

PARTNERSHIP FOR HEALTH



FRIENDS OF DAVENPORT HOUSE

BULLETIN NO 12 – MAY 2020

REPORT ON THE RECENT ON LINE SURVEY OF THE FRIENDS By Richard Munton, Chairman

Introduction

Back in February we asked you, our friends to take part in a short online survey. We had an excellent response with more than 200 replies, some including detailed and informative commentaries. On behalf of the trustees I want to thank you for the time you took in replying. We now have a number of important issues to take up ourselves and in conjunction with the Practice.

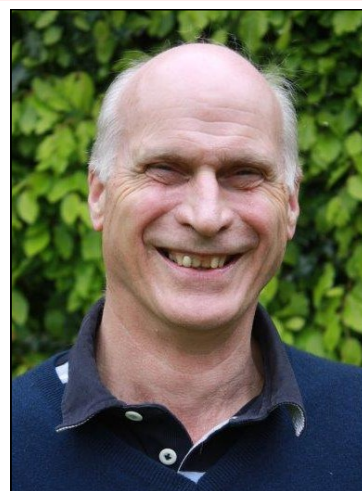
We asked for views about the new Bulletin, the programme of talks, the services currently provided by Davenport House and what you would like to see provided in the future at the Surgery and in Harpenden more generally. There is too much to report in a single issue so here we discuss your responses on the Bulletin and the programme of Monday evening talks. We will follow up on the other issues in the next edition.

We recognise that the Covid-19 epidemic has altered all our worlds, including that of General Practice, and this might mean you would have given us different responses today. Nonetheless, we believe that enough will remain the same to make it important to report the findings alongside some initial observations on what we intend to follow up. The requirements of social distancing and self-isolation, and the difficult and very busy period experienced by the Practice, mean that we have yet to agree on how to proceed on everything.

The Bulletin

About 80% of respondents read the Bulletin regularly and only a few never read it. About 90% find its contents interesting and informative. Some prefer the old hard copy Newsletter, including the longer articles by the doctors, but most accept the need for change. I think we can conclude that the new Bulletin is a success. There were a number of suggestions for improvement.

1. Some asked for **hard copies to be available in the Surgery**. There is one on the wall by the door but we **agree** we should get extra copies into the Surgery. Currently, the Covid-19 virus means that the Surgery has to keep reading material to a minimum to avoid a further source of potential infection.
2. A regular request was that **the chart of doctor and nurse availability should be put in each edition**, not least because of the rapid change in personnel and their responsibilities. We **agree** with this but under today's extreme circumstances and the new triage and telephone system of appointments (see 3 below) responsibilities are changing on a weekly basis making this suggestion impracticable. But when matters return to a more normal situation we will take up this suggestion.
3. The need **to repeat information on the appointments system and how best to access it**. We **agree** that the appointments system needs to be under continuous review, especially now that the system has been changed to meet the needs of the coronavirus pandemic.



The Surgery has just put an explanatory note on the Davenport House website about seeking an appointment by telephone and we have circulated it to members.

4. Encourage **letters from patients which describes their own experiences** in dealing with particular illnesses. Whilst this would be interesting we are unsure whether we should do this as our insurance policy prohibits us from circulating 'medical' information unless it comes from an authorised source.
5. There should be **storage of past Bulletins on the FoDH website. We began to do this two months ago.**
6. The Bulletin should contain **up-to-date information on vaccinations.** We **agree.** It should always be included as part of 'Surgery Snippets' as supplied by the Practice.



Programme of Talks

About two-thirds of respondents do not come to any talks but about 15% come to most of them. A majority of the topics are of interest to members. Monday evenings are only convenient for about 60% of respondents but we feel we are unlikely to increase this proportion at any other time or day.

There were two suggestions for widening the audience both of which we regard as promising. We will **follow these up**, but their implementation ultimately depends upon the agreement of the speakers.

We already include a synopsis of each talk in the Bulletin but in addition:

- (a) Can we make videos or acquire the Powerpoint slides from the speakers and find a way to distribute these to members? **We will investigate with the speakers.**
- (b) Can we get the speakers to identify some reliable online sources which we can publicise in the Bulletin and members can follow up in their own time?

At present, because of the pandemic, our programme is on hold but we had a number of interesting suggestions for future talks. The most frequently mentioned are listed below. They are a very helpful guide and we will use them in planning future programmes. Please send in any other suggestions you may have.

- The link between health and social care provision and role of carers
- Diabetes
- Dementia and mental health
- Pain management
- Changing recommendations on diet and alcohol intake
- Disease/illness prevention
- Frailty and mobility in old age
- Arthritis
- COPD and lung disorders

Richard Munton
Chairman

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MAKING DONATIONS TO THE "FRIENDS OF DAVENPORT HOUSE"

By John Harris, Treasurer

Introduction

When the decision was taken in March 2019 to transform the Patient Group into a charity and stop applying an annual membership fee of £10, we invited members to continue supporting the new Friends of Davenport House by way of donations. In addition taxpayers could Gift Aid these donations producing an extra 25% income for the Friends at no cost to the donor.

Issues arising from this transition

- 1) Many existing members of the PPG have continued their standing order payments from March 2019 into the old PPG account which has been kept open for these receipts. Very few have provided Gift Aid declarations to enable us to claim an extra 25% from HMRC.
- 2) It took an inordinate length of time to open a new bank account for the charity at Barclays Bank details of which were included in our web site.

Unfortunately it was later concluded that the charity should be incorporated to reduce the personal liabilities of the Trustees. However, Barclays required us to open another new account for the Friends simply because we had received a new charity number from the Charities Commission. This meant that we had a new account number (23828182) and were obliged to close the earlier Friends account despite all other information being exactly the same.

- 3) Accordingly, some of the new standing order instructions completed around March 2019 contained the wrong Friends account number which Barclays would not accept. I have been able to resolve some of these issues, but others have remained outstanding.

What should I do as an earlier member of the PPG?

- 1) For those who have continued their standing order in favour of the old PPG for which we have received "donations" in March 2019 and 2020, please complete a new standing order mandate in favour of the "Friends of Davenport House" which can be found on the Friends web site: www.friendsdavenporthouse.org.uk
- 2) If you are a taxpayer then please complete the Gift Aid Declaration available on the web site which will enable us to claim an extra 25% on your March 2019 and 2020 donations.
- 3) When you have completed 1 and 2, please cancel your earlier standing order in favour of the old PPG.

What should I do if I am new to the Friends of Davenport House?

Please consider making an annual donations to the Friends and gift aiding it if possible to enable us to continue our efforts to work on your behalf to improve the services and flow of information from the Practice and the health community in Harpenden.

Guidance on how to make donations are summarised on our web site with specimen bank standing order mandate, Gift Aid Declaration and the "**Friends of Davenport House**" bank account details.

If you have any queries then please feel free to email me at:
treasurer@patientgroup.org.uk

John Harris

Treasurer, Trustee and Bulletin Editor

