

## April 2019 – Surgery Newsletter



This month's newsletter is dedicated to a section of the blog I've been serialising as this particular bit is on the long side, but I think very important for patients' to know. Before I worked in general practice I didn't have a clue this is how most practices worked:

### ***“10 insider tips I bet you don't know about your GP”***

*I came across a great online blog by a Dr Jon Griffiths recently which really struck a chord with our GPs. As a result I am serialising this blog with Dr Griffith's permission and share its contents with our patients and numbers two and three are below. You can read the full blog online here: <https://bit.ly/2GHljRt>*

#### **6 Your Doctor is self-employed**

- Did you know this? Why does it matter? GP partners own the business of the practice and are 'independent contractors' to the NHS. Many members of staff at the surgery, including some of the doctors, will be employed, but by the surgery not by "the NHS"; This has a number of implications:
- Firstly, your GP receives a set amount of money per patient per year to provide all of their care. It doesn't matter whether you see your GP every week all year, or don't attend for 5 years; your GP gets the same amount of money for looking after you. You must not think that by seeing your GP you are 'doing them a favour' by bringing in money for your attendance! The amount of money your GP earns varies from practice to practice (they are all individual small businesses) but the average is around £140 per patient per year. This is really good value (less than 40p per patient per day), particularly when you consider this is the money the practice receives to provide all the services and pay all the staff including the doctors.
- Secondly, this means that your doctor's surgery is contracted to provide certain things, and not others. It's worth remembering this as this is why you will sometimes be asked to pay for things. In simple terms your GP is contracted to provide medical care, but not to do things outside of this such as the multitude of letters they are asked to sign. If ANYONE asks you to "get a note from your doctor", you should really question this before heading off to the surgery. Many of these requests are unnecessary and just seek to move a perceived risk from one person to the doctor, who may not be in a position to carry that risk.
- The payment GPs receive is not affected directly by referrals or prescribing – the costs for this are in a separate budget. If your GP decides to prescribe an expensive medicine for you they are not paying for it themselves. People often think that GPs switch medicines to cheaper ones in order to personally benefit financially. NOT TRUE! They are doing this to help the NHS budget as a whole, which I would hope we would all be in support of.
- Despite what The Sun might tell you, your doctor does not earn £700k per year (unless your GP happens to be the sole one in the country that does ... )

**The next meeting of the Patient Participation Group will take place at 6.30pm on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at the Great Bentley Village Hall.**

**Richard P Miller – Practice Manager**