

Wishing our patients a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

# Middlewood Partnership News

**Welcome to the fourth edition of our newsletter with news about how PATCHS works, our Care Community and new Mental Health & Wellbeing Team.**

## Our new Mental Health & Wellbeing Team

In today’s challenging times, our new Mental Health and Wellbeing team offers patients the opportunity to improve their mental health and wellbeing. The team of mental health practitioners, social prescribers, and a care coordinator, offers patients both practical and emotional support. The different roles work closely together to give patients the right level of support and care.



*Vidette, Genevieve, Lynn, Leah and Holly*

Our two mental health nurse practitioners, Holly and Vidette, work over the four GP practice bases, Monday to Friday. Vidette explains the services on offer: “We can advise on a wide range of mental health conditions, including psychosis, anxiety, depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), self-harm, drugs and alcohol, personality disorder traits and complex trauma.

“We provide a range of mental health support and we are really pleased to be part of the new Mental Health & Wellbeing team offering Middlewood patients local support with their mental health.

Our social prescribing link workers, Genevieve and Leah, also work over the four GP practice bases, Monday to Friday. Describing their role, Leah said: “We support patients to have more control over their health and wellbeing and to help with issues that cannot be resolved with medicine alone. We can give

patients the time to talk about the things affecting their health and wellbeing and come up with a personalised plan. We can then link them to the relevant services, community groups or people to suit their needs.”

The social prescribing link workers can help with a range of issues including managing long-term health conditions, feeling more connected and accessing local groups, financial or housing difficulties; supporting people following life-changing events, such as retirement and bereavement; and accessing work, training and volunteering.

And last but not least, Lynn, our care co-ordinator works alongside the social prescribers, mental health practitioners as well as practice staff to support patients and families to access therapy, social, fitness & craft groups locally.

## Bollington/ Disley/ Poynton (BDP) Care Community

The Bollington/ Disley/ Poynton (BDP) Care Community comprises a team from Middlewood and partner organisations, including GPs, district nurses, paramedics, occupational therapists and social care staff. It works to keep people well, treating and managing acute illness and long-term conditions, and supporting people to live independently in their own homes. The team supports people at home who need:

- end of life care
- rehabilitation after illness or injury
- support for complex health and social care needs
- support for in a health crisis.

## More about PATCHS

**We fully appreciate that some patients have found the introduction to PATCHs, our new online consultation system, frustrating. Thank you for persevering. We want to tell you a bit more about how PATCHS works to help explain the challenges that we are all facing and how we balance the demands of a busy GP practice to ensure we provide a safe service.**

PATCHs is essentially a CONSULTATION tool. As soon as a patient enters a 'Patch' it is the first part of an online consultation with the GP or another appropriate clinician. GPs only have a limited amount of time allocated to online consultations. If we increase the number of Patches (online consultations) we accept, we'll have to reduce the number of face-to-face and telephone appointments we offer. This will affect our most vulnerable patients who cannot consult online so we must reserve time in each of our daily schedules to meet their needs in person and on the phone.

Practice staff and GPs currently work very long and intense days engaged in lots of different clinical activities. EVERY GP on each day they consult is doing the following work:

- Face-to-face appointments (for new, urgent & follow up, including medication/annual reviews)
- Telephone appointments & advice
- Online appointments & advice
- Signing prescriptions
- Visiting patients in need of end-of-life care or needing a GP to visit them at home
- Administration including the review of blood test results, dictating correspondence, & reading and acting on hospital letters (each GPs has over 300 a week!)
- Discussing cases with colleagues & training/teaching, supervising and supporting staff.

In addition, every day at Middlewood, GPs are representing and supporting the whole Partnership in the following ways:

- Providing on-site & permanent medical support to our reception (online and telephone)
- Reviewing requests for medication not on repeat

and other medication queries

- Visiting one or more of our 12 local care homes
- Completing forms, insurance, legal & private letters
- Supporting a specialist clinic – e.g. minor surgery, child health, heart failure, etc
- Teaching and training tomorrow's doctors & GPs.

So, whilst PATCHs can be a helpful tool to request appointments, we are having to manage how it is used in order to stay safe. The British Medical Association indicates that GPs should not be completing more than 32 contacts per day, as it becomes unsafe and unsustainable. Therefore, we are monitoring very closely the opening and closing times of PATCHs to try and balance clinical safety with accessibility.

So please be patient. We will continue to do everything we can within the resources available to provide general, routine and ongoing medical care. We have a set number of same-day appointments but at times these will be used up and whilst we try and squeeze people in where we can, we simply cannot meet everybody's demands every day. Thank you.

**You can register for  
PATCHS at**



[www.middlewoodpartnership.co.uk/ PATCHS](http://www.middlewoodpartnership.co.uk/PATCHS)

**News from our Patient Participation  
Group (PPG)**

### **PATCHS drop in sessions**

Thanks to our PPG volunteers for helping to run the PATCHS drop-in sessions at local libraries. We are continuing to run sessions at our practice bases to help people register with PATCHS.

### **Information session**

On 13<sup>th</sup> December, the PPG hosted an open meeting about the Bollington/ Disley/ Poynton (BDP) Care Community.; their future plans; and how patients benefit from their care and support.

Find out more about our [PPG](#) and we'd love more members if you'd like to join us.

