

Present: Dawn Riley (Deputy Manager) Michael Hemmerdinger

Apologies: Jayne Muspratt, Alistair Tranter

Welcome: Dawn thanked Mr Hemmerdinger for attending.

Pregabalin and Gabapentin to be controlled as Class C Drugs

The Government have announced that prescription drugs Pregabalin and Gabapentin are to be reclassified as Class C controlled substances from 1st April 2019. The change has come after experts have highlighted rising numbers of fatalities linked to the drugs. This change means it will be illegal to possess Pregabalin and Gabapentin without a prescription and it will be illegal to supply or sell them to others.

What will this mean for the Patient?

If you are currently prescribed either of these medications Pharmacists must dispense the drugs within 28 days of the prescription being issued. The Doctor will now only be able to prescribe a maximum of one month's supply, the prescription will need to be collected within 28 days and if you currently collect your prescriptions this will now have to be signed for with one of our reception team. If you require a nominated person to collect your prescription on your behalf the Practice will provide a consent form to be completed. It is hopeful that in the future Pregabalin and Gabapentin can be sent electronically but in the meantime if you nominate a Pharmacy they can collect this on your behalf – all you need to do is choose your preferred Pharmacy and either let them or one of our reception team know and we can set this up for you.

Extended Hours Services

The Practice continues to offer and advise patients of '**Extended Hours Services**' that are available to them outside of our surgery hours:

- GP Appointments
- Nurse Appointments
- Phlebotomy
- Wellbeing Co-ordinator
- Physio First

Patients can access these appointments at six locations between Monday to Friday 6:30 PM – 9:30 PM and Saturday and Sunday 9:00 AM – 6:00PM (but please note some of the opening times and services offered at different venues may vary). These services are available at; 1829 Building Countess of Chester, Ellesmere Port Hospital, Tarporley War memorial Hospital, Neston Surgery, Helsby Health Centre, Laurel Bank Surgery Malpas.

The Elms also offers Extended Hours every week on a **Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 7:10 AM – 8:00 AM** with Dr Jackson, Dr Snowden and our Advanced Nurse Practitioner.

Stay Well Pharmacy' Campaign

'Stay Well Pharmacy' is a new campaign from NHS England which is encouraging people, especially parents and carers of children under the age of 5, to visit their local pharmacy team first for clinical advice for minor health concerns. They can offer advice on; sore throats, coughs, colds, aches and pains, upset stomach and teething as well as offering support with healthy eating and stopping smoking. The main message from this campaign is that community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are qualified healthcare professionals, who are the right people to see if you need clinical advice or over the counter medicines to help safely manage a wide range of minor health concerns. If the pharmacist thinks your symptoms suggest your condition is something more serious they have the clinical training to ensure you are directed to the correct healthcare professional such as your GP

or hospital. Many pharmacies offer extended opening hours in the evenings and weekends and no appointment is required. If you need to speak about something private the majority of pharmacies now have consultation rooms for private conversations.

Elms Equipment Fundraising – at our clinical meeting on Friday 15th March 2019 we will be discussing what equipment would best benefit the team to help with patient care and services provided – we will give an update at our next meeting what was decided to be purchased.

Elms Staff Update – Dawn Riley the Deputy Manager will be leaving the Elms as of 29th March 2019 after nearly 13 years' service. She will be undertaking a new role of Practice Manager at Northgate Medical Centre. She would like to thank all the dedicated PPG members for all their hard work and support since 2012 when the PPG was first set up.

Agenda items received from PPG Members - No Items received

Any Other Business

Attendance of PPG Meetings was discussed at our previous meeting in January, we currently have 49 members. It was suggested to contact group members to ask if there was any particular reason preventing them from attending (we understand patient's work commitments and previously been informed about these) – Dawn did ask the question when sending the minutes of January's meeting and unfortunately we had no response.