

Update from Woodchurch Surgery - 26th August

Nando's ran out of peri peri sauce, McDonalds ran out of milkshakes and the NHS is running out of blood bottles. Due to this shortage, we are reviewing all the blood tests we have booked in and will have to cancel any that are not urgent or going to change a treatment plan. It feels as if we have our hands tied behind our backs but we will have to accept that we won't be able to monitor certain conditions as we would have liked just for the short term (we hope).

I took our 2nd Year Trainee, Dr Mukundh Putkour, for a walk around the village as part of his induction. It was lovely to show him the sights and what the community does to help the local population. The Surgery population is spread much wider than just Woodchurch as historically we were combined with Hamstreet and also had a branch in Bethersden so our boundary covers parts of Hothfield, Singleton and as far as Ivychurch. The Tenterden end has been revised a little over the years but we still have 650 patients registered with us that are outside our current boundary.

As Ashford expands the number of patients we have that live in the town is growing which is beginning to be a logistical problem for a service designed with rurality in mind. We are in discussion with the health authority (the CCG) to look at this and revise our Northern boundary. Due to the ongoing discussion we are sadly in a position that if a patient moves to an address outside our current boundary we have to ask them to register elsewhere. While this seems to go against patient choice and undermines the value of well-developed relationships we hope a revised boundary will strengthen our service to improve care.

I am often asked what the talk behind the scenes is about Covid boosters and there really isn't anything other than what is written in the popular press. We have been asked by the CCG for our plans to deliver boosters but with no indication of which vaccine and which cohorts we should be targeting. As soon as we get any news about the "will we/won't we" the banners will be out.

And finally our staff news – We have a new Clinical Pharmacist starting in September called Eileen who will be working for our PCN and I'm sure many of you will get to meet her and welcome her in the usual manner. More importantly, Tamsin won our Surgery Sunflower competition and was awarded a lemon drizzle cake (after a strong start my own efforts didn't survive the move to the outside). Thanks to our nurse Sarah for organizing the competition and baking.

On behalf of the team I wish everyone a good end to the summer holidays and a safe return for all the children back to school - Dr Jack Hickey GP.