

Staff News

We are pleased to say that both Dr Beale and our HCA Tabby Lewis are progressing well with their cancer treatment. We would like to thank both our fabulous team of locums for their support during this difficult time, and our patients for your tolerance when we cannot always see you as quickly as we would all like.

On a happier note, we will welcome Dr Deborah Smithers to our permanent team of GPs from January. She introduces herself here:

"I qualified from Liverpool medical school in 1990 and moved to London after a couple of years to start my paediatric career. I spent an amazing two years in Sydney Australia working in paediatric intensive care including four months as a flying doctor. I moved back to the south west where I met my husband in Burton Bradstock and still live there with my husband, 2 daughters and 2 dogs. I joined general practice 14 years ago when my daughter was born and I have worked as a partner in a very busy Weymouth practice since then.



I love walking my dogs, try to control the garden and you can often see me running around the country lanes training. I now want to work nearer to home and our family business, and can't wait to join Portesham where I started my GP career as a locum. "

Drs Baird, Fowler and Beale Good (Portesham S)



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(01305) 871468
Provided by: Drs Baird, Fowler and Beale

CQC inspection area ratings
(Latest report published on 12 October 2016)

Safe	Good ●
Effective	Good ●
Caring	Outstanding ☆
Responsive	Good ●
Well-led	Good ●

CQC Inspections and ratings of specific services
(Latest report published on 12 October 2016)

CQC Rating

We are delighted to announce that our CQC rating has been updated following submission of further evidence and we are now rated **Good** in four areas of care and **Outstanding** for our Care. The full report is available on the website at www.CQC.org.uk



SURGERY SNIPPETS

Winter 2016



Threat to West Dorset GP Surgeries?

You may have seen press reports about "proposals" to cut GP Surgeries in West Dorset.

Some patients have come to us with fears that Portesham might close and be merged with Bridport Medical Centre. Rest assured:

We are not going anywhere!

However there are many pressures on Primary Care at the moment, not least the increasing difficulty of recruiting GP partners, which we experienced ourselves for the first time when Dr Baird retired, but which has affected practices in other areas such as Weymouth and Portland for much longer.

Other pressures come from the ever-increasing workload as populations age, something which particularly affects us (in West Dorset 27% of the population are aged 65-84 and 4.7% are 85 years and over; in Dorset as a whole the figures are 20.3% and 3.8%). As medicine advances, the complexity of treatments and the increasing expectations of patients also add to the workload, as do the constant changes in the services and reporting requirements introduced by NHS England.

Dorset's Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) who plan and secure healthcare in Dorset, are concerned that, without a change in the way we deliver Primary Care, primary care may come under so much pressure that GP practices as they are now will not be able to deliver care safely in the future.

Turn over for details of the draft plan and what it could mean for us.

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THE CCG DRAFT PROPOSALS

The CCG's 50 page draft plan was sent to GP practices in early October. (You can find it online by searching for 'Dorset Primary Care Commissioning Strategy and Plan' or looking on the CCG website at www.dorset.ccg.co.uk.)

To summarise, the CCG says that General Practice needs to evolve or we will find it difficult to respond to changing needs, and explains how **"better patient experience could be achieved by organising GP practices into larger groups"**, which would make practices stronger and help us to attract and retain the GPs and staff required to meet local needs. It also draws attention to some practices working out of older premises which may not be fit for purpose in the future, and states that **"patients will have their care delivered from larger, local and better-equipped sites offering a wider range of options for care"**. And the plan repeatedly states that **"working at scale"**, including what it calls **"super practices"**, and delivering care to populations of between **30,000 to 100,000 patients** is the way forward. In their blueprints for each part of Dorset, the plan for West Dorset (page 37 of the plan) suggests that future GP care could be delivered from **3-5 locations**. We currently have 7 practices working from 8 locations.

Understandably this terminology sounds frightening and raises all kinds of concerns. We understand why the CCG is concerned and the rationale behind their proposals. However we believe that in West Dorset our practices already provide excellent care and we work mostly from modern, purpose-built premises. So for us, the main advantage in working at scale is not economic or work-force related but is in terms of better patient care in emergency situations, because we can work as part of multi-disciplinary teams and quickly mobilise district nurses, social care, community physios etc where a rapid response is needed. As a small practice we would also benefit from sharing "back-office" administrative functions.

The good news

Yes, there is some! We are already starting to work together as a group of West Dorset practices with the federation that we formed this year, Jurassic Coast Healthcare Ltd, and this form of "working at scale" is one of the options proposed by the CCG plan.

The Federation comprises the 6 practices of Portesham, Bridport Medical Centre, Tollerford Practice (in Maiden Newton & Tunnel Road in Beaminster), Barton House in Beaminster, Charmouth Medical Practice and Lyme Regis Medical Centre. We also work closely with Lyme Bay Medical Centre.

As a Federation, we are already putting plans in place to start sharing administrative and back-room staff and to work closely with community services through the Bridport Care Coordination Hub which provides crisis response. When extended access to bookable GP appointments is introduced, our practices propose to provide this service jointly from a central location which is likely to be Bridport. Patients would be able to book a late night or weekend appointment to see a GP who has access to their full medical notes. And we will consider providing any new services through the Federation if it would give better patient care provided at scale rather than from our premises.

Our strategy is therefore to develop joint working through the Federation, whilst retaining our individual practice lists and premises so that we can continue to provide excellent, personal care close to our patients' homes.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Make yourself familiar with the CCG's draft plan
- Talk to your PPG member (see below)
- Make sure we have your email address so we can contact you quickly if we need your support or input
- Look out for public meetings with the CCG between now and March 2017, where you can express your views.

We will keep you up to date with our plans and any proposals that might affect your care with us.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The PPG has a noticeboard and comment box in the waiting room, and members attended our Saturday Flu Clinics to introduce themselves and the group to patients.

Group members

William Knapman (Chair), **West Bexington**:

Andrew Bailey, **Long Bredy**

Sandra Marshall, **Puncknowle**

Jill Askew, **Shipton Gorge**

William Whiting, **Portesham**

Clive Willetts, **Martinstown**

If you have any suggestions or concerns that you cannot make directly to a member of staff, please feel free to discuss it with any member of the PPG.