**WELTON FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE**

**FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER**

Thank you to everyone who brought presents and cards for the staff over the Christmas period – they were greatly appreciated by all of us. Thank you also to the PDA for an excellent (as always) Christmas Lunch in December, again, much appreciated by all concerned.

We have experienced a high volume of staff sickness in recent weeks leading up to Christmas, obviously a particularly busy period, and thank patients for bearing with us during a difficult time and apologies to anyone who was inconvenienced by appointment changes etc.

A reminder that it would be very helpful if requests for routine repeat prescriptions could be left on the dispensary answerphone; there is no need to speak directly to a dispenser in these cases. Such messages are extracted and acted upon regularly throughout the day and it is much safer and efficient for staff to use this process rather than have to break away from what they are doing to answer the ‘phone during the day.

At the time of writing we are still awaiting the report from CQC following our formal inspection on 12th September 2016. Once approved, this will be posted on our website in due course.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, Nurse Practitioner Kerry Belshaw has joined our team and part of her role is triaging requests and undertaking appropriate home visits during the week. A home visit is intended for those patients who are bed bound or terminally ill and unable to attend the surgery in any other way. Doctors can see patients much more effectively and swiftly and carry out any necessary examinations appropriately in the practice setting rather than in the patients’ homes. Our Practice area is very large and it can take an hour to travel and undertake certain house calls so please be aware that unless there is a medical need for the visit, patients will be asked to attend surgery and with just under 9500 patients (and more to come!) it is no longer possible (or necessary) to routinely visit all patients who are discharged from hospital.

We are doing our best to help our A&E colleagues and trying to encourage patients to seek assistance from a pharmacist for minor complaints or ourselves where appropriate, rather than using A&E services in such circumstances. Please help us to protect our A&E and ambulance services – who knows when any of us may need them in a true emergency?

Sallie Stead