

Note from the Editor

Little did I realise when, last month, I included tips for dealing with the hot weather, that we were to endure those really high temperatures for weeks on end. I'm sure that I am not alone in breathing a sigh of relief at the return of normal British summer weather. I hope those ideas from Age UK were useful.

This month, we've looked into an on-line prescription service whose flyers have been dropping through our letterboxes in the last few weeks. Some of our members raised concerns about their legitimacy and service so we've tried our best to find out more (pages 2&3)

There is a perhaps once in a lifetime opportunity to be part of Armistice Day below. It's bound to be oversubscribed but there's nothing to lose by entering and it sounds as though it will be a very special day. If anyone needs help to apply on-line, please give me a call. Closing date 12th August!

You also don't have long if you want to contribute to Luton Airport's proposed expansion plans. The Chilterns will be directly affected (page 4)

If you have access to the internet or can arrange to play a video at your group, it is really worth watching the short film by the Metropolitan Police which shows 3 different scam scenarios (page 6).

On the back page I always put dates of other meetings that you might find interesting and in the past I have recommended attending the Bucks NHS Trust Board meeting which alternates between Wycombe & Aylesbury. Not only is it fascinating and welcoming but you also have a chance to ask questions direct to the top team. I was delighted that Alan from the Marlow Bottom group, Valley Plus, went along in July and had exactly the same experience. Please go along.

As ever, thank you to all my contributors this month and if anyone needs further information on any of the articles and you are not on the internet, please get in touch, my details are always on the back page. Likewise, if there is something that you think we should be looking into, let me know.

Andy



Armistice 2018 A Nation's Thank You – the People's Procession

On 11 November 2018, members of the public will have a unique opportunity to take part and pay their respects to all those that served in the First World War. The Nation's Thank You procession will allow 10,000 members of the public, selected by random ballot, to join a procession past the Cenotaph, to pay their respects and help express the nation's thanks to the generation that served, and those that never returned.

Applicants to the procession ballot do not need to be direct descendants of those that served, but they would appreciate you sharing any personal or family connections to the First World War when entering the ballot.

Successful applicants will receive full details of the event timings, what they should and should not bring, and what they will need to do on the day via email.

Facilities will of course be in place to allow guests with disabilities to attend, and

further information regarding these facilities will be supplied directly to guests along with full joining instructions. You can let them know about any special requirements you may have when you apply.

Demand for tickets is expected to be high so tickets will be distributed via a random ballot. Tickets will be allocated in pairs. Only one entry per applicant will be permitted and duplicate entries may result in your being withdrawn from the ballot.

Ballot details

Applications are now open

The Ballot closes on the 12th August

Applicants will receive the results of the ballot by 20 August, via the email address they used to register.

Applications can only be made via the website <https://armistice100.org.uk/procession> and if anyone needs help, please contact Andy



Pharmacy2U

Your prescriptions, taken care of.

Pharmacy2U is a distance selling pharmacy and therefore have no high street presence; They market via “door drops” (junk mail that the post office deliver) and target at a postcode level.

Pharmacy2U are currently targeting households in Buckinghamshire and readers are reporting receiving NHS official looking envelopes containing postcode focused leaflets that list your local GP surgeries. The envelopes and leaflets look like this.



IMPORTANT NEWS.
Introducing a new pharmacy service available in your area.

Here are some local surgeries using the NHS Electronic Prescription Service.

- Westongrove Partnership - Wendover
- John Hampden Surgery
- The Practice - Prospect House
- Rothschild House Surgery
- Cross Keys Practice
- And Others

Now you can get your NHS repeat prescriptions without leaving home

The Pharmacy2U service means that you can have your NHS repeat prescriptions arranged, dispensed and delivered for you – so you won't have to brave bad weather, wait for buses, find a spot to park or rely on someone else for help.

Your surgery has not given us any of your details for this letter and has not approved this communication.

Delivered free to your door



The first thing to mention is that Pharmacy2U is a legitimate NHS provider of pharmaceutical services, and they are required to use the NHS logo when advertising any NHS funded services.

Is it right for you? Is it right for the NHS?

The Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) which our GP surgeries now use mean that your prescription can go direct to your local pharmacy which is quick and saves the risk of bits of paper being lost. EPS also means that a patient can select the pharmacy service which suits them best and not necessarily the one closest to the GP surgery. Options also include mail-order pharmacies such as Pharmacy2U.

On the face of it, having your prescriptions delivered direct to your door sounds wonderfully convenient but it is really important that you think carefully before signing up.

A mail-order service for medicines is really only ok for people with relatively simple conditions that remain stable meaning that the prescription rarely changes. Once you inform your GP surgery that you wish your prescriptions to be fulfilled by a mail-order pharmacy, all prescriptions go to them. So if one day you require an emergency prescription, this still has to be fulfilled by the mail-order process, hence you lose any ability to get a prescription the same day.

There are apparently safeguards to stop people with unsuitable conditions mistakenly signing up. Pharmacy2U have in place vulnerable patient checks. This identifies new patients by age, certain conditions, certain medications and/or have medication prescribed in quantities of 7 or 14 and may be expecting their medicines in a monitored dosage system. Patients meeting this criteria are contacted by telephone to confirm they understand the service they have signed up to.

Having received a Pharmacy2U mailshot through my letterbox, I don't personally feel that it is clear to prospective customers that this service is only suitable for those with straightforward and stable conditions. On behalf of BOPAG, I have reached out to Bucks NHS Trust and our Clinical Commissioning Group and subsequently onto NHS England, all of who have helped my understanding of this service. NHS England are responsible for contracting



Is it right for you? Is it right for the NHS? *ctd*

prescription services and they have stated that ‘ **The distance selling model operated by Pharmacy2U fits only a small proportion of patients and their lifestyles.**’

I also have some rather more fundamental questions about the impact of distance pharmaceutical services that I hope NHS England will be able to answer. We know that NHS England are under significant pressure to reduce costs and Pharmacy2U have claimed in advertising that using their service will save the NHS £300 million! (More on that claim later...) We also know that community pharmacies are under increasing financial pressure due to funding cuts. In October 2017, Lloyds Pharmacy announced that they would be closing or selling off 190 branches. It's little wonder a low cost mail-order service is appealing to the NHS.

I shall be asking if NHS England are looking at the possible implications of a significant reduction in community pharmacies. What then?

Earlier this year NHS England launched the ‘Stay Well Pharmacy’ campaign to encourage people to use their pharmacy as the first port of call for minor illnesses. NHS England estimate that around 18 million GP appointments and 2.1 million visits to A&E are for self-treatable conditions costing the NHS more than £850m each year. That's the equivalent of 220k hip replacements or 880k cataract operations.

So if community pharmacies have an important role to play in health provision, one has to hope that this won't be put at risk for some short term cost savings. I will report back what they say.

So what about that claim by Pharmacy2U that they will save the NHS £300million. In July, the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) told Pharmacy2U to cease its adverts making claims about these savings as they are “not currently realistic”. Pharmacy2U told the ASA that it had substantiated this claim by saying if all pharmacies charged the NHS the same rate as Pharmacy2U, the saving would be £300m. However, the ASA said it considered that consumers would be “likely to interpret the

references to ‘savings of over £300m a year’ to mean it was currently realistic that the NHS would save £300m or more if a significant proportion of the population switched from paper to online repeat prescription services”

So what if all pharmacies charged the same rate as Pharmacy2U, what impact would that have on the financial viability of our high street chemists. One would imagine that there would be closures and if that happens, there will inevitably be more GP appointments and A&E visits. Those additional costs would certainly wipe out £300 million savings.

So what else have I found out about Pharmacy2U? On-line reviews seem to be mixed. Some people love the Pharmacy2U service, others appear to have had a terrible experience but we clearly don't know their individual circumstances .

In 2015, Pharmacy2U were fined £130,000 by the Government's data protection watchdog for selling the names and addresses of more than 21,000 patients without their consent. Some of the data, which Pharmacy2U priced at £130 for 1,000 records, was bought by an Australian lottery company which then “deliberately targeted elderly and vulnerable individuals”, the ICO said. The watchdog said it was “likely” that some customers would have lost money as a result of their details being passed on. Pharmacy2U apologised for the “regrettable incident” and said it would no longer sell customer data.

I also approached Lloyds Pharmacy Head Office to ask them for their views on on-line pharmacies expecting a staunch defense of their role in our communities but was rather disappointed to be referred to the Advertising Standards Authority.

I will keep you posted on how this unfolds and in the meantime, if you are thinking about signing up to an online pharmacy for convenience, I would suggest checking with your GP to make sure that it is appropriate for your specific circumstances.

My thanks to Neil MacDonald, CEO, Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust and Jan Westgarth, Patient Advice & Complaints Team (PACT), for their help in finding answers.

Andy



Luton Airport Expansion Plans

London Luton Airport (LLA) are proposing to expand the airport considerably, which if successful, will increase the already huge impact of noise, visible and aural pollution over the Chiltern communities and the AONB.

Currently, the Chilterns are overflowed by Easterly arrivals and Westerly departures operating at Luton, Heathrow departures, the Bovingdon stacking hold and operations at Northolt.

There were no plans to hold a consultation event in the Chilterns but after significant lobbying by the Chiltern Countryside Group, an event is planned

This will be held in TRING on Wednesday 8th August at the Nora Grace Hall, Faversham Close, Tring, HP23 5BA between 4-8.00pm.

Wherever you live in the Chilterns, this is YOUR OPPORTUNITY to find out at first-hand what the Airport Operators plan and to voice your

concerns.

The non-statutory consultation is live and closes on the 31st August. Full information about the plans and the consultation can be found

at: www.futureluton.llal.org.uk

LLA say: 'We want to make the best use of our existing runway (in line with Government policy) which will involve providing additional capacity, and we have identified a number of options to help make this happen. We are also committed to minimising and mitigating the impacts of expansion. We ask for your feedback on our mitigation plans.'

To get a physical copy of the consultation, you need to email futureluton@llal.org.uk or write to London Luton Airport Ltd, Freepost Future Luton, LLAL. Despite my best efforts I couldn't find a telephone number

CarersBucks

Caring for Older Carers

Are you, or anyone you know, aged 75 or over and caring for someone who cannot manage on their own because they are ill, frail or have a disability?

Do you or they also struggle to access support because the person being cared for cannot be left? Or perhaps have a difficulty communicating over the telephone and would benefit from face-to-face support. If so, our Caring for Older Carers service is here to help. Once a referral is received a home visit will be arranged with a Carer Support Worker who will be able to provide information, advice and guidance to the carer, insuring they receive all the help and support they are entitled to.

This service is being run by Jo Dover, who is the Caring for Older Carers service coordinator at Carers Bucks.

For more information, call Carers Bucks on 0300 777 2722 or mail@carersbucks.org or go to our webpage <https://www.carersbucks.org/services/caring-for-older-carers/>



Talking Archives

Autumn 2018

A series of talks about records held at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and how to use them

Tuesday 18th September Conservation in Action 11 – 11:45

Wednesday 24th October Record Keeping in Buckinghamshire 11 – 11:45

Thursday 22nd November She Got The Vote 11 – 11:45

All events are at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, County Hall, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UU

Refreshments available

Admission is free but booking is strongly recommended for all events due to popularity and limited space

To reserve your place call 01296 382 587 or email archives@buckscc.gov.uk



Money Matters

Ditch the triple lock: state pension should rise in line with earnings, say MPs

State pension should rise in line with earnings, while “fundamental reform” of pensions tax relief is needed, according to an influential cross-party parliamentary committee of MPs.

The Treasury Committee has recommended replacing the “unsustainable” triple lock – which sees the state pension rise annually based on the highest of earnings, inflation or 2.5% – with an “earnings-uprating”.

It also doesn't believe tax relief is an effective incentive for vulnerable households, and says the government should consider “fundamental reform” to introducing a flat rate of tax relief. The Committee adds that bonus and matching incentives – such as those used on Help to Buy Isas and the Help to Save scheme – have more of an impact. A spokesman for the treasury has re-iterated that they are committed to maintaining the triple lock on the state pension to the end of this Parliament.

Millions of people risk financial chaos by refusing to talk about death

A reluctance to talk about death means many over 55s could be missing out on the opportunity to sort out their finances before they die. As a result, they could end up leaving problems for their loved ones to resolve and a possible tax bill.

According to life-curation website, Wishlockr, just 6% of over 55s have consulted an independent financial adviser for help with estate planning. Of those that hadn't, just under a third (30%) said this was because they were not comfortable discussing their own death. This equates to a substantial 5.5 million people. Exacerbating potential problems, the research reveals that only half of over 55s have written a will.

In many cases over 55s hadn't even discussed their wishes with their families, with over half (57%) admitting that they were yet to have ‘final finance’ discussions with loved ones.

Frugal pensioners are hit by a £10,000 care home penalty

Elderly people who pay for their care home places are charged £10,000 a year more than fellow residents whose bills are met by the taxpayer, a report said yesterday. Those who own their own homes or have savings typically pay £750 a week for a care home bed, it found. This is £195 a week more than councils pay for people without savings who have similar rooms and similar levels of help.

The extra charges, £10,140 a year for someone living in an average residential care home, are demanded by care home operators from residents who pay privately because councils refuse to pay the full costs of looking after those whose bills are met by the taxpayer.

As a result, elderly people who have saved and paid mortgages throughout their lives are subsidising the care home places of those who have not saved.

The subsidies are even higher for people who need the greater levels of care provided by nursing homes. Those paying their own nursing home bills are likely to be charged £1,000 a week – £270 a week more than the average amount councils are willing to pay for state-funded nursing homes residents.

The figures, produced by care industry analysts LaingBuisson, put the extra costs faced by private payers in nursing homes compared with taxpayer-funded residents at more than £14,000 a year.

The estimates underline the deepening sense of injustice felt by families at the way frail and vulnerable parents who need care home places are forced to spend the value of their property and savings to meet the cost, while others without savings receive the same care free.



Scams & Frauds

↓ WATCH THIS VIDEO ↓

Demonstration of scams by the Metropolitan Police

A fantastic 10 minute video by the Metropolitan Police that shows 3 different scams has just been published on YouTube.

If you are able to show videos to your groups, this is really worth it as it brings it home to you, just how easy it is to fall victim but just as easy to protect yourself when you know that you are looking for.

The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Pc93RkplIM>

Fake emails after your Amazon log in details

These fake emails are after your Amazon login details!



We've had an increased number of reports about these fake emails purporting to be from Amazon. The subject line and content of the emails vary, but they all contain links leading to phishing websites designed to steal your Amazon login details.

Always question unsolicited requests for your personal or financial information in case it's a scam. Never automatically click on a link in an unexpected email or text.

Delay to pension cold calling ban

The Treasury has been accused of picking a 'good day to bury bad news' as it admitted delays to the pension cold-calling ban. John Glen MP, economic secretary to the Treasury timed his statement to Parliament on pensions cold calling on the same day as the publication of the now-infamous Brexit White Paper and the arrival of the US president.

In his statement, Mr Glen said "Pensions cold calling is an important and complex issue. Pensions scams can have devastating consequences and cold calling is the most common method used to initiate pensions scams, so the government has taken the time to ensure the ban works for consumers. The government will imminently publish a consultation seeking views on a set of draft regulations to ban pensions cold calling. Once we have considered all responses to the consultation, in the autumn we intend to lay regulations under the affirmative procedure and subject to Parliamentary approval bring the regulations into force as soon as possible thereafter."

The government first made signals it wished to implement a ban as far back as November 2016 now it is more likely to be 2019 at the earliest.

Latest scam phones calls

Is anyone else plagued by pre-recorded messages when you answer the phone? Here are two that have plagued us recently.

HMRC & Tax Avoidance

James Anderson, apparently from HMRC, called from 01438940554 leaving a pre-recorded message informing whoever answered the phone that they have been accused of tax avoidance and legal action was imminent unless the person called back. Slightly freaked out my 16 year old! This is a scam. If you call the number back it's probably premium rate. If anyone else gets this call, please ignore.

Compromised IP Address

Another pre-recorded message received informed us that our IP address had been compromised in several countries. Apparently this needed to be changed and all we had to do was press 1 to be connected to a technician who would change our IP address otherwise our internet would be cut off.

My two teenage girls honestly looked as though the world was about to end. I gave them that withering look and told them that it was a scam. I'm not sure that they were entirely convinced but two weeks later we are still on the internet despite several repeat calls.



Health News



Organ donors aged 50-plus are 'urgently needed' to help save lives

There is an "urgent need" for members of the public aged 50 or over to sign up as organ donors – but many older people refrain from doing so because they mistakenly believe they are not healthy enough to help, a report has suggested.

People aged 80 and beyond have the potential to save lives by donating their organs in death, yet fewer than 1,000 individuals over the age of 50 did so in the year 2017/2018, according to data published by the UK's organ donation organisation NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT).

Just 21% of people on the NHS organ donor register were aged over 50 when they signed up, as of March this year, NHSBT figures show. By comparison, 72% of people who died after being referred for potential donation were 50 or over.

"Too many people mistakenly assume their age means their organs won't be healthy enough to help other people," said Sally Johnson, NHSBT. "People in their fifties, sixties, seventies and even eighties can all save lives. Ms Johnson continued. "You may not be able to donate your heart or lungs but many can still save lives through donating organs such as their kidneys and liver."

Dementia accounts for 12.7% of deaths

New data for 2017 from the Office for National Statistics has revealed that Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia accounted for 12.7% of all deaths in England and Wales last year.

The figures have prompted Alzheimer's Research UK to call for "urgent investment" in dementia research.

Dr Matthew Norton, director of Policy and Strategy at the charity said. "With one in four hospital beds occupied by someone with dementia and deaths from the condition rising, we must take urgent action. As well as support for dementia research, the condition must become a priority for the NHS 10-year plan."

Integrated Care System (ICS) What is it?

Buckinghamshire integrated care system (ICS) is part of the wider Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West sustainable transformation partnership (STP). The partners include:

- NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) ;
- Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust;
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust;
- South Central Ambulance Service ;
- Buckinghamshire County Council;
- FedBucks GP federation.

The health and life expectancy of the population of 534,000 in Buckinghamshire is generally better than the England average. The population is expected to grow by 12% by 2030 (with increases of 39% in people aged 65+ and 78% aged 85+). Unhealthy lifestyles present a major challenge for the future demand for services.

The Bucks ICS aims to create one integrated health and care system', working together. This will be delivered through more joined-up care close to home, making it easier for people to get urgent care when they need it, improving and simplifying care for diabetes and musculoskeletal problems, improving access to mental health services and improving the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

What this means for local people

- Services will provide better care with easier access;
- Individuals will be more able to manage their own conditions and plan their care;
- The right care will be delivered at the right time and right place – often closer to people's homes and out of hospitals;
- After hospital treatment, patients will be supported to recover at home or as close to home as possible;
- Local teams will bring together the expertise of health and care staff to support people's physical, social and mental health needs, especially those with long-term conditions;

Louise Watson is Managing Director for Bucks ICS. Contact details are hard to come by other than ccgcomms@buckscc.gov.uk



2018

Contact Details for the Bucks Older People's Action Group
Andy can be contacted on
Tel : 01296 622122
E-mail : info@bopag.org.uk
BOPAG, c/o The Hale Farmhouse, Hale Lane,
Wendover HP22 6QR

Bucks Older People's Action Group Meetings

2018 Dates

19th September (Brain Health)

21st November

All are welcome. Meetings run 10-12.30 and are currently held at Christ the Servant King, Sycamore Road, High Wycombe, HP12 4TJ

Please contact Andy Trueman on 01296 622122 for further information



The Thames Valley Police (TVP) holds its annual force **open day** on **Saturday 18th August.**

As this year marks 50 years since the formation of TVP, the force will be celebrating the work it has done for the past half a century.

It takes place at their Training Centre in Sulhamstead, near Reading (post code RG7 4DX) between 10am and 4pm.

There will be something for everyone as stalls showcase what TVP has to offer. Some of the highlights include:

- Arena displays,
- Pat and chat with the mounted section
- Force helicopter & meet the pilots
- Learn about the Forensic Investigation Unit and FISO (Force Intelligence and Specialist Operations)
- Visit the police museum
- Hear about what it is like to be on the other end of 999 and 101 calls in our specialist talks, also including how it feels to be at the centre of complex major crime investigations

Dates for your diary

2018 Dates of Partnership Boards

Assistive Technology 12/09, 12/12
Dementia 15/08, 11/10, 13/12
Older People 26/10
Physical & Sensory Disability 27/9, 29/11
Carers—further dates to be advised
Please email or phone Debbie if you are interested in attending. Mobile: 07507 399 180 Email: debra.robinson@suco.org.uk

Bucks Health Trust Board Meetings

Wed 26th Sept 9am Olympic Room, The Gateway, Aylesbury

Wed 28 November 9am Hampden Lecture Theatre, Wycombe Hospital

Buckinghamshire CCG Board Meetings

13 September 10.30-12.30. AVDC offices, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF.

Review of house recycling centres



Bucks County Council has announced that there's going to be a service review of the household recycling centres. They need to make savings and plan to reduce expenditure on this service. They also say that it is also extremely important that we maintain the quality of the current service, which gains very high approval ratings from residents.

The public consultation which will begin soon will be found at www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/waste-and-recycling/hrc-service-review

This does not affect the kerbside waste and recycling collections

If you have any specific questions, please call Aidan Shutter, on 01296 382444 or email Bill Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, BCC, at bchapple@buckscc.gov.uk

Hospital Discharge Feedback

SUCO are looking into your stories about the 'Hospital Discharge' process and would really like to hear from anyone with a story to tell about their experience in a Bucks hospital. Healthwatch, SEAP, PALS and the Trust's Health Patient Experience team are keen to listen to suggestions and any experiences of hospital services you wish to share. You can do this by contacting Debbie on 07507 399 180 Email: debra.robinson@suco.org.uk