

Patient Update

Newsletter for Patient Participation Groups

December 2019



Act now and become an Antibiotic Guardian

A campaign has been launched to make people more aware of antibiotic overuse and misuse.

People are being urged to become an Antibiotic Guardian to spread the word about sensible use of antibiotics. There's more information here (<http://antibioticguardian.com>).

The move comes in the wake of the World Antibiotics Awareness Week aimed at alerting people to strains of bacteria which can't be treated by antibiotics currently on the market.



Bacteria are continually adapting to develop new ways of withstanding antibiotic treatment. This is called antibiotic resistance and overuse and misuse of antibiotics is a major factor causing this.

To reduce this risk, it is important that antibiotics are taken only when necessary and patients follow advice given by the doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

Antibiotic Guardian's will help spread this message and also talk to people about the simple things they can do to help keep antibiotics working.

This includes things like:

- Don't ask for antibiotics if you have a cough or cold. Antibiotics should only be taken for bacterial infections. Many infections get better on their own, without the need for antibiotics. Go to your pharmacist for advice first.
- If the doctor does prescribe you with antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed; never save them for later and never share them with others.
- Spread the word. Tell your friends and family about antibiotic resistance. You can also help prevent infections spreading by:
 - Using tissues and disposing of them when you sneeze.
 - Washing hands thoroughly with soap, especially after you have used a tissue or sneezed into your hand
 - Get the flu vaccine if you or your child is eligible.

Kidney project scoops £30k prize

Staff working on a pioneering new patient project at Reading's Royal Berkshire Hospital have clinched a £30k national award after impressing judges with their ideas.

The team, which includes members from the RBH and Cognitant, an Oxford-based health tech company, are working with kidney patients for this project. They will spend the funds on a pilot aimed at finding more effective and efficient ways of communicating health and self-care information with patients - moving away from traditional printed leaflets, and towards digital systems and immersive content, including some virtual reality content.



As part of the pilot, 90 patients with Chronic Kidney Disease will receive information in a range of ways – a printed leaflet, digitised text leaflet or a short immersive, interactive animation which they can view on their smartphone or tablet. Clinicians will then test how well the patients have accessed, understood and acted on the information delivered through the three different channels.

Poorly informed patients are then less likely to follow advice and medication recommended by clinicians which can have a knock on effect on their health which then puts greater financial strains on health services.

Video link hospital appointments are hit with patients and staff

A major project aimed at cutting the number of times patients need to visit the Royal Berkshire Hospital for routine appointments took a big step forward last month with three outpatients clinics delivered to patients via video.

Five patients who would normally need to visit rheumatology, physiotherapy and oncology for check-ups were able to have 'face to face' appointments with their consultants via video links.



The move is part of an ambitious programme to revolutionise outpatient services at the RBH by linking clinicians and patients virtually. Now the rheumatology and physiotherapy video clinics are up and running, health managers plan to introduce virtual clinics in other areas including urology, paediatrics, trauma and orthopaedics and occupational health.

The virtual system, called 'Attend Anywhere' allows patients can discuss their progress with medics without the hassle of visiting the hospital. It means they don't have to take time off work, sort out child care, arrange transport or sit around in waiting rooms.

Patients have praised the virtual system. One said: “The whole thing was really easy - I like being able to speak directly with my consultant and discuss my condition. It would have been a two hour round trip to have the same conversation in person. I am reassured I will still be able to see my consultant as this is vital for checking measurements, but the more regular check ins via video are really reassuring.”

Help us Help You

We’re well into winter now and the NHS is stepping up its work to make sure people stay well and warm over the next few cold, dark and damp months.

A ‘winter webpage’ has been published on the [Berkshire West CCG](#) and [Integrated Care Partnership](#) websites, containing lots of information. It gives up to date information on flu vaccines, where to go for help if you’re unsure about who to talk to, advice on falls, support around mental health and information on winter fuel allowances.



There is also a series of short video clips linked to the health and wellbeing issues which will be uploaded on to the websites over the coming weeks.

And there’s more winter tips and information on these websites:

- <https://involve.community/news/winter-pressures>
- www.reading.gov.uk/winterwatch
- <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/winterprep>

Use the Right Service



And to help ease pressure on the Royal Berkshire Hospital over the winter, we’re making local people more aware of the services they may find useful before seeking treatment at the Emergency Department which is already experiencing major pressures this winter.



Pharmacy Christmas Bank Holiday opening hours

Pharmacists are qualified healthcare professionals. They can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses and you don't need to book an appointment. For more information and to find your nearest pharmacy visit the [NHS website](#).

Pharmacy opening times over the Christmas Bank Holidays are available below:

- [Berkshire](#)
- [Oxfordshire](#)
- [Buckinghamshire](#)

Next steps in proposals for Future NHS Commissioning Arrangements

Thank you to everyone who had their say in the first stage of engagement on future NHS commissioning arrangements in Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB). A full engagement report will be published in the New Year.

Views were invited on three proposals:

- The delivery of more joined up and integrated health and care through three, locally focussed Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) – alliances of NHS and Local Government organisations working together to plan and deliver care through a joint approach
- The streamlining of commissioning arrangements through a single Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) – a more strategic organisation to support ICPs and also commission services at scale as appropriate, such as NHS 111 or specialised services
- Changes to the current CCG management arrangements to create a single Accountable Officer and ICS Executive Lead role, supported by a shared management team working across the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West CCGs

Next steps regarding any proposals about a single CCG will be considered by Governing Bodies in early 2020. Any proposals for future CCG configuration would be subject to consultation with CCG members later in 2020, in line with NHS England/NHS Improvement guidance.

Berkshire Hidden Carers Campaign – Freephone number extended for a further six months

Berkshire West and East Berkshire CCGs, together with Signal4Carers have extended this helpline number to support hidden carers for a further six months. The helpline was launched in June this year and has signposted a number of carers to get the support they need.



"I am her son, not her carer"

If you are looking after a relative there is help for you. Call freephone
0800 133 7851

Lines open 10am-4pm, Monday-Friday
With 24 hour answerphone cover



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The number to call is 0800 1337851 from 10am until 4pm Monday to Friday (message facility for evenings and weekends). Further details can be [found here](#).

Make sure it's a safe and 'nappy' Christmas with our Lift the Baby film

As the countdown to Christmas parties starts, health teams are reminding parents and carers about vital 'safe sleeping' measures which could save a baby's life.

They are urging people to watch their award winning 'Lift the Baby' film lifthethebaby.org.uk which warns of



Lift the baby for safer sleeping
#LiftTheBaby



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the risks of hazardous sleeping circumstances. This could be where a parent or carer falls asleep whilst holding the baby, unwittingly placing the child at risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

The risks are exacerbated if the adult has been smoking, drinking, using drugs or heavy medication or is excessively tired. But in most cases, if adults follow the safe sleeping guidelines, these deaths are completely avoidable.

Health officials from across Berkshire teamed up with players from London Irish Rugby Club to produce the video which picked up silver at the Public Sector Communications Awards last month and has been viewed more than 95,000 times on Facebook.

Liz Stead, Head of Safeguarding Children at Berkshire West CCG said: "For many people Christmas and new year is a time of parties and family get togethers. There's usually a lot of alcohol on offer and, if there's a new baby on the scene, they're usually passed around for lots of cuddles.

"Sadly, this is a risky combination and could put the baby at harm. It's so easy, especially after a few drinks, to nod off on top of the baby and this has unfortunately has resulted in loss of life in a number of cases across the country," she said.

"Our Lift the Baby film stresses the importance of moving the baby to a safe place so both baby and carer can sleep safe and sound."

New Chief Operating Officer at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

Dom Hardy has just started work as the new Chief Operating Officer at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

He joins from NHS England and Improvement where he was Director of Primary Care and System Transformation, Dom said: "The RBH is my local hospital and this is a fantastic opportunity to work together with other partners across Berkshire to provide outstanding care for our community."



Dom has wide spread experience in the health service and has also worked in central government as Principal Private Secretary to John Reid and Patricia Hewitt and policy advisor to Tony Blair.

He takes over from Mary Sherry who retired last month.

Health and Wellbeing Board meetings

The three Boards all have meetings in January and they're a good chance to find out about work being done across Berkshire West to improve the health and wellbeing of local people. Senior health officials, councillors and key players from the voluntary sector and Healthwatch are members and the meetings discuss the progress of partnership work and future plans.

The January meetings are:

Wokingham (9th) Reading (17th), West Berkshire (30th). The venues and times are on the CCG website www.berkshirwestccg.nhs.uk/aboutus/howweworkwithothers

Caring for the carers

A new Working Carers Support group starts in Reading on 5 February and will run on the first Wednesday of each month. It's at the Abbey Baptist Church (behind central library), Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BE from 6pm 8pm. There are a few parking spaces and refreshments will be provided. For further information, please call 0118 324 7333 or email: ask@berkshircarershub.org

The Stroke Association Support Group - 2020 Reading dates

The Stroke Association's Caring about stroke dates are available below for [January - April next year](#). They meet monthly in Tilehurst and the support group helps stroke survivors and their family and carers. For more information contact: Dave Riley on 0118 321 9349.

Happy Christmas!



And last, but not least, merry Christmas and a very happy and **HEALTHY** new year to you all!

