

May 2012

## All Change and No Change in South Reading

Next year will see big changes in the way our National Health Service is run and local GPs are at the heart of these changes. The NHS will still be free at the point of use as it has been since it was brought in in 1948. You will still have the rights to treatment outlined in the NHS Constitution. But there will be a much more local focus to the way parts of the service are run.



**Juliet Hanfling, a patient at Pembroke surgery was elected to represent the Patient Voice on the Board of the Commissioning Group**

In South Reading GPs from twenty GP practices have got together as the South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group. Together with hospital and nursing colleagues and some lay persons they will decide on the way money is spent on community and hospital medical treatment. It's a huge responsibility - the budget will be around 140 million pounds for about 123,000 patients - but they will have local support and a professional support organisation to help them do it. They also want to have your input and that is why they have encouraged the formation of South Reading Patient Voice, the patients' input to the commissioning of health services.



South Reading GPs will also be working closely together with similar groups of GPs in Newbury, North and West Reading and in Wokingham to coordinate their relationships with treatment suppliers like the Royal Berks Hospital and to share administrative costs and best practice. Together these four groups will have to take on most of the responsibilities of the Berkshire West Primary Care Trust which will disappear at the end of March 2013. The two Reading groups will be going forward for formal authorisation by the NHS over the summer.

Another change is that Reading Borough Council takes on responsibility for public health. Public health means preventing harm and improving health. So there will be an intense local focus and a lively conversation on health and environment, health inequalities and medical treatment.

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**SOUTH READING  
CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP**



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**Dr Elizabeth Johnston of University Health Centre leads the South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group**

The changes will put a spotlight on the integration between GP care, care in the community and hospital care. More treatment will be given out of hospital where that is possible. As new equipment and methods comes in, more conditions will be treatable out of hospital. Commissioning by the PCT has recognised inequalities and differences between areas, but now these will be subject to a greater local focus.

So if this is all decided right here in South Reading how can you get involved? And why should you? South Reading Patient Voice will be a forum for finding out about changes in treatment, about how our health is developing, about the changes that GPs are thinking of bringing in and outcomes that result. By getting involved you can bring about a health service that works better for people like yourself and for everybody else too.

And by the way, you don't need to worry about GPs

commissioning themselves - they are not allowed to do that. GP services are commissioned by a National Commissioning Board which will also commission some rare and specialised treatments. But GPs will be able to move some medical tests and procedures into local surgeries for a more integrated local experience.



The South Reading Patient Voice group meets on the last Wednesday of the month except for August and December to discuss health and medical services commissioned by the South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group. We do not deal with individual complaints. Please contact Andrew Price (see below) giving full contact details and including the name of your South Reading GP surgery if you are interested in attending.

This newsletter will be distributed electronically about 4 times a year and may also be available to read in local surgeries. Please contact Andrew Price by email if you wish to receive the newsletter.

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### **Crossword or Puzzle Spot**

Could you provide a crossword or set of puzzles? On a voluntary basis? If so get in touch with a sample of your ideas for our newsletter.





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## **Dementia Awareness Week 2012**

With many more people surviving into advanced old age dementia is becoming more commonly encountered. Dementia is the name for a group of brain diseases which disrupt short-term memory and undermine the personality. An early diagnosis can lead to treatment which slows the advance of the disease, although it can not yet be cured. It can also bring help and support to carers and friends looking after someone with dementia.

Dementia is generally noticed when confusion or memory lapses involving familiar names or places are troubling enough for someone else to comment on. Seeing your GP is then the first step to discovering the cause, whether stress, anxiety, dementia or some other cause. South Reading GPs will be making improved dementia diagnosis and treatment a target this year.

Dementia Awareness Week 2012 is being promoted by The Alzheimer's Society as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. It runs from 20 -26 May. Look out for activities and displays in Broad Street Mall during the week.



**Tom Lake is  
current chair of  
the South Reading  
Patient Voice.**

## **Reading Walk-In GP Health Centre**



Open from 8am to 8pm every day of the year is the NHS Walk-In Centre at Broad Street Mall. Up the escalator and turn right if on foot or just come into the Mall from the main level of the Broad Street car park. On Sundays after 5pm use the door next to Burger King on St Mary's Butts. You can be registered with another GP practice, or unregistered. Just walk-in for a wide range of GP services from 8am to 8pm. If you don't need hospital Accident and Emergency Services, try the Walk-In Centre - you will probably be seen quite a lot faster.

## **Patient Participation Groups at Surgeries**

The views and ideas of patients are increasingly being taken into account by local doctors. Six South Reading practices have active patient groups where issues relating to the surgeries and the GP practice can be discussed. They are Kennet surgery, London Road surgery, Dr Kumar and partners at Milman Road Health Centre, Russell Street surgery, University Health Centre, Westwood Road surgery and Whitley Villa surgery. Ask the receptionist for details. Many of the other surgeries have "virtual" patient groups, where you are asked your views on the practice's services by email and web surveys. Joining these groups is not just a way of staying in  
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touch with changes at your surgery, or of helping to make continuous improvements to the surgery. The members of patient participation groups will be in a position to receive information about the commissioning of health services by the South Reading group and be able to feed into the patient voice in the commissioning process. So why not get involved when you are next at the surgery, or when you look at the surgery web site?

## **The South Reading Connection**

*Revealing some of the rich and inspiring local contributions to the development of medicine and medical technology.*

In 1843 or 1844 a gentleman with enough inherited wealth to provide a comfortable living opened a photographic studio in Baker Street, Reading. Henry Talbot, or William Henry Fox Talbot, to give him the full name he disliked, was in his forties and lived at Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire. He had been a gifted student of mathematics and chemistry at Cambridge University and independently followed his interests in mathematics, archaeology and chemistry. He had served as a reform-minded Member of Parliament for Chippenham. While sketching in 1833 he had conceived the idea of causing "natural images to imprint themselves durably and remain fixed upon the paper". With years of private effort he developed his calotype process, by which he first produced a negative and then prepared any number of positive prints from it. When news of Louis Daguerre's



related work in France reached him in 1839, he needed only a few weeks to write up his methods for the Royal Society. He later took out a patent. His methods laid the foundation for modern photography and imaging. They are now mostly displaced by electronic methods, but without 150 years of film photography we would never have today's equipment. So if you have ever had an X-ray or a CT scan, you have benefited from Henry Talbot's inventions and his work at his "Reading Establishment".



**Active South Reading Patient Voice member Keith Jerrome seen in an informal setting with his home-grown garlic harvest.**

