

Cropredy Surgery – activities and achievements over the past year

Cropredy, like every other practice in the UK (and no doubt worldwide) has been focussed on the prevention of spread of Covid 19 virus over the last year and before.

At the beginning of the outbreak, we joined with other Banbury practices to deliver the vaccines at Grimsbury Community Hall. After delivering to the most vulnerable, elderly and ill patients and those over a designated age, we decided to withdraw from the program as we were struggling with exhausted staff, a massive backlog of annual leave and the danger that ordinary care for our patients was going to be affected if we carried on. This was a whole practice decision and many of us were uncomfortable with it, but it proved to be the only sensible way forward. Having said this, we have still vaccinated our housebound and nursing home patients and are set to do this again in the coming week.

We ran our flu campaign very successfully over the winter. It was the second year where we allocated appointments rather than the usual turn up and wait philosophy but it was important to maintain social distancing. We are hopeful that this may not be necessary in the future.

The biggest news however was the retirement of Dr Barry Tucker. Barry was much loved and respected and his work ethic and dedication to his patients amounted to a passion and this gained him many truly admiring patients. However his dedication came with a price and despite being relatively young, he found he needed to retire early, move to Cornwall and leave his chosen career. This was devastating to the practice as a whole and everyone who worked with him and there was a time where the fear was the practice may have to close if we could not find new partners which were prepared to take it on. Partnership is quite a rare commodity these days and available GPs even rarer. We were incredibly lucky to find two partners Dr Tom Holyoake and Dr Cat Reid that were keen to take on Cropredy (and each other) and keep our doors open to serve our patients. Inevitably we have had to make changes – it is important in order to keep the practice sustainable, but the heart of Cropredy has survived intact and now has a secure future. We have also increased our nursing hours by employing an additional practice nurse, so we now have much better cover throughout the week and fewer pressures when a nurse wishes to take annual leave

Along with the new partners and nurse we have now got 1.5 days of a community pharmacist per week who is undertaking medication reviews (among other things) on behalf of the practice. This not only helps to keep our doctors seeing patients rather than doing these reviews but also benefits patient as we have the use of a hugely qualified member of staff with a vast array of pharmaceutical knowledge.

The practice is gradually returning to normal and we have managed to catch up with all the annual patient reviews, despite the difficulties presented by Covid. The understandable reluctance of patients to attend during the pandemic meant that they didn't have the chance to really discuss their condition in the detail they necessarily would have liked but are now able to really take advantage of our highly skilled and specialised nurses.

Nicci Bennett
Practice Manager
Cropredy Surgery