

HAVE YOUR SAY - RINGMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of the Ringmead Medical Patient Participation Group newsletter.

Firstly, a great big 'thank-you' is due to all our Practice staff and our Vaccination volunteers. Despite staff sickness, shortages (and some very unkind comments on social media platforms!), the Practice IS open for triaged and booked appointments and health reviews whilst also maintaining (with the help of volunteers) a key role as a Primary Care Network (PCN) Vaccination hub on specific days.

Early problems with long delays are being ironed out and recently wait times have been greatly reduced even with the longest queues.

Regrettably it has come to our attention that some Patients have chosen to take out their frustrations on volunteers which does not help the situation and which has caused unnecessary stress to staff and volunteers.

That is a great pity because it is their kindness and willingness to give up their time that has helped our Vaccination hub to deliver both a huge Covid Vaccination programme AND this year's 'flu jab to our patients. We do believe that the majority of patients recognise their selfless contribution, offering kindness, not aggression, and we really hope that this will become the norm.

Our PCN has vaccinated so many and provided an opportunity to have a jab without having to travel miles. We all need to recognise this and be grateful. Please do follow current regulations regarding wearing masks and suggested guidelines regarding social distancing, gatherings and ventilation to protect us all. It's not only common sense but also a matter of showing respect to everyone else!

With the latest Government's Covid guideline announcement many people will have to continue, or perhaps start, to work from home, now is a good time to really look at posture at your work station. The British Chiropractic Association reports that they have seen more postural and neck issues among home workers since the first lockdown, so look at how you can try to resolve any unsuitable work set-up. Firstly, is the seat you are using at your designated home work station providing the best possible support to avoid future spine and joint issues?

Here is some guidance provided by a large retail distributor that may be helpful:

- The best office chairs promote the natural "S" spinal curve, making sure your head is balanced at the top of the chair
- It should be adjustable to your height and provide support for your lower back and if the chair has armrests, they should be both comfortable and adjustable
- The seat should be contoured allowing even distribution of weight with at least 2.5 cm either side more than your hips and thighs and when you lean back there should be ample space for your hips
- The seat should not be too long or catch you behind the knees and the height should be adjustable so that the front of your knees are level when your feet are firmly on the ground

Secondly, are your forearms parallel with your desk when your hands are on the keyboard with the top of your screen at eye level? If not, ask your employer if you can be provided with a Bluetooth keyboard to correct this.

Core and spinal strength are so important and the stronger the muscles that hold us upright are, the better they will cope with any strain we impose on them.

Thirdly, there are 5 simple steps that you can take towards avoiding aches and pains:

1. Follow the 30/30 rule. Do this by getting out of your chair for 30 seconds every 30 minutes and walking about. If you need to, set an alarm to remind you to do this.
2. Try a Pilates class, it's a good all-rounder that focuses on flexibility and strength.
3. Go for a walk at lunchtime. 20/30 minutes is a good thing and walking really activates muscles, builds strength and helps mobility. Try to walk as if you're going somewhere and running a little late.
4. Roll a tennis ball around your shoulders and neck to give yourself a good massage. You can also take off your shoes and roll it under your feet to help with foot mobility which in turn, is also good for posture.
5. Relax your shoulders and lower them then try and squeeze an imaginary ball between your shoulder blades. Hold the squeeze for 10 seconds then repeat 5-10 times to activate the muscles that keep you upright.

Following the articles produced in our last Newsletter about The Menopause, we are delighted to advise that our Practice now has a designated doctor, Dr Mandeep Sahota, one of whose specialisms is the Menopause. Our own Tania Hewitt is a Volunteer for the Menopause Support Network, which is home of the #makemenopausematter campaign.

The Menopause Support website has an 'about' section which is a good introduction. It's a not for profit community interest company. Its kindness and support and sharing evidence based information is completely independent of any organization, brands or doctors. The group share evidence based information to help women make informed choices.

The website also includes a link to the Women only Facebook support Group which has 25+ members and a team of volunteer Moderators. It's closely monitored to make it the respectful, safe environment that it was set out to be by the founder Diane Danzebrink.

Website:- <https://menopausesupport.co.uk/>

Link to Facebook group which is a close group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/384849495215750/>

Finally, please be 'drink aware' during the Festive Season. The chart on the next page shows how many units there are in certain drinks. Scary, isn't it?

If you are attending a festive function and you know alcohol is going to be involved, please do arrange a nominated driver who isn't going to drink or Taxis to share. We should also remember it isn't just AFTER drinks that we should be thinking about how safe we are to drive, it's also the morning after! There's a good calculator on website <https://morning-after.org.uk/drink-drive-calculator/> and there is also advice on other websites.

Let's all make sure we behave responsibly on this issue for the sake of our friends and family this Christmas, we are all looking forward to celebrating this year so please be careful!

Please let either Viv Gunner or Beryl Kingsnorth know if you would like to see a specific topic included in a future edition of this Newsletter. You can contact us via the Practice Website.