

Parkbury House Newsletter

Spring 2024

SPRING 2024

NEWS

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NHS TALKING THERAPIES FOR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Primary care mental health service delivering talking therapies for mild to moderate mental health conditions including anxiety and depression. There are a number of online support options available including webinars, self-help videos and guides.

A GP can refer you, or you can refer yourself directly without a referral.

[Visit Talking Therapies' website for more information.](#)

Green Impact 2024 Award

Having been awarded the Bronze award we are now embarking on Silver. This initiative is now being driven by Flo Sawyer. One of her responsibilities within the practice is to galvanise us all towards achieving Silver. Although having only joined us in January Flo has made a significant impact and currently she and the partners are working on our Green Action Plan and a commitment to it. At Parkbury House, we recognise that the climate emergency is a health emergency. With the NHS attempting to deliver the world's first Net Zero health service, we understand our role, as a general practice, in helping to reach those sustainability goals. As an organisation, we declare a climate emergency; as such, we are willing to set ambitious emissions reduction targets, disrupt unsustainable processes and routines, raise awareness of sustainable behaviours throughout our staff and patients, and prioritise climate action. In the following document, we outline our 'green plan of action', which has been made in response to the identification of energy hotspots and environmentally damaging areas, and our move towards decarbonisation, waste reduction, and carbon literacy. We, as a practice, commit to this plan in order to take meaningful action to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and better embed sustainability within the practice culture. For more information please follow this link: <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/representing-you/policy-areas/sustainable-development>

Some of you may be aware that there is a garden at the rear of our Sandridge site. Members of the practice have been very busy recently in 'sprucing up' the space. Some time ago, BC, before Covid we planted some Spring bulbs: These are in the back garden with some newly planted trees (saplings) in evidence behind:



We plan to continue to develop the garden together with some of our patients. For more information please contact:

paulmcnally@email.com



Flo Sawyer, busy at work, planting trees. The trees were donated through the generosity of the Woodland Creation and Tree Planting Project and The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare.





One important aspect of our Green Impact is **TRAVEL**. I thought I would share with you some of the detail involved. Travel remains an important hotspot in terms of contributing to the practice carbon footprint. In order to better understand its impact, a staff travel audit was conducted, which investigated the mode of transport used for staff commutes, along with the distance travelled and the weekly working pattern of staff members. Of those who completed the survey, a considerable proportion travel in from over 5 miles away. The estimated total annual carbon emissions of the 52 staff who completed the survey correctly came to 32.5 tonnes CO₂e.

Parkbury House also recognises that a lack of physical activity contributes to diabetes and heart disease, while petrol car travel is contributing to more pollutants and a higher frequency of asthma, respiratory disease, heart attacks and strokes, as well as dementia. Lessening the environmental and health impacts of staff commutes remains an important consideration for Parkbury House.

Beyond staff commuting patterns, Parkbury House understands that the patient body and their travel into the surgery contributes massively to the carbon footprint of the practice. As such, the practice commits to mitigating actions, such as reducing unnecessary patient travel and encouraging sustainable travel with their patients where possible.

Parkbury House currently engages with the following actions:

- Measuring and understanding the impact of staff commutes by conducting staff travel audit;
- The practice provides bike rack facilities and offers the 'cycle to work' scheme to encourage staff active travel;
- To reduce unnecessary patient travel into surgery, the surgery runs a telephone triage system, and encourages patients and clinicians to address patient concerns through telephone appointments where possible. The practice invests in technologies which enable more over-the-phone treatments and less patient travel; and prescriptions are sent electronically to local pharmacies to reduce patient travel when collecting medications;
- Parkbury House publicises local bus routes on practise website, promoting sustainable transport into the practice.

Moving forward, Parkbury House commits to actioning the following:

- Reducing staff travel;
- Research into staff interest in showering/changing facilities for staff, to encourage commuting to work via running/cycling;
- Remain open-minded to staff remote working where possible;
- Investigate the feasibility of installing electric car charging points to encourage staff to 'go electric';
- Further reducing patient travel;
- Open mindedness and investment into innovative software/apps that mean patients can be treated from home, without travelling into the surgery;
- Plans to provide patients with 'active travel' reminders during the booking reminder text, or provide them with the location of local bus stops;
- Research into patient interest in a covered cycle parking area in the patient car park;
- Investigate the feasibility of installing electric car charging points to encourage patients to 'go electric'.

Regular practice meetings will enable the progress of the above actions to be tracked, while monitoring and tracking modes of travel through qualitative surveys of patients and staff will help measure the impact of the above interventions.

Herts ICB UPDATE



Encouraging parents to protect their children with vital vaccinations

The NHS has launched a [national campaign](#) to urgently increase the uptake of childhood immunisations to protect young children against a number of diseases.

The campaign aims to increase the uptake of immunisations among children aged 0-5 years. It also hopes to raise awareness amongst parents of the importance of vaccinations by highlighting the serious risk that childhood illnesses can pose if children are not vaccinated.

If any child has missed a vaccine, it is never too late for their parent, guardian or carer to contact their GP practice to catch up.

Visit our dedicated [childhood vaccinations webpage](#) to find out more information.



Health and wellbeing courses for summer term

The New Leaf Recovery and Wellbeing College has published its summer timetable featuring varied courses that help people improve their mental health and resilience.

The college, managed by the Hertfordshire Partnership NHS University Foundation Trust, offers various courses centred around boosting mental health and wellbeing. Courses take place both online and face to face at community venues across Hertfordshire.

Courses are free to Hertfordshire residents over the age of 18.

For more information, visit the [college website](#) or email Newleaf.wellbeingcollege@nhs.net.

Social Prescribing

Many things that affect our health cannot be treated by doctors or medicine alone, like loneliness, isolation or stress due to problems with debt or housing. Social prescribing connects people to non-medical support to address these issues and other unmet needs. This could involve making an appointment to see one of the volunteers at Parkbury House. We can help someone who is isolated to join a befriending group, an art class or a community gardening project, based on what matters to them. Connecting someone struggling with financial stress to a service that helps with managing debt or claiming benefits. Working with someone with high blood pressure to take up a form of exercise that they're comfortable with. Social prescribing involves understanding the complexities of people's lives and the inequalities they may face. It can help change the circumstances that make people unwell, and empower people to manage existing health problems. It can help people to connect and to grow in confidence.

At Parkbury House the appointments (45 minutes long) are every Wednesday from 09.30 -12.30



Parkbury House has made an application to the Council to have an accessible ramp for wheelchair users at Sandridge surgery (front and rear).

PPG NEWS

At our recent PPG meeting the practice manager shared with the group some planned developments at the surgery. The first bit of good news was that the practice is having a new web site developed so that it becomes more user friendly. The new website will hopefully offer a 'total triage' experience for patients so that they can more easily book appointments, those patients without access to digital technology will be able to use iPads which will be available at reception. This new framework hopefully will cut out unnecessary paperwork. At the moment there appears to be a bottleneck with E-consult, with the introduction of our new website staff will be able to manage better the inbox. He also noted that he hopes to refine the present E-consult so it becomes more user friendly with just 4 questions.

Finally we were told that the practice hopes to provide an ear wax removal clinic. Currently this service is being offered by some local pharmacies but at Parkbury House the treatment will be free.



The next meeting of the PPG will be on Thursday 20th June at 18.30 in the library at Parkbury House. If you would like more details please contact me: paulmcnally@email.com