

## Update from the Surgery

The perfect storm arrived on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> showing just how vulnerable we all are. I have experienced a number of power cuts after bad weather in Woodchurch but this has been one of the worst. Usually a few hours of disruption causes a bit of “thinking outside the box”, however this occasion really floored us. Our old telephone system was outdated and unsupported so was replaced in the Autumn to a fancy “digital” system which all went surprisingly smoothly. We failed to appreciate that in the past, in the event of a power cut, we could always get an old analogue phone out of the cupboard to use. The new system doesn’t allow us to go back-in-time so the phones were hopeless. Never mind, we can always use mobile phones – unless the Masts are all down too...

Guiltily, I was abroad during the storms enjoying lunch when videos and photos of the carnage at home were being sent through. It was clear how much it has affected everyone and I could not get through to anyone in Woodchurch to offer any support. I knew that the nurses would be fretting about the fridges and the whole team would be trying to do what they could. With pen and paper the consultations continued by torchlight. We will look as a team to see what we can learn to improve accessibility during such events but meanwhile I am proud that the team tried to explore every avenue to do what they could in such adversity.

Covid is officially due to finish on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>... or is it? Of course not! However, while we wait for some guidance from above we will continue to wear face masks and try to separate our patients from all arriving together and sitting together in small waiting areas. We have already had some robust discussion around protecting patients, each other and ourselves and will publish any updates on the parish newsletter and social media as we realise a sensible approach.

Last month we focused on Men’s health and this month I would like to highlight a new service for the fairer sex. We have a Women’s continence physiotherapist who can help with urinary incontinence. With my greatest sympathy women are at particular risk of trouble with leaking urine, which is contributed to by bad design (not my fault), childbirth and menopause. It is dreadfully unfair but to make amends this service has been set up and has been really well received. There are spaces that can be booked directly into so please phone up and get booked in.

We are also working towards better arrangement for our waiting area with better acoustics and now we are a bit closer towards being a bit “more normal” we can finally plan and execute. I’m very aware that the walls are pretty blank and, while I think I have recruited one local artist to help a little, I am very interested to see if anyone will extend their artistic values to make a mark on the white walls we have.

With best wishes on behalf of the Surgery – Jack Hickey, GP.