon

We look into some of the benefits of physical activity



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Editors' Column

With winter now nearly upon us again we would like to remind all patients who are eligible to receive a free flu vaccination on the NHS to get protected as soon as possible. The seasonal influenza vaccination gives the best possible protection against the main flu strains in circulation this winter. We have more information about who is eligible as well as the clinic times on page 3.

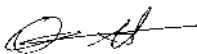
In recent months we encountered a significant problem of patients booking more than one GP appointment at any one time. This resulted in several wasted appointments as well as resulting in other patients stating they could not get appointments. The practice have therefore taken a decision that one GP appointment can be booked at any one time, be that via reception, online or through the automated telephone booking system. If a patient is deemed to require another appointment, a GP can make an exception to book more than one in the future, otherwise any further appointments can only be booked after the current appointment is completed.

We would like to thank all the patients who took the time to complete the latest GP Patient Survey which is conducted by IPSOS MORI on behalf of the NHS. The latest results were published in July 2019 and they make for very positive reading with an overall 5% higher score on average compared to the Harrow average. Nine out of the 12 main areas were scored higher at GP Direct than the local average. We have summarised the key findings on page 6.

As many of you will be aware the practice is actively engaged in promoting research opportunities to patients. By engaging in research we can help shape future services and treatments and it gives the practice and patients a glimpse into the latest developments in the health sector. Occasionally this may even mean access to new treatments or investigations. If you are happy for us to contact you, from time to time, about research opportunities, you do not need to do anything, however, if you prefer that we do not approach you for research related activity, please let us know by completing a contact preference form from reception or emailing us at gpdirect@nhs.net with the subject matter 'consent to contact form.'

We have great pleasure in welcoming Dr Emily Cecil and Dr Kaanal Thakkar to the practice, they started their one-year GP Registrar training placements with us in August. We also bid farewell to Dr Victoria Lee and Dr Pavithra Prathab who completed their GP training placements with us in early August.

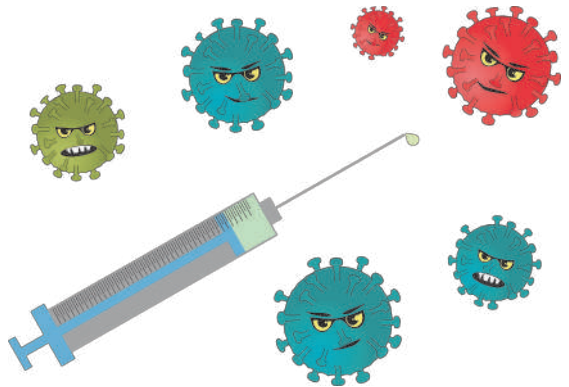
Finally, we would like to congratulate Dr Merali for completing the Harrow Half Marathon on Sunday 15th September, read more about his achievement and fundraising cause on page 7.



Have you had your flu vaccine yet?

At the time of going to print with the Journal more than 1,000 of you had received the flu vaccine. We strongly recommend that you get your free vaccination if you fall in an 'at risk' group. The main 'at risk' categories this year are:

- Aged over 65 (born before 1.4.1955)
- Underlying health condition (such as diabetes, heart disease, COPD etc.)
- Asthma which is treated or has resulted in a hospital admission
- Liver or Kidney disease
- Weakened immune system
- Being a carer
- Pregnant women
- Those living in long-stay residential or nursing home
- Problems with your spleen
- Neurological conditions such as previous strokes, Parkinson's etc.
- Learning disability patients
- Severely overweight (a BMI of 40 or more)
- children aged 2 & 3 years of age (born between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2017). Children in reception class and school years one, two, three and four, five & six should be vaccinated at school). Patients aged 2-17 years of age will be offered the nasal flu vaccine.



Come along to one of our flu vaccination walk-in clinics.

Patients aged 65 and over:

- Saturday 5th October 9:00am - 12:00 noon at Welbeck Road
- Wednesday 9th October - 9:00am - 12:00 noon at Eastcote lane

For eligible patients aged 18 to 64 (and 6 months to under 2 years):

- Wednesday 2nd October 6:00pm - 7:30pm at Eastcote lane
- Saturday 12th October 9:00am - 12:00pm at Welbeck Road

Getting your over the counter medicines

The practice will not generally give you a prescription for over the counter (OTC) medicines for a range of minor health concerns. This applies to treatments for the conditions below. Instead, over the counter medicines are available to buy in a pharmacy or supermarket in your local community. The NHS has changed its policy on prescribing these medicines so as to ensure the NHS can appropriately fund access to essential medicines for serious conditions. More information is available on the following link: <http://bit.ly/OTCscripts>

Acute sore throat	Conjunctivitis	Coughs, colds and nasal congestion
Cradle cap	Dandruff	Diarrhoea (adults)
Dry eyes / sore tired eyes	Earwax	Excessive sweating
Haemorrhoids	Head lice	Indigestion and heartburn
Infant colic	Infrequent cold sores of the lip	Infrequent constipation
Infrequent migraine	Insect bites and stings	Mild acne
Minor burns and scalds	Mild cystitis	Mild dry skin
Mild irritant dermatitis	Mild to moderate hay fever	Minor pain, discomfort and fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)
Mouth ulcers	Nappy rash	
Oral thrush	Prevention of tooth decay	Ringworm / athletes foot
Sunburn	Sun protection	Teething / mild toothache
Threadworms	Travel sickness	Warts and verrucae

The bowel screening test is now easier to do

There is an update to the home testing kit for bowel cancer automatically sent to everyone aged 60 to 74 years old. Like the previous testing kit, the new FIT kit detects blood in the stool, but is easier to use, more sensitive, and only needs one sample.

The FIT kit can help detect bowel cancer much sooner, which means a better outcome and a higher chance of survival. For more information go to www.stmarksbowelscreen.co.uk/fit-kit or call 0800 606 7070 to request a FIT kit.

Early detection of bowel cancer will mean 4 times better survival rate than a late diagnosis! To help catch it as early as possible, make sure to complete the home-testing kit (if aged 60-74).



Did you know who Harrow Health are?

Community Services	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) •Anticoagulation (Prevention of blood clots) •ENT (Ear, Nose & Throat) •Gastroenterology (Stomach) •Haemorrhoids (Piles) •Neurology (Headaches & Migranes) •Orthopedics (Bones & muscles) •Ophthalmology (Eye conditions) •Paediatrics (Children & Young people under 16) •Physiotherapy (Incl. Spinal assessment & triage) •Rheumatology (Rheumatic diseases)
Locations	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pinn Medical Centre (Pinner) •Alexandra Avenue (Harrow) •Stanmore Park Medical Centre (Williams Drive) •Elliott Hall Medical Centre (Pinner) •Bacon Lane Medical Centre (Edgware) •Belmont Health Centre (Harrow) •Streatfield Health Centre (Harrow) •Northwick Park Hospital •Kenton Road •Edgware •South Harrow

Harrow Health CIC was formed in 2007 to provide a range of high quality health care services which are accessible for all patients within Harrow and the surrounding area.

They currently run 11 community clinics at local sites across Harrow.

If you require a referral to one of these specialties the GP may suggest a referral to Harrow Health if they feel your condition can be managed by them. They currently have much shorter wait times for several specialties such as ENT, Neurology and Ophthalmology.

**(N.B Each location operates different opening hours & not all services are offered at every location)*

July 2019 GP Patient Survey Results are out

We have summarised the result of the July 2019 GP Patient survey results in the table below, showing the practice score, the Harrow average and the difference between the two. Overall, the results are very positive and we thank our patients for taking the time to complete the survey.

One question stood out as being notably lower than the Harrow average, this is in relation to having enough support to manage your long-term condition(s). We would be very grateful if you could share your ideas and suggestions as to how we can make improvements in this area, feel free to write, call or email us gpdirect@nhs.net with your views.

Question	GP Direct	Harrow average	Difference
Find it easy to get through to this surgery by phone	85%	67%	+18%
Usually wait 15 minutes or less after their appointment time to be seen	62%	60%	+1%
Describe their overall experience of this surgery as good	89%	81%	+8%
Find the receptionists at this surgery helpful	97%	87%	+10%
A range of questions about the healthcare professional (giving time, confidence, care and concern, involving them in decisions, understood mental health needs, good at listening and ensuring their needs were met)	91%	89%	+2%
Usually get to see or speak to their preferred GP	42%	43%	-1%
Satisfied with the general practice appointment times available	77%	64%	+13%
Offered a choice of appointment when they last tried to make a general practice appointment	78%	66%	+12%
Satisfied with the type of appointment they were offered	72%	70%	+2%
Took the appointment they were offered	89%	93%	-4%
Describe their experience of making an appointment as good	74%	65%	+9%
Had enough support in the last 12 months to help manage their long-term condition(s)	63%	73%	-10%

Dr Merali has run the Harrow Half Marathon

Dr Merali completed the Harrow Half Marathon (13 miles) on 15th September in 2 hours and 45 minutes. He set himself a target to raise £50,000 for the Salaam Centre, a local community centre in North Harrow, which aims to bring people together through sport and leisure.



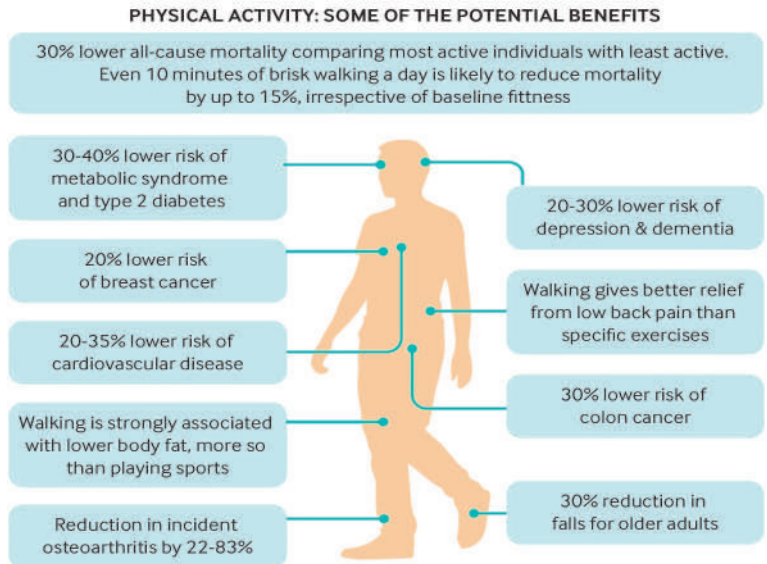
At the time of writing this article Dr Merali had raised more than 91% of the target. If you are interested in supporting the project you can donate via the following link:

<http://bit.ly/drmhalf>

While the fundraising effort is not related to GP Direct, we would like to thank Dr Merali for being a great role model in encouraging us all to lead healthier lives. He is also the walk leader for the regular Sunday morning West Harrow Park walk, which takes place every Sunday morning from 9.30am. Everyone is welcome to along!

An illustrative guide to the benefits of physical activity

Staying on the theme of physical activity, the British Medical Journal (BMJ) recently published an article on its many and diverse benefits. The illustration which was included in the September edition of the BMJ (right) provides an overview of the numerous benefits associated with physical activity. This has been adapted by the BMJ from publications produced by Public Health England and the Department of Health.



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