

York Older People's Assembly

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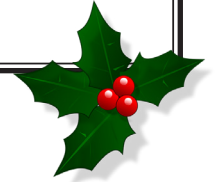
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HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR



THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD TO RECOVERY

Simon Morritt - Chief Executive of York and Scarborough Hospitals was the guest speaker at the annual meeting of the Assembly in October. He gave an insight into the challenges being faced at York Hospital during the Covid-19 Pandemic.



In February 2020 all elective care was suspended whilst the Trust concentrated on meeting the demands from those who were suffering from the virus. Two wards are still dedicated to meeting this demand offering 60 beds for in-patients. At its peak there were 242 covid patients in the Hospital.

The effect on normal admissions has been dramatic. At October 2021, 1644 potential patients had been waiting for over a year, with 375 waiting over 18 months and 104 over 2 years.

Similarly, the normal maximum wait in Accident and Emergency of 4 hours has been significantly extended, with some trolley waits up to 12 hours before a suitable bed became available. During this period 3800 patients have been discharged. The Chief Executive said it was likely to take up to three years to get back to normal.



On a more positive note the multi-million programme of investment at the hospital is well underway. Scaffolding surrounds much of the area around A & E which will be expanded to provide improvements to the waiting, consultation and treatment areas. In addition 6 new Critical Care Beds are to be provided and 12 discreet cubicles for rapid assessments to take place in the Emergency Area.

PENSIONS UP FROM APRIL - BUT ONLY 3%

In 2010, the Government introduced a new system to calculate future pension rises. Known as The "triple lock," it was to be the highest of:

- Inflation – measured by the rise in the consumer price index
- Average wage increases
- or 2.5%

However, this "formula" is to be suspended for next year. It is stated that many people were earning less than usual because they

had been "furloughed" during the pandemic. Notwithstanding the average wage increase over this period reached 8% in the recent past.

In short, the basic state pension of £137.60 will only rise to £141.85 an increase of £4.25 per week or 3%.

If you believe them, the Government promises to return to the "triple lock" for the rest of this Parliament.

MARATHON MAN SCALES BACK HIS AMBITION

George Wood well known Secretary of the Assembly has just completed his 19th Marathon at the age of 75. This year, in addition he has completed the Leeds and Sheffield Half Marathons. In both events he won the prize for the first male over 75 to complete the course.

George says in future he will continue to concentrate on half marathons! No wonder he champions Health and Wellbeing in the City. He puts us all to shame! Hearty congratulations.



OLDER CITIZENS ADVOCACY RECEIVES OVER £250K FROM THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

Local charity, Older Citizens Advocacy York (OCAY) has been awarded over £250K in National lottery funding over 4 years to support its work with older people. The Charity based in the Priors Street Centre will use the funds to provide advocacy support to help older people in things like applying for benefits, writing letters, changing energy suppliers, finding information, or making a complaint about services received.

OCAY has been running since 2001 and has a volunteer team of 40 supported by 3 members of staff. The group operates Monday to Friday 10am - 3pm and works with 300 older people each year.

Ruth Potter, Charity Manager says: “we are all really excited to have this continued recognition from the National Lottery of the important work our volunteers do to help older people in York.”



VACCINES - VACCINES AND MORE

The person in charge of the outstanding vaccines service at Askham Bar Professor Mike Holmes has been named as “person of the year” by the Local Press. As a GP partner in the Haxby Group Practice he has co-ordinated a range of clinical admin and voluntary staff who have delivered thousands of jabs over recent months.

But not satisfied with that Professor Holmes has expanded the role to become a “health village” improving access to services. This has included:

- City wide cervical screening clinics
- Warfarin monitoring
- contraceptive clinics

Most recently, babies and young children with breathing difficulties can be seen between 4pm-10pm each evening following referral by their own GP. Is this the pattern for the future? Whilst only a pilot now, there is scope for this to become mainstream.



PROTECTING YOUR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

From the 11th November, 2021 all care staff in direct contact with residents of residential and nursing homes must be “double vaccinated”. The risk of catching Covid-19 in these settings has been highlighted in the early stages of the epidemic and whilst these measures may appear draconian, the well-being of residents is absolutely paramount.

Similar arrangements will apply to all front-line NHS and care staff who have direct contact with patients in hospital settings or in their own homes. This will take effect from April 1st 2022.

The Assembly has been campaigning for these measures to be put in place and therefore welcomes the Government’s determination to minimize the risk to our relatives and friends who have been unnecessarily exposed to Covid-19.



HEALTHWATCH SURVEY ON NHS DENTISTRY IN YORK

Healthwatch is an independent organisation set up to make care better for all those using health and social care services. There is a local Healthwatch in every area in England.

Healthwatch in York seeks to listen to the experiences of local people and then share this information with professionals in health and social care to improve the services available.

Recently they contacted 39 dental practices in York with the following results.

- No practice in York is currently accepting new NHS adult patients.
- Existing patients requiring routine dental treatment have a waiting time between 3 to 6 months.
- Covid-19 has created significant backlogs in dealing with existing patients.
- 72% of practices treating private patients were accepting new patients with waiting times less than 6 months.
- Waiting time for existing private patients was less than 1 month with many being seen in a matter of weeks. Does all this information suggest that NHS Dentistry is a service in decay?



FRIGHTENING GROWTH IN DIABETES

1 in 10 people in the UK will have Diabetes by 2030. 90% of patients have type 2, a life changing condition that is more likely to develop in people who are overweight.

Over 60% of people are overweight and 28% are officially obese. It affects older people in particular and is often recognised by high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels. Complications of diabetes include potential heart attacks, kidney failure, amputations, strokes or visual impairments.

So, clearly examine your diet and minimize your fat and sugar intake and exercise more to bring down your weight.

INVITATION FROM SPARK YORK AT CHRISTMAS

During December, “MELK” one of the outlets at SPARK, are offering free teas to anyone who mentions York Older People’s Assembly!



Marjorie Waite Court Extra Care Scheme

Marjorie Waite Court is a council sheltered housing scheme in Clifton completed in 1989, providing 42 flats and bungalows for older people. Seen here being opened by the Duchess of Kent.

With the demolition of the Burton Stone Lane community centre an opportunity arose to extend and convert the existing scheme by the addition of 29 flats and 4 bungalows. It also allowed the scheme to be redesignated as "Extra Care" providing 24 hours support to residents. Some of the accommodation is being offered to patients being discharged from hospital to reduce waiting times.

A community cafe and hair saloon have additionally been provided in the new community hall, which is open to residents living in the area.



50+ FESTIVAL- ROUND UP

With no Festival held last year it was with some cautious optimism a decision was taken to relaunch in 2021.

In total 82 events were organised with 20 outdoors, 30 indoors - face to face and a further 32 on-line. 4000 copies of the programme were printed and distributed.

Attendance was varied, some were low due to peoples continued caution due to the pandemic, others outdoors were affected by the terrible weather.

Thanks as always to our main sponsors, Harrowell's Solicitors, Foresters Friendly Society (since 2009!) and Later Life Hub an organisation promoting independence in later life.



Under the stage at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre tour



Walls & Floods - a 1000 years in York's history walking tour led by Ian Tempest



Cuppa, cake & chatter at St Nicholas Church, Dunnington



Nordic Walking at Rawcliffe Country Park with Jules Titheridge

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

A stage adaptation of Ian Donaghy's "The Missing Peace" will be performed at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre.

The play is a series of fifteen Talking Heads style monologues, which have been brought together within this play, exploring life after death. It is not a play about death, It is a play about life! There will be moments of laughter, sadness, and refection throughout. It runs from Thursday 27th - Saturday 29th January 2022

You may remember that Ian Donaghy was one of our previous speakers.

Open Meeting - Wednesday December 8th at The Friends Meeting House, 2pm

The speaker will be Tom Meares, Project Manager for IT Re-Use at the Community Furniture Store, who will discuss how they are refurbishing used and obtaining new PC's/laptops/tablets for distribution to those who need them.

This is a chance to catch up on all issues concerning the "digital divide".

Most importantly - free mince pies will be available.