**NEWS FROM THE LOCAL DOCTORS**

**AN INVITATION TO JOIN YOUR PPG (Patients Participation Group)**

**Confused about what’s happening with healthcare in this area?**

**Do you know how to get your voice heard?**

All GP Practices are required to have a Patient Participation Group. There are no requirements about how a PPG should operate, and it’s up to each Practice, but their role is to be a ‘critical friend’ on behalf of patients. PPG’s work to foster communication between patients, doctors, carers and all who work in the Practice. They support the Practice’s objectives and give feedback to the Practice on patients views and concerns. They also act as a forum for discussion on general health matters, including promotion of good health and prevention of disease; this may include public meetings on topics of general interest.

We’re all aware of the rapid expansion in the Didcot area, with many new homes and newresidents arriving. Sadly, investment into infrastructure to support this expansion has been poor; a small area of land in Great Western Park has been allocated for a GP Practice,but the submitted plans are still a cause of argument and debate. This is not the fault of the Practices, who are working hard to deal with the pressures of ever-increasing workloads. The three Didcot Surgeries are now collaborating, through the Didcot Primary Care Network, to offer integrated primary and community health care, enhanced services and additional advances in patient care, through multidisciplinary teams. The Didcot PCN is still at an early stage and the three PPG’s are supporting the Practices in this important initiative.

The PPG’s welcome active membership to ensure there is continuity in medical facilities for the growing population in this area. The more members there are, the higher the volume of the collective PPG voice in support of the Partners and Staff of our valued GP Practices.

As Chairs / Representatives of the three PPG’s we will be writing regular articles to keep you informed on local healthcare developments.

In some Practices, patients are automatically members of the PPG, but can opt to become active members, participating in meetings, surveys, consultations, etc. In other Practices, you may need to apply specifically. Check your Practice’s website or ask at Reception for further details.

**Andrea Warren Shelagh Garvey Stewart Lilly**

**Oaktree Health Centre Didcot Health Centre WoodlandsMedical Centre**

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