

# THE VILLAGE SURGERY PROMOTES HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

---

## **PRACTICE AND PATIENTS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

Following the debates during the European referendum and general election campaigns, few of us will be left with any doubts about the political and economic significance of the NHS. It is clear that the increasing cost of health and social care is a huge challenge for the UK, and that our ageing population is one of the contributing actors.

For some time (and because of advances in medical science and improved quality of care) life expectancy has been rising by around 2.5 years every decade. In general, the need for medical support and social care increases with age and, when people do require that support, the issues which they face become more complex with advancing years.

One of the ways in which we can all help to address this problem is by doing all we can (in every age group) to adopt healthier lifestyles and live our lives in robust health for as long as possible.

It is to support this objective that the 'PIP' group (Patients Involved in the Practice) will be operating a desk in the surgery reception area on a Friday morning from July until Christmas to supply leaflets and information on healthy lifestyles. PIP members are not 'experts'. However, we will try to give support, guidance, information and encouragement to anybody who wants to 'look after themselves' better. Leaflets will be available which will signpost patients to relevant support services.

One such service, and one which attempts to address the specific issue of loneliness and social isolation, is the Formby Information Hub. Loneliness is a growing problem, particularly for our elderly population, which can have a profound impact on physical and mental health. The information hub provides free details on activities, social clubs and support groups for people over 55 who live on their own. The PIP is working closely with the hub to provide relevant information for those who request it.

If we can all take simple steps to live healthier lifestyles it will help the NHS to meet the huge financial challenges which it faces. It will also help to relieve the pressure on the G.P's and staff at our Village Surgery, allowing them to concentrate on unavoidable and serious health issues. In the long run this will obviously be of benefit to us all.

So please come and chat to PIP members at the desk in reception and while you are there please give us any views on how you think the surgery operates. We are keen to learn what you think works well and / or how things might be improved. We can then feed your views back to the practice.

*Roger Pontefract on behalf of the PIP committee*