

COVID-19 - Staff Bulletin - Keeping in Touch

17 April 2020

Home Visiting

The 'Red' Home Visiting team opened on Good Friday. Staffed initially by CBC GPs Drs Brian Liddle and Winnie Stack, the 'red' team comprising doctors and rapid response team nurse practitioners will visit housebound patients that have been triaged as having symptoms of Covid-19.



A significant amount of work has been carried out by Brian and Winnie in establishing a standard operating process, which ensures staff and driver safety while at the same time affording the best possible care for patients in the community.

Medicus

I have been astounded on a daily basis as to how much The Medicus Team have come together and developed into a strong and stable team under such difficult circumstances. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your continued hard work which is enabling our patients to continue to receive an excellent primary care service despite the challenges of COVID-19.

There have recently been concerns highlighted in the news and to NHS organisations that Emergency Health Care Plans and Do Not Attempt CPRs have been put in place without adequate consultation with patients and families. Please can we all ensure that if we create or change an EHCP or DNACPR document that this is done in a personalised way after discussion with patients/families. Thank you.

There has been a wealth of information circulated about the High risk/shielded patient group. As the workload to ensure all the lists that have been created by NHS England is large we have decided to take a pragmatic approach on this. If a patient has been identified as shielded and already has been sent a letter, unless they approach us or we see them for a different reason in a consultation and identify they are NOT high risk we are not going to pro-actively look for incorrectly identified patients. If you have any concerns about this please ask myself or the senior management team for advice.

Dr Emily Hadaway

PPE

Practices are still experiencing difficulties in obtaining essential supplies of PPE; however, PCNs are being encouraged to share stocks within their localities. Practices have been asked to report on stock levels daily using an App designed to capture in real time the *Opel levels across the system

*Operations Pressure Escalation Levels (Opel) is a method used by the NHS to measure the stress, demand and pressure the system is under. Opel 4 represents the highest escalation level. For example, when the system is unable to deliver comprehensive care and patient safety is at risk.

Blaydon & Second Street Hot Sites

Blaydon and Second Street hot sites are both up and running. Initially staffed and supported by CBC's Urgent Primary Care team, Medicus Practice administrators and HCAs, an increasing number of clinical and non-clinical staff from Gateshead practices are now coming on stream to fill vacant sessions. The UPC team has been tasked with collecting details of all volunteers, undertaking due diligence, assigning relevant logins and allocating staff to rotas.

Respecting privacy

In these days of mass electronic communication madness, just a gentle reminder of the importance of respecting an individual's privacy.

Please do not share personal mobile numbers with anyone else in any circumstances without the explicit consent of the individual.

When circulating mass emails there are times when an individual's personal email address is inadvertently shared with tens, and in some cases hundreds of others. To avoid this, you should use the 'Bcc' (**Blind circulation copy**) distribution function rather than 'Cc' (Circulate copy) in order to avoid this breach of individuals' privacy.

Nursing Support

The GP Federation has been supporting Community Locality teams by gauging the interest of nurses, who normally work in Gateshead practices to work instead and/or in addition, in these community teams. Details of willing volunteers have been passed on to the Locality Leads who will be in touch in due course.

Practices can reduce the burden on Community teams by seeing their own practice patients at home.

Gateshead Care Partnership is experiencing critical staff shortages in Shadon House, Eastwood and Southernwood Promoting Independence Centres on both day and night shifts for all staff groups. Nursing colleagues wishing to help are encouraged to check the CCG Covid bulletin for more information or email marieslater@gateshead.gov.uk

Don't forget the Gateshead GPN Facebook page to keep in touch, ask questions, share stuff and support each other.

Deb Dews

Supporting NHS 111 to provide telephone advice to patients concerned about Covid



Our Urgent Primary Team has have worked with the regional Directory of Services (Dos) Team to provide a Covid-19 DoS pathway, which allows our UPC clinicians to provide continuing to support NHS 111 in with suspected Covid-19 cases at a time of unprecedented pressure.

Resilience in General Practices & across PCNs

The Federation continues to support PCNs and Practices to build resilience and implement new NHSE guidance and the new Standard Operating Procedures on ways of working through this pandemic. Much work is taking place between Practices and in PCNs on planning buddying arrangements for situations where Practices may not be able to open due to the pressures.

Pharmicus

We feel like all we are doing is saying thanks, but you really are making our lives easier and pulling together as a team as much as you can whilst working remotely. Finally, home working solutions are available for everyone within the Pharmicus Team. Some of you are still having issues but see emails and start a Teams chat conversation with Gary to see if he can help resolve. FAQ info for the most common issues will be in place soon.

We're aware there are lots of emails etc and potential information overload but please check emails regularly and use Teams to ask for help or just to chat to colleagues.

Catherine and Gary

Covid-19 Statistics:

There are 492 confirmed cases in Gateshead, out of a local population of 202,508

Note: Not all those with the virus will have been tested

Source: UK public health bodies. Figures 16 April

A word of thanks:

For everything done by CBC's Urgent Primary Care Team in establishing Blaydon GP Assessment Centre (Hot Site) and the Red Home Visiting Service and for lending their support and expertise to colleagues setting up the same in Second Street. Thanks to Drs Brian Liddle and Winnie Stack for getting the clinical work off the ground, determining safe clinical working practices and for paving the way for clinical colleagues coming into the service from Gateshead practices. Brian and Winnie continue to steer the mobilisation effort by inducting colleagues on-site and providing on-going peer support where needed.

Care Home Visiting Service

An assessment of the arrangements for visiting in care homes has been undertaken with the Practices who are linked to the care homes in Gateshead, and an escalation plan has been produced to cover situations where the services are under pressure.

