

Academy Medical Centre Newsletter

Summer 2017

Regular News, Information and Updates

Keeping you informed of practice developments and forthcoming events with regular articles helping you get the most from your General Practice

Social Prescribing at Academy Medical Centre

Community Development Worker

Ashley McGregor from Voluntary Action Angus has been working in Academy Medical Centre, Forfar since July 2016. Ashley is a Community Development Worker who has taken referrals from Healthcare Staff in the practice to offer individual, one to one advice to provide any non medical support they may benefit from. This is available for anyone who could benefit, including people who's health is affected by social and environmental issues which cannot be dealt with by only a medical response, which can be called Social Prescribing.



The information and support provided is agreed between Ashley and the person, on an individual basis to best suit their needs. This could include how to access support from other Third Sector organisations and services that may be able to offer. There is the opportunity for people to find out about local community groups, chances for socialising and getting involved.

Since starting at the Medical Centre in June 2016, until March 2017 Ashley has received 99 referrals. The support people have received has varied in accordance with their needs and what support they feel they require themselves. This has ranged from a 5 minute chat through to on-going, one-to-one meetings for a number of weeks. Some of the types of support that has been accessed have been for help with housing, finances, living as a carer, experiencing bereavement, looking to get into local volunteering as well as to access volunteer transport and counselling support. These are just some examples of the reasons for referral to Ashley. Most referrals are taken from GPs and other Medical Centre Staff, but can also be through self-referral, or also enquiring about support if you're in the practice.

Ashley is part of each of the 5 teams at Academy Medical Centre, and is based within the main Hub Area in the surgery. This means that she has good working relationships with all staff and there is good, strong communication with each of the referrers and the Community Development Worker. This work is part of the holistic and more joined up way of working that the new model at the practice promotes. The work helps to maintain and improve physical and mental health and opens up a range of opportunities for people who are referred.



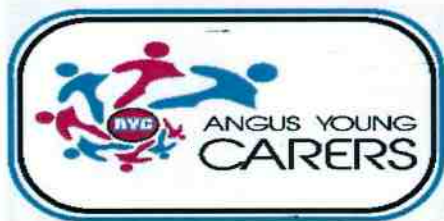
For more information contact Ashley at Academy Medical Centre on 01307 462316 or at Voluntary Action Angus on 01307 466113, or you can email her at ashley@voluntaryactionangus.org.uk.

Your PPG News...

On Friday 5th May 2017 Kathleen Ferrier from Angus Cardiac Group paid a visit to Academy Medical Centre, Forfar to present 2 blood pressure machines for home monitoring and a cheque for £200 which is to be put towards the practice purchasing a more up to date defibrillator for their emergency bag. Dr Thomas, one of the GP's from the Practice paid thanks to Kathleen and Angus Cardiac Group for the valuable work they do supporting people with cardiac conditions in the Angus area and would like to thank the committee for their generosity in making this donation of vital equipment which will benefit our patients.



Would you like to get involved?
 Email: academymc.rayside@nhs.net
 Tel: 01307 462316
 Or speak to a receptionist, leaving your contact details.



Angus Carers Centre
 supporting carers

Do you look after someone?

You may not think yourself as a "carer" because you are simply looking after a member of your family, perhaps an elderly parent, a partner or a child with disabilities, but if you do, then you are a "carer"

A carer is someone who looks after someone who is frail, has an illness or disability, and cannot manage on his or her own without help. The person being cared for may have:

- ❖ A physical disability
- ❖ A mental condition
- ❖ A learning disability
- ❖ A dependency on alcohol or drugs

The person being cared for can be any age. Carers are unpaid and are usually family members, although neighbours and friends can have a significant caring role.

Jacqui Dillon is the Carer Development Worker for the North West area, (Forfar and Kirriemuir). She is based here at Academy Medical Centre most Thursdays. Jacqui supports carers by offering 1:1 support, group sessions, training, social events and activities. If you think you might be a carer and would like information or support please contact Jacqui on 01241 439157 or email Jacqueline@anguscarers.org.uk to arrange an appointment.

National Carers Week, 12th - 18th June 2017 is an annual campaign to raise awareness of unpaid caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities. Angus Carers Centre celebrate this week every year by holding their annual Carers Day at Carnoustie Golf Hotel. Carers take some time out from their caring role and participate in some fun activities, enjoy a leisurely lunch, get together with other carers and share their experiences.



To find out more about our latest event or to discover more about what we do please visit www.anguscarers.org.uk, email enquiries@anguscarers.org.uk or like us on Facebook.

Make a pledge to support carers

www.carersweek.org/about-carer-friendly-communities



Mens Health Week – 12th June to 18th June

The latest figures reveal a concerning trend in obesity, in 2015, 65% of adults aged 16 and over were overweight, of which 29% were obese.

This is the focus of this year's "Mens Health Week" in conjunction with the Mens Health Forum (www.menshealthforum.org.uk).

The campaign, which runs from the 12th to 18th June this year, culminates on father's day. The aim is to promote healthy living amongst men, who are notoriously a cohort of patients less likely to engage in health related activities, and to report illness than women.

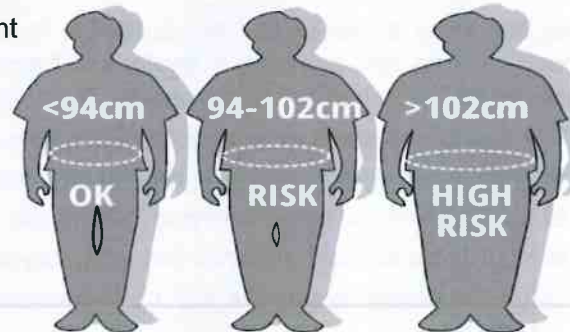
After previous successful campaigns, including "healthy living", and last year "beating stress, this year's focus is on "belly fat". This is not just what can be seen from the outside, but what lurks deep down, surrounding our vital organs. Most people consider the problem as one of weight alone, which is most commonly measured using "body mass index (BMI)". This is a measure of a patient's weight, taken against their height to provide a standardised figure can be compared to the average population. A number of online calculators are available if you wish to know you own BMI, for most adults, a BMI of:

- 18.5 to 24.9 means you're a healthy weight
- 25 to 29.9 means you're overweight
- 30 to 39.9 means you're obese
- 40 or above means you're severely obese

However it is becoming increasingly recognised that both the amount, and distribution of fat are equally important. There have been moves of late to classify an individual's risk, dependent upon their waist measurements as shown below:

There is strong evidence that, a larger measurement can increase the risk of the following conditions, although this risk is not exclusive:

1. High blood pressure
2. Sleep apnoea
3. Cardiovascular disease
4. Insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes
5. Colorectal cancer
6. Premature death from any cause



Remember that even losing what seems like a small amount of weight, such as 3% or more of your original body weight, and maintaining this for life, can significantly reduce your risk. Guidelines recommend that you should try to lose weight gradually, about 1-2 lbs (approximately 0.5-1.0 kg) a week. There is lots of support available to assist with sustainable weight loss, below are a sample of commonly used resources;

1. NHS choices website - 12 week weight loss guide
2. Couch to 5K programme - www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/c25k/Pages/couch-to-5k.aspx
3. Men's Health Forum - Online guides, in style of a "Haynes manual"
4. Commercial slimming classes
5. Affiliation with local sports clubs - Forfar Athletic and Dundee United offer fitness for men

If further assistance is required, NHS Tayside have a weight management service, although to qualify patients must either have a BMI > 35, or a BMI > 30 with a weight related health condition. Any questions? Our PPG "Health Shop" and Ashley, our Community Development worker are valuable sources of further community support information, or an appropriate clinician can assist with advice and onward referral if appropriate.

Stroke Awareness. What is a Stroke?

A stroke is a "brain attack". It can happen to anyone at any time. It occurs when blood flow to an area of the brain is cut off, or a blood vessel near the brain ruptures causing a "bleed on the brain".

When this happens, brain cells are deprived of oxygen and begin to die; furthermore when a blood vessel ruptures the blood in the brain cavity acts much like a vice, squeezing brain tissue and breaking neural connections.

The brain is involved in a wide variety of essential functions; these are organised into "regions" of the brain. The region of brain involved and the size of stroke largely determines how someone is affected. For example, someone who had a small stroke may only have minor problems such as temporary weakness of an arm or leg. People who have larger strokes may be permanently paralysed on one side of their body or lose their ability to speak.

The sooner stroke is recognised and treated, the less likely a patient is going to suffer life altering changes to brain function.



Recognising a Stroke

Knowing the signs and symptoms of a stroke is the first step to ensuring medical help is received immediately. For each minute a stroke goes untreated and blood flow to the brain continues to be blocked, a person loses about 1.9 million neurons. This could mean that a person's speech, movement, memory, and so much more can be affected.

The first thing to remember about stroke, is that it is a sudden change in symptoms (minutes-hour). A person suffering a stroke will have until that point in time likely been feeling well in themselves. Some of the symptoms to look for include:

- SUDDEN numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- SUDDEN confusion, trouble speaking, understanding or finding words
- SUDDEN trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- SUDDEN trouble with balance (walking may be affected), dizziness or loss of coordination
- SUDDEN severe headache with no known cause

Act FAST

Doctors and nurses have been trained to recognise stroke using a simple acronym, which you may have seen advertised in the press and media over the past few years. It has been shown to be an effective tool in identifying patients currently experiencing a stroke, and we would recommend you use it as a guide.



Further information including useful links and websites, including those mentioned above, can be found on our website www.academymedicalcentre.co.uk click on the Support/Advice tab and then Health Links on right hand side to access this.



Nurse led Minor Illness Service

The practice nursing team at Academy Medical Centre are playing an increasingly important role in the management of minor illnesses. The practice has increased the number of practice nurses over the last year and has supported significant additional training for the nurses to prepare them for their expanded role within the practice team. In addition to being trained in the assessment and management of minor illnesses some are also independent prescribers which enables them to issue a prescription should you need one.'

Dr MacCallum told us

'The practice nurses are providing an invaluable service in the practice, supporting the management of minor illnesses every day in the practice. This not only allows the patient to have quick access to appropriate support for the management of their problem, but also frees the GP's up to spend with people with more complex health problems.'

'In order for the most appropriate person to deal with a request the patient will be asked for a brief description of the problem when they contact the practice'.

Eleanor McIntosh, one of the practice nurses continued

'We feel that we are using our skills fully supporting patient care within the practice in this way. It is really satisfying for us to be able to ensure people with minor illnesses that require input from a healthcare professional get seen promptly. There is always a GP available on the rare occasion that we decide following assessment that medical input is urgently required.'

' Minor illnesses that are commonly dealt with by our nursing team include allergies, minor burns, coughs, cold sores, earache, emergency contraception (morning after pill), eye infections, urine infections, sunburn and thrush.'

Dr MacCallum concluded

'While this is a great service that has greatly improved patient access in the practice, we would remind patients that many minor illnesses are self-limiting. Coughs and colds normally get better in a week or two in an otherwise healthy person and we have little to offer in such situations. Community pharmacies also now offer an extended range of services and can be a really useful first point of contact if you have a minor illness and are not sure whether you need to see someone in the practice or not.'

'We are aware that the patients within the practice have experienced significant change over the last year as we have implemented and fine-tuned our new service. We are grateful for all your feedback that has allowed us to continue making small improvements. Please continue to provide feedback by using academymc.tayside@nhs.net or contact Diane Meek, Practice Manager either in person or via telephone'.

Feedback

As the first practice in Scotland to work with our small team-based model of care, we recognise that we are only just starting out on our journey and the new model will take time to embed.

Information and updates are available in the surgery waiting area and on our website: www.academymedicalcentre.co.uk

As we continue to grow and develop the model, we would welcome your feedback on what we need to improve and what is going well. You can give feedback either to your team or by writing to the surgery or emailing us at: Academynewmodel.tayside@nhs.net

If you are requesting a Team change, please put your request in writing to Diane Meek the Practice Manager.

Academy Medical Centre Public Holidays

The practice will be closed on the following dates:

Monday 24th July 2017 – Public Holiday

Monday 9th October 2017 –Public Holiday

If you take regular medications, please ensure you check you have enough left to cover the holiday period. It's also important not to over order, so only request what you need, and make sure you don't run out of anything during that time.

If on regular medications please discuss the Chronic Medication service with your pharmacist.

If you need help over holidays...

If you are ill on a day or time when the surgery is closed and you can't wait until it reopens, call **NHS24 on 111** who can arrange for you to be seen at your local out of hours services or whatever is most appropriate.

If its an emergency... always dial 999 in the event of an emergency

