



**Suffolk
Primary
Care**

Winter newsletter

Issue 2 – Winter 2025/26

Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter, which will keep our health and social care partners updated with the latest developments at Suffolk Primary Care.

We would be grateful if you could forward the bulletin to any colleagues who may find it interesting. Equally, please let us know if you'd like to sign up to our distribution list and receive each edition direct to your inbox.

We hope that you enjoy reading the newsletter. If you have any comments or would like to sign up, please get in touch by emailing SPC.newsletter@nhs.net

With best wishes,

Dr Nick Rayner
Executive Chairman of SPC and GP partner at Oakfield Surgery, Newmarket



Safety work picks up prize

Our Clinical Safety Team has been awarded a prestigious prize in recognition of the outstanding way it uses data to improve the care we provide to patients.

The team has been named as joint clinical winner of the first Bennett Institute Prize. It comes after they used a tool called OpenPrescribing to identify every SPC patient who was being prescribed an antidepressant with potentially serious side effects so they could be gradually switched to safer medication.

The prize was presented during a celebration event at the Bennett Institute Medicines Symposium at the University of Oxford on 10 December. SPC's submission for the award was led by Dr Paul Driscoll (pictured), GP Partner at Haven Health, together with Judy Layton and Helen Flatt.



New Medical Director appointed

Dr Lena Farruggio has been appointed as SPC's new Medical Director.

Lena is a GP partner at Debenham Surgery and joined SPC in 2019. As part of her new role, she will continue to act as governance and training and education lead for all of the partnership's practices.

Lena is also Training Programme Director of the Ipswich GP Training Scheme.



Generous donation to boost cancer diagnosis

Hartismere Hospital League of Friends has generously donated a state-of-the-art dermatoscope to Debenham Surgery to improve diagnosis for patients with suspected skin cancer.

The DermLite DL5 will allow GPs to look under the surface of the skin to help tell the difference between benign and suspicious lesions. This will make sure that only those which need urgent attention are referred onto hospital.

Dr Ahmed Moawad, a GP at Debenham with a special interest in dermatology, said: "We are genuinely grateful for this generous contribution from the Friends, and for their support in improving patient care in our community.

"As GPs, we see a wide range of skin problems every day. Many lesions are clearly benign, but others fall into that grey zone where naked-eye examination alone simply isn't enough. Dermoscopy lets us visualise structures beneath the surface of the skin, improving our ability to differentiate benign from suspicious lesions and reducing unnecessary referrals. This donation will not only empower us to provide safer and more informed dermatological care, but also enhance the quality of care we can offer to our patients."

Pauline Diamond, Chair of the League of Friends, said: "This valuable piece of equipment is able to analyse and detect skin cancers early, therefore speeding up diagnosis, treatment and recovery."



New-look Howard House takes shape

Four brand new clinic rooms have been created at Howard House as part of a major project to extend and refurbish the building to improve the environment for both patients and staff.

The scheme began in July and has seen the surgery expand into a neighbouring pharmacy, which has been empty for some time. The existing surgery has also been refurbished and reception space upgraded. The work will take the total number of clinic rooms at the surgery to 15.



Awards success for SPC Research Team



SPC's Research Team has been named as runners-up in the 'Learning from Data, Evidence, Knowledge, and Intelligence' category at the Suffolk and North East Essex ICS Health and Care Awards.

The team were presented with the accolade during a glittering ceremony held at Newmarket Racecourse. They received the recognition for their work on the capsule sponge project, which is being developed to help earlier detection of oesophageal cancer.

SPC heroes step up to save lives

Three members of SPC staff have heroically stepped in to give life-saving care during two separate incidents.

Stacie Harvey and Donna Rutherford, who are based at Oakfield, stumbled across an emergency in Newmarket town centre late at night after enjoying a meal out. The pair immediately offered help after seeing a man collapse and stop breathing, working together to check his pulse, clear his airways and give chest compressions until he started breathing again just as an ambulance pulled up.

“Giving chest compressions wasn’t easy,” said Stacie. “We had our basic life support refresher at work a few months before and I never thought I’d remember it in a real-life situation, but obviously it was embedded in the back of my mind when I needed it.”



Stacie and Donna aren’t the only two SPC staff to help save a life recently. For when a member of the public called into Howard House to report that a lady had fainted in Felixstowe High Street, Paramedic Abi Lewis leapt into action.

After running to the scene, Abi found she was dealing with a life-threatening emergency as the woman was completely unresponsive with no pulse. She tasked some police officers with carrying out CPR while she sprinted back to the surgery to collect the defibrillator.

“When I heard about the incident, the paramedic in me immediately kicked in,” said Abi. “As soon as I got there I could tell it was serious. When my old colleagues from the ambulance service arrived we cannulated the lady and gave her adrenaline, at which point her heart started beating again. It was just like being on the frontline again!”

Dementia project shortlisted

A project spearheaded by an SPC GP which has transformed an unused room into a relaxing space for care home residents to enjoy was shortlisted for a Great British Care Award late last year.

The Namaste Room, which was created by Haven Health GP Dr Nick Neill and Nicky, team leader from the Firs care home in Felixstowe, was named as a finalist in the dementia carer award.

The project saw a dated room at the Firs turned into a calming area for residents with advanced dementia. It includes light boxes, smart speakers and water features, as well as areas for relaxing hand and head massage.

