

Launceston Medical Centre Patient Group - Newsletter

Issue 2

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Update on medical centre expansion plan

Medical centre business manager Peter Harper updated the Patient Group on the progress of the expansion plan. "It has been submitted to NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group for its 'Estates Plan' and that is likely to be completed in February 2016.

"We understand that the Launceston expansion plan is still acknowledged to be a priority. "In the meantime, the medical centre has been granted some money so that it can instruct architects to draw up detailed plans for the extension and can go ahead and apply for planning permission. That will mean the work on the extension would be able to go ahead once the long-term funding is agreed."

The Patient Group will hold a public information session once the detailed plans for the new build have been drawn up.

Nurses now playing bigger role at our Medical Centre

Delays for patients in getting appointments at Launceston Medical Centre should be reduced because the centre now has three nurses qualified to treat patients suffering from minor illnesses.

Nurse practitioners Carol Jackson and Pete Wyatt have been joined by Christine Fielder as nurses who can treat – and prescribe medicines for – illnesses such as chesty coughs, eczema or sickness and diarrhoea.

"This level of expertise within our professional team should reduce delays for patients in getting appointments," the centre's business manager, Peter Harper, told Launceston Patient Group at its November meeting.

"Patients shouldn't be surprised to be offered an appointment with one of the GP support staff now that we are in a position to promote this option. And they can be confident that these senior nurses have the experience, skill and training to treat, and prescribe for, less serious illnesses."

The types of illnesses that the three nurses can treat include sore throats, urinary tract infections, sore eyes, ear infections, rashes, boils or skin infections.

From the first week in January a paramedic will also be employed at the medical centre said Mr Harper. "He will initially work for two days a week and will support the team in the medical centre as well as taking over some home visits from doctors."

Patients' questions

Q. It seems we are going to have a long wait for the new facilities, so please would the medical centre consider installing automatic doors now to make it easier for people with disabilities and buggies?

A. Unfortunately, the constant movement of people in the reception and dispensary area mean that the doors would either be pushing into people waiting in that area or would be permanently open. It will be a priority with the extension.

Q. Has the medical centre considered taking over the running of the hospital?

A. The practice made initial inquiries, but the Launceston Hospital is one of 13 hospitals currently being run under contract by Peninsula Community Health and the new contract will also be to run all 13 hospitals, not individual hospitals.

Q. When the new facilities get built, will there be provision for the community bus to drop off/turn at the new car park?

A. It should be possible for the community bus to use the new car park. It is proposed to introduce a one-way system with cars entering along Landlake Road (the existing entrance/exit road) and leaving by driving to the side of medical centre (Kernow House side) and exiting by the hospital approach road.

Medical Centre to become a wellbeing centre?

Launceston Medical Centre could become a wellbeing centre over the next five years if the proposed expansion plans get the go-ahead. Dr Amit Dhulkotia, one of the GPs, outlined this vision when he updated members of the Launceston Medical Centre Patient Group on issues and challenges facing the centre over the next five years.

“At the moment the health centre is primarily reactive,” he said. “But the traditional GP practice will not be a viable model for a future in which the Government wants to see bigger and more co-ordinated community health services.

“The expansion plans for the medical centre will enable the practice to provide and support more comprehensive health services in future.” He envisaged the health centre evolving into a “wellbeing centre” or health hub; a base for a super surgery with a presence/input from social services, district nurses, and charitable organisations, such as Age UK.

The new model would also have to reflect the needs of the growing and changing population. The fastest growing sections of the population in the Launceston area were in the over-65s and the under-30s. Currently the practice was more geared up towards meeting the needs of an ageing population so one of the challenges would be to meet the needs of a diverse population.

Dr Dhulkotia said that change was already underway. “Despite current restraints of premises and difficulties in recruiting GPs, the practice is moving away from the traditional GP surgery by expanding the role of nurse practitioners and pharmacists to meet the increasing demand.”

Dr Dhulkotia gave details of some useful websites, including Kernow NHS which contains much useful information including tips on looking after yourself during the winter – to find out more please visit <https://www.kernowccg.nhs.uk/health-topics/winter-wellbeing/>



Good support for our second information table

More than 60 patients who visited our information table in Tesco’s foyer in September pledged to write to NHS England asking for a speedy decision on funding for the much-needed expansion of the Medical Centre.

Some people made a special trip to Tesco that morning to visit the information table.

Picture shows volunteers and staff from the Medical Centre at the information table.

Survey into delays in receiving scan and x-ray results

If you have been affected by delays in receiving the results of CT scans or X-rays, you are asked to take part in a survey being carried out by the national Patients Association and the Royal College of Radiologists. The survey is designed for people who have had either a scan or an X-ray in the past two years.

The Patients Association is keen to gain evidence to find out whether services are achieving the Government’s 2020 target of 28 days from referral to test result. This target was created to help prevent the deaths of 11,000 people per year.

All personal details supplied will be held only by the Patients Association and the Royal College of Radiologists, and will remain secure and confidential. The survey takes very little time to complete, so please let them know what you think about this important issue. You can complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XN7WNJ7>

Launceston Patient Participation Group is one of hundreds of Patient Groups linked to surgeries all over the country. Our group has its own pages on the Launceston Medical Centre website where you can see details of our activities and learn more about us, so visit <http://launcestonmedicalcentre.co.uk/index.php/ppg/ppg-home-page> To contact us directly, please email chairman Maureen Amy on mzuk39@gmail.com or secretary Patty Taylor on pat@pmurray-pr.co.uk or ring Patty on 01409 211182.