

17 February 2012

Attend your GP practice PPG to influence your local NHS commissioners

Clinical Commissioning Groups are the GP led groups which are taking over the purchasing of health services under government reforms.

MK Commissioning is the the clinical commissioning group (known as CCG) for Milton Keynes.

By April 2013 MK Commissioning aims to become fully authorised and take over responsibility from NHS Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire Primary Care Trust.

Recently MK Commissioning has been encouraging patients to join their GP practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) to help influence healthcare decisions.

Patient Participation Groups are established in the majority of the practices in Milton Keynes with the aim to bring patients together to discuss what could improve their practice, as well as health issues that affect them. Stony Medical Centre's PPG has been in operation since 2009 meeting on average 8-9 times a year as a whole but with smaller working parties addressing specific needs as they arise.

Each PPG has recently been asked to elect a representative who will sit on the MK Commissioning **Patient Congress**. The Patient Congress will work closely with the MK Commissioning board and other groups to ensure patients are at the heart of local NHS decision making.

We are pleased to confirm that **Sheena Bullen** has been elected to represent Stony Medical Centre's patients within the Patient Congress.

More information on her work within the group, and the work of the CCG will follow over the coming months via infomraiton sheets. Meanwhile thank you Sheena and Good Luck.

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Do you have a hearing loss?

Why not go along to the Hear to Meet coffee mornings for a chat and a chance to meet others and share your experiences?

- **When?**

3rd Tuesday of every month

- **What Time?**

10.00am - 11.30am

Interested?

Please contact:

Milton Keynes Sensory Service
320 Witan Gate
Age UK Milton Keynes
1 Chadds Lane
Peartree Bridge
MK6 3EB

Telephone 01908 295660

Textphone 01908 239996

Email: mk.sensoryservice@hearingloss.org

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk



Obtaining a Blue Badge

In December 2012 the government enacted new legislation with regards to the administration of "Blue Badges" by Local Authorities.

This revised legislation requires that eligibility under the "permanent and substantial disability" criterion is confirmed by an independent mobility assessor, unless eligibility is self evident.

This means that after 31 March 2012 General Practitioners (GPs) will not be permitted to undertake mobility assessments on behalf of Milton Keynes Council any longer.

The Council have advised us that they are making alternate arrangements for the provision of mobility assessments from 1st April 2012 onwards.



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Age UK Milton Keynes Winter Warmth



Warm Homes Healthy People Fund

Age UK Milton Keynes Home Improvement Agency (HIA) and Handyperson scheme has been awarded funding from the Department of Health's Warm Homes Healthy People initiative, through the local authority. The HIA assists vulnerable people of any age to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes. More information on HIAs can be found at wwwFOUNDATIONS.UK.COM/home.

What is the purpose of the funding?

Funding has been provided in support of the NHS Cold Weather Plan. On average, 27,000 additional people die in England over the winter months because of cold weather, and it is estimated that cold weather costs the NHS over £850 million as a result of the effects of cold housing on people's health. This exciting opportunity extends the energy efficiency work currently being undertaken to help address the causes of fuel poverty and improve housing conditions for the most vulnerable people in Milton Keynes.

How we can help

We can provide energy assessments of clients' properties, advise on energy efficiency measures, along with providing funding for eligible people to install replacement boilers, white goods and double-glazed windows. We can help GPs and district nurses by providing cold weather information and advice. They in turn could identify vulnerable patients on GP practise lists and refer to Age UK Milton Keynes for help.

How you can help

If you work with vulnerable or older people who may be at risk due to cold housing conditions, please contact us to see how we can help.

This scheme is available for people of any age until 30th March 2012.

If you think we can help then contact the Home Improvement Agency at Age UK Milton Keynes to book a free energy assessment

Tel: 01908 557885

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