

## AUGUST 2013 NEWSLETTER

### **St.Helens Carers Centre**

At the recent Patient Participation Group Meeting, Peter Sinnott from the St.Helens Carers Centre gave a short presentation outlining what is available locally for Carers. There are two centres – one for adult carers and one for young carers (aged 8-18). If you are a carer (or think you might be), speak to Janet (as our lead) or look at the literature available in reception.

### **Monday Open Surgery**

For those who might not be clear about the 'new' regulations surrounding open surgery, I have been asked to offer clarification. Open surgery is booked from 08.30am until 9.30am every Monday (not Bank Holidays) and from 01.05.2012 has been by appointment only. You can still turn up without an appointment but might have to wait until there is a gap. Appointments can be booked by telephone or in person from 08.15-9.30am every Monday. The usual 'one problem only' and 'quick consultation' still applies.

### **Suggestion Box**

It has been suggested that patients would like to be able to book telephone consultations and that the doctor should ring the patient rather than the other way around. It was also suggested that routine appointments should be cancelled to facilitate this. We do offer telephone consultations where the doctor feels this is clinically appropriate – this is usually for discussion of results following a face to face consultation. The expectation of what can be achieved in a telephone consultation cannot always be met and what the patient considers appropriate for a telephone consultation is not necessarily the case e.g. rashes, chest pain, abdominal pain. This was discussed in full with the Patient Participation Group and it was agreed that the current system worked well and there was no need for change.

### **Improving GP Access**

We are currently looking to improve access to GP services and are looking for patients to sign up to on-line access for booking routine GP appointments and requesting prescriptions. The current on-line prescription ordering service will eventually be replaced by the new service. You may be asked to provide photographic proof of identity. Access ID code can ONLY be handed to the person to whom it applies. The minimum age limit of 16 is a national decision – no arguing about children please! Please ask at reception if you are interested. For those without a computer, do not panic, you can continue to telephone or appear in person to book an appointment.

We plan to start using SMS (text) messaging reminders. These will be sent out to the mobile number we have recorded for you unless you opt out.

### **Dr Corner's Replacement**

We had hoped to be announcing the new GP partner in early August but he has changed his mind at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. We are now in the process of looking again and will keep you updated when we have news.