



Welcome to latest newsletter

In this edition we update you on the development of services, including new community clinics and Rheumatology pathways; introduce our new Managing Director, Geoff Bailey and Rheumatology consultant, Dr Ragnar Ingvarsson. We also have some feedback from the GP survey. We hope that you will find these articles interesting and relevant, but do let us know what you think.

Update on MSK and Rheumatology Services

Since April, Sussex MSK Partnership East Clinical Referral and Assessment Service has received and processed 29,594 referrals. During the same period our Extended Scope Practitioners have seen 9,451 patients. Since October 426 patients have been seen by Orthopaedic Consultants in community based clinics.

We have extended the reach of our community clinics. Extended Scope Practitioner-run clinics for hip and spine have been running in Peacehaven's Anchor Health Centre since December and are proving popular with local patients – see article on page 3 for more information.

There have been significant developments to the Rheumatology Service, with the appointment of Rheumatologist Dr Ragnar Ingvarsson. He is already reviewing every Rheumatology referral and running clinics at Eastbourne DGH. He will be setting up community clinics so that patients will be able to see him closer to where they live. See the article about Ragnar and the Rheumatology service on page 4§ for more details.



Introduction of PROMs and PREMs to measure patient experience and outcomes

We have recently started measuring patient experience and outcomes (PROMs and PREMs) to help us evaluate the effectiveness of our service from the patient's perspective. For the PROMs, we are using the new Arthritis Research UK Musculoskeletal Health Questionnaire. Our experience will contribute to the joint NHS England/Arthritis Research UK trial. *[continued on page 2]*

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Once patients have been referred to us and given an appointment to see a clinician, they are asked to complete a PROMs questionnaire. The questions focus on how the condition is affecting their quality of life and provides a benchmark for comparison. The patient will receive a follow up PROMs questionnaire three months after discharge (six months if they have had surgery) so that we can measure how beneficial the patient feels their treatment has been.

We are also measuring the patient's experience of their journey through the service - from their initial appointment with their GP right through to discharge. Once patients have been referred and received their first appointment with a clinician, they are asked to complete a PREMs questionnaire: Were they given enough information? Did they feel involved in decisions? Did they understand the proposed treatment? Were they able to ask questions? Was the waiting time acceptable? Were they treated with respect and dignity? Patients will be asked to complete a follow up PREMs questionnaire within 24 hours of being discharged.

Data from PROMs and PREMs is just starting to come in so we are looking at it carefully to see how we can incorporate patients' viewpoints into the delivery of our service and work towards improved outcomes and experience.



New Leader for Sussex MSK Partnership East

Sussex MSK Partnership East has appointed Geoff Bailey to the role of Managing Director. He takes over the reins from Interim Managing Director, Stephen Cass.

Geoff has 30 years' experience in the healthcare sector, most recently with Nuffield Health where he headed up its Brighton Hospital. He was previously based in Berlin as Head of Global Marketing for the pharmaceutical firm, Bayer.

Although his career has taken him all over the world, Geoff grew up in Sussex and is delighted to have the opportunity to develop healthcare services in parts of his home county. He said: "I am joining the Partnership at a very exciting time. A lot of hard work has gone into creating the structure of the service so this next stage will focus on refining and development. Key areas are working with providers to cut waiting times and opening more clinics in the community so that patients can see specialist MSK practitioners closer to where they live."

An early priority for Geoff is engaging with patients and the people who work in the local health community.

He said: "I am looking forward to getting out to meet our patients and the health professionals who care for them. I want to find out how their experience of Sussex MSK Partnership East has been and what they think we can do better. I hope people will be keen to talk to me and if anyone wants to get in touch, please email me at geoff.bailey@sussexmskeast.com."



Launch of Peacehaven Hip and Spine Clinics

A new clinic has been set up at the Anchor Healthcare Centre on Meridian Way in Peacehaven by Sussex MSK Partnership East, the local NHS service for patients with bone, joint and muscular problems.

Patients will have a 30-45 minute appointment with a specialist health practitioner known as an Extended Scope Practitioner (ESP). ESPs are physiotherapists who have specialist knowledge of musculoskeletal problems and can diagnose and recommend follow up treatment. The service is helping patients to be seen and treated quickly and closer to home.

Toby Lambourne is one of the ESPs at the clinic at the Anchor Healthcare Centre. He explained how the service is transforming healthcare for local patients: "It's all about delivering high quality health services where people need them most – that is, close to where they live. The more we can treat people in their community the better, both for patients and the health economy.

"The term "musculoskeletal" covers a huge range of bone, joint and muscle conditions, including arthritis, sports injuries and back problems to name but a few. Our team is made up of medical experts with different specialisms which means that we can make sure our patients get to see the most appropriate specialist to treat their problem," said Toby.

One of the first patients to be seen at the new clinic in Peacehaven was Tony Poore from Peacehaven who works as an electrician and is a keen golf player. He had been suffering with aggressive pain in his knee and was referred by his GP to the MSK service.

"It was great to be able to come to the clinic in Peacehaven. I expected to have to go to the hospital in Brighton or Eastbourne. The ESP was extremely thorough and spent a lot of time talking about my condition. I'm very impressed with the service so far."

Patients are initially referred to the Sussex MSK Partnership East by their GP. Once referred, the partnership looks after them throughout their treatment and organises all their follow-up appointments. Clinics are also held in Seaford, Crowborough and Eastbourne.

Dr Irma Murjikneli, a GP at the Meridian Surgery is very pleased the service has come to Peacehaven. She said: "It's great for local patients to be able to come to somewhere they know and can easily get to, especially for those who don't have their own transport."



New Consultant Leads Rheumatology Service Development at Sussex MSK Partnership East

We are delighted to welcome Rheumatology Consultant Dr Ragnar Ingvarsson to Sussex MSK Partnership East. He is dividing his time between the Partnership and Eastbourne DGH's Rheumatology department, where he is running regular clinics.

A key part of Ragnar's role with Sussex MSK Partnership East is to help redesign Rheumatology services. All Rheumatology referrals to Sussex MSK Partnership East are now reviewed by Ragnar, which helps to ensure that patients are offered appropriate treatment for their condition as soon as possible. Over the coming months Ragnar will be setting up Rheumatology clinics out in the community so that local patients can be seen, diagnosed and offered the treatment they need more quickly and closer to where they live.

Ragnar is keen to make himself available to offer advice and guidance and welcomes enquiries from GPs who want to discuss cases prior to making a referral. He said: "A referral might not always be necessary and I'm always happy to discuss individual cases with GPs – for example, if there is a query about a certain drug or treatment. Often we can sort out a problem on the phone there and then which will save the patient having to wait for an appointment."

Ragnar began his medical studies in his native Iceland and went on to complete his training in Sweden. His most recent post was Consultant Rheumatologist at Lunds University Hospital in Sweden. He has a specialist interest in Systemic Lupus and is leading a research project on its epidemiology in southern Sweden. When he is not working Ragnar can often be found in the kitchen. An accomplished amateur chef, he has written two cook books and presented his own show on Icelandic TV – The Doctor in the Kitchen.

GPs who would like to talk to Ragnar can contact him via Sussex MSK Partnership East on 0300 300 0003 or email smskp.east@nhs.net. Alternatively please use the "Guidance" button on the GP Referral Guidelines page in the Health Professional section of our website.