



The Elms Quarterly

*Keeping you in touch
with developments at our Medical Centre*



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Summer 2011/2012

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. The Elms celebrated Christmas in early December at Burke's on Main in Bacchus Marsh. A very relaxed and enjoyable evening was had by all who attended.

Doctor News

As mentioned previously, Dr Emma Scriven will be moving at the end of January to Ipswich in Queensland to be closer to family. At the end of February, Dr Faiza Khan will also be leaving for family reasons. We are saddened to see these doctors go as they have both developed a loyal following. However, Dr Manju Nadiger will be returning to The Elms after completing six months of outer rural GP training in Ararat. He will be welcomed back by us as well as by his family, from whom he has been apart from for the last six months.

We would also like to welcome two new doctors in early February. They are Dr Jessie Low and Dr Asha Jacob. Jessie completed her medical training at the University of Western Australia and has been working at Bendigo Hospital for the last year. Asha studied medicine in India and she has worked in India, Dubai and Australia, with the last 12 months at the Austin Hospital.

Medical Student News

We will have a new full-time medical student, Kate Middleton, at The Elms in the coming year. Kate and her husband will be moving to Bacchus Marsh soon. She will see patients under the supervision of Dr Rob Hosking and Dr Woody Wu. We hope you will welcome her as you did Eliza Muir over the last year. Eliza said she thoroughly enjoyed her time at The Elms and she has informed us she did well in all her subjects. She will begin the final year of her Deakin University medical degree in 2012.

Psychologist News

Dr Louise Hayes and Dr Meredith Rayner (both with PhDs in psychology) are soon to be joined by psychologist Phillip Blackwood who will consult on Fridays. Billing of these services is independent of The Elms. You can elect to see them privately, or if your condition warrants it, a Mental Health Plan can be completed by your usual doctor and then a referral made. This will allow some visits to be subsidised by Medicare (not bulk billed).

Melbourne Womens Imaging at The Elms

Ken Taylor continues to provide high quality ultrasound for pregnancy and gynaecology at The Elms. This service is provided here at The Elms on Thursday mornings, on referral from your doctor. Billing is independent of The Elms and is not bulk billed.

Collection of Medical Certificates etc

We are finding a large number of people ringing and asking us to complete medical certificates, prescriptions and other paperwork for them, and then not collecting them. This is causing a growing storage problem, as well as wasting the time of staff and doctors. We have decided to implement a system where any document not collected within 2 months will be destroyed. If a person then requests the same item, they will be charged extra for this.

Swallowing Tablets

Learning to swallow tablets should be started at an early age as most people will need to do this at some stage in their lives. Children between the ages of 8-10 years are usually able to learn this skill. It is useful to practice when children are well and not under pressure to perform. Many doctors advise starting with small, easy to swallow lollies such as Tic-Tacs. Placing one on the tip of the tongue and then swallowing with a glass of water gives them the idea. Once successful with Tic-Tacs, they can graduate to Smarties or M&Ms. In order to maintain the skill, they could continue with these or a small multivitamin or fish oil capsule for a short time. We occasionally see an adult who has never learnt to take tablets and it causes great stress and difficulty for them.

Measles Outbreak

There is currently an alert from the Victorian Health Department that there have been a number of cases of measles in Melbourne. It is timely to remind people to continue to have children immunised against this serious disease. In other countries measles continues to kill children every year. Fortunately in Australia it is rare and people do not usually get as sick. Measles vaccination is part of our national immunisation program with injections provided free at 12 months and 3 ½- 4 years of age.

Smoking and Alcohol in Pregnancy

We care for many pregnant women at The Elms. It is concerning that some are unaware that the long term health of their unborn child can be affected by poor lifestyle choices in pregnancy, such as smoking and alcohol. Smoking leads to many problems during and long after the pregnancy. If you need assistance with smoking cessation in pregnancy, talk to your doctor about the use of Nicotine patches as these are much safer than continuing to smoke.

Drinking alcohol in pregnancy is also recognised as being dangerous to the baby. Alcohol is very toxic to the developing brain and this can lead to mental as well as physical problems with the baby. This is termed Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and is far more common than people realise.

It is sad that otherwise well-informed women will panic about consuming salami or uncooked seafood (which are best avoided in pregnancy) but sometimes continue to smoke or drink.

Preventing short-sightedness in children

There is recent evidence that children need time outside for their eyes to develop normally. Currently in Singapore 80% of young adults have myopia (short-sightedness). Similar figures are being reported in other countries where children spend little time playing outside. It is thought that the problem is not from reading books or looking at screens, but the lack of outdoor time. This gives further evidence to the long-held idea that children need to be encouraged to spend time playing outside at school and at home.

Bacchus Marsh Community Bank

We are supportive of the move to establish a Community Bank in Bacchus Marsh, with the help of Bendigo Bank. For this to occur, the steering committee needs people to provide a pledge. A pledge is not legally binding but is a commitment to support the bank when established. Currently there has been just over \$500,000 pledged by the community, with the target being \$800,000. It would be great for Bacchus Marsh to have a Bendigo Bank branch as they support local communities. It will also provide local jobs within the branch and offer yet another banking choice (and competition) in Bacchus Marsh. If you are willing to pledge support, please contact Travis Bawden (0400 673 058), Claire Sutherland (0412 337 788), Ian Bennett (5367 1055) or Paula McMillan (0418 105 980).



We request that patients please turn off their mobile phones during consultations, and refrain from using while at the reception desk. Thank you.