

The PPG is about
PARTICIPATION -
your participation.

Why not come along and
join us at the next event
and have your say . . .



PPG EVENT: "HEARING LOSS" 19 January 2017 at VMC

Julie Wilkins, manager of audiology services at Charing Cross Hospital, opened the meeting with the surprising statistic that over 10 million people in the UK suffer from hearing loss (1 in 6). Hearing loss can be at many levels from mild to moderate, severe and profound. Causes include hearing loss at birth, certain drugs, medical conditions, noise exposure, ear infections, wax build up, accidents, injuries and age. Stress can also cause temporary hearing loss. Serious damage can be done by poking about in the ears. No-one should ever use Q-tips or anything small to clean out their ears.

The excellent NHS audiology services involve screening, paediatric and adult diagnostics, adult rehabilitation, hearing therapy, cochlear implants and other devices. The future lies in smartphone-compatible programming aids and stem-cell research. Hearing aids are all about amplification, and audiologists have to consider many factors both technical and psychological when recommending them. Julie gave us her top tips for wearing hearing aids, most importantly: wear them all day, every day in order to get used to them, and make sure you insert them correctly.

Richard France then spoke on behalf of Action on Hearing Loss (The Royal National Institute for Deaf People). Richard has been profoundly deaf from birth. He described how danger levels above 80 decibels from jet planes, heavy gunfire or a pneumatic drill can permanently damage your hearing. Noisy rock concerts and listening to music on headphones at high volume can also do long-term damage in just a few hours. Remember that you risk more than your hearing. You lose friends, family and social life. You lose confidence, become isolated and depressed and face loss of earnings. Richard urged the audience to speak directly to a deaf person, without shouting, looking away or covering the mouth, to enable them to lip read.

ACTION ON HEARING LOSS – We can help
Information Line: 0808 808 0123 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm)
e-mail: informationline@hearingloss.org.uk



Contact Victoria MC and Lees Place MC by e-mail: CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net
Contact the Patient Participation Group by e-mail (on PPG matters only.
Not to be used for clinical or practice matters) vmcpgg@live.co.uk



Patient Participation Group

Victoria
Medical
Centre

29 Upper Tachbrook Street,
London SW1V 1SN
tel: 020 7834 2298
www.victoriamedicalcentre.com

Lees Place Medical Centre,
11 Lees Place, London W1K 6LN
tel: 020 7036 6060
www.leesplacemedicalcentre.com

Spring 2017



news

Dear VMC and Lees Place Patients,

The group room was packed out for the PPG Annual General Meeting on 21 February. Dr Rankine reviewed the past year at VMC in the context of increasing cut-backs on budgets and resources coupled with difficulties in recruiting and retaining high quality staff. It is clear to all that the NHS is under enormous pressure, but the good news is that the wonderful world of digital technology is coming to the rescue. Out with laborious documentation, in with joined-up data is good news for patients and good news for doctors too.

The launch of VMC's new website with its online services gives patients the option of booking an appointment, ordering a repeat prescription and accessing their medical record from the comfort of their favourite armchair, or from anywhere in the UK. The online services promise to offer major benefits not only to patients but also to the hard-pressed practice team in terms of time-saving, efficiency and improved care for everyone.

It is, however, important to point out that it is only an option. If you prefer to book your appointments over the phone, and come to the surgery with your repeat prescription in the usual way, then those services will still be available. And there is no truth in the rumour that patients who prefer not to go online will be sent to the back of the queue.

For a step-by-step guide to VMC's online services and how to register for them, see the inside of this newsletter or ask at reception.

Throughout 2017 the PPG will continue to keep patients up to date with news from the practice, and find distinguished speakers for our open events – at which everyone is welcome to come along and take part.

Mary ORR
Chairman, VMC PPG

INVITATION

– PPG EVENT –
6.00 pm, Thursday 6 April

CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT

causes and treatments

Dr ADNAN AL-KAISY
Clinical lead and consultant, Pain Management
and Neuromodulation Centre,
Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals
and his team from St Thomas

KAREN SANDERSON, Senior Chronic Pain Nurse
DR GEORGIO LAMBRU, Neurologist
with a special interest in headaches

Followed by a Question and
Answer Session

Group Room VMC,
29 Upper Tachbrook Street

QUICK GUIDE TO VMC'S ONLINE SERVICES

FREE ACCESS TO VMC SERVICES 24/7

By booking appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions and reading your medical record online, you will find accessing these services much more convenient. You will also be taking a time-consuming burden off the shoulders of the VMC team, which means they will have more time to take care of you.

This is a summary of the main benefits offered by VMC's online services. Please take time to read them carefully, and think about it. You may not need to use them straight away, but once you have registered for them you can access them whenever you need to in future.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO VMC'S ONLINE SERVICES

IF YOU ARE ONLINE

BOOKING APPOINTMENTS

You can now choose to book and cancel appointments with your doctor or nurse via your computer, laptop, tablet or smart-phone anytime, anywhere in the UK.

ORDERING A REPEAT PRESCRIPTION

You can now order repeat prescriptions via your computer, laptop, tablet or smart-phone anytime, and have them dispensed at a pharmacy anywhere in the UK.

ACCESSING YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

You can now access a summary of your medical record instantly from anywhere in the UK, and in an emergency share it to speed up your medical care or to find answers to questions about your medical history without having to contact your doctor. You can also request a version of your full medical record online but this will take longer to access.

SHARING YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

It is entirely your decision if you wish to share your medical record with your family, friends or others outside the NHS.

MISTAKES ON YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

If you find errors on your online medical record or anything that worries you, please speak to your GP about it. You cannot change the record yourself.

IF YOU ARE NOT ONLINE

BOOKING APPOINTMENTS

You can still book and cancel appointments with your doctor or nurse by phone or by coming to the surgery during opening hours just like you do now.

ORDERING A REPEAT PRESCRIPTION

You can still order a repeat prescription by bringing the old one into the surgery. It can be dispensed at any pharmacy of your choice in the UK.

ACCESSING YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

You can request your full printed medical record from the surgery, but you may be charged for this. If you are involved in an emergency or accident away from home your summary care record (SCR) will be available only if you have not asked to 'opt out' of record sharing and you give permission at the time of the contact.

SHARING YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

It is entirely your decision if you wish to share your medical record with your family, friends or others outside the NHS.

MISTAKES ON YOUR MEDICAL RECORD

If you request a copy of your medical record from VMC you can discuss any queries with your GP. You cannot change the record yourself.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. I would like to take advantage of the benefits of going online, but I cannot use a computer or other device. I do, however, have a close friend/family member who can. May I name someone as a proxy on my behalf?

A. Yes. But verification is required.

Q. How far ahead can I book an online appointment?

A. Currently 28 days.

Q. Will continuity of care at VMC be compromised by online bookings?

A. VMC tries hard to maintain continuity of care for the duration of a treatment, and this will not be affected by the new system. If anything, it will be easier for you to choose to see the same doctor.

Q. How will VMC stop online patients from blocking appointment slots?

A. VMC staff will be checking up, and multiple bookings will not be allowed.

Q. Will going online adversely affect the security of my medical record?

A. VMC holds a summary care record (SCR) on every patient. Unless you have 'opted out' of SCR sharing, your care record can be accessed with your permission – and solely by members of the NHS, such as hospital doctors involved in your care – when it is needed to streamline contacts between VMC and other NHS services. This is clearly beneficial to your wellbeing, and VMC encourages all patients not to 'opt out'. If you have 'opted out' you can ask the practice to reverse your decision.

Q. Can I access VMC's online services when I am abroad?

A. No. The VMC system only functions within the confines of the UK.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR VMC'S ONLINE SERVICES

1. If you are a registered patient either at VMC or at Lees Place you must first ask reception for a username and password. If necessary, you can ask someone to write them down or send them to you.

2. Go to the new VMC website:

www.victoriamedicalcentre.com

and either click on the 3 bars at the top left-hand corner of the home page and then click on INFORMATION, or scroll down the home page and click on the INFORMATION box. This will bring up the SYSTMOnline page. You will need to sign up for the first time. Half way down the page click SIGN UP and enter your username and password, which will take you to another page where you can sign up and change your password to a more memorable one. You are now ready to use the online services and can Log In.

3. In future, whenever you want to book an appointment online, just follow the links to BOOKING AN APPOINTMENT. Log In and choose an appointment slot that is most convenient for you.

4. To order your repeat prescriptions, just click on the INFORMATION section on the home page and scroll down to where you see ORDER A REPEAT MEDICATION and Log In.

5. You can access your summary care record online through the SYSTMOnline homepage. However, you will have to make a request if you would like your full medical record to be uploaded from the practice.

6. If you have any problems, please ask at reception who will be happy to help you.