

Wincle WI February meeting

Wincle WI met once again on Zoom in February and Suzanne Henshall was pleased to welcome some extra guests who had joined us from Bosley, Wildboardclough and Swythamley WI's. Our speaker was John Miller, his second visit, and this time his subject was 'How to be a patient in today's health service', a very relevant topic for these times.

There have been great changes in the last 18 months, and not only because of Covid.

One area, where John has been closely involved, has been in pharmacy. Pharmacists (and nurses) have been 'upskilled' so that they can perform many of the tasks previously only done by doctors. This not only frees up time for the doctors but gives us all easy and straightforward access with no appointment required. There has also been more emphasis on patients' involvement and self-monitoring and he told us about 4 different methods currently in use.

Red Flag questions. 6 essential question to assess the seriousness of a situation. If the symptoms have been going on for a while and if they are causing concern, action needs to be taken. These questions concern: loss of appetite: weight loss: night sweats: fatigue: bumps and lumps: bleeding. **SOCRATES** is an acronym commonly used to home in on a problem.

Site: Onset: Character: Radiation: Associated Symptoms: Time course: Exacerbating & relieving factors: Severity

LICEF is another useful acronym.

Life (effects on): **Ideas: Concerns** (what might the problem be?): **Expectations** (what would you like to happen?): **Feelings**

But most of all, returning to the emphasis on patients monitoring themselves, there are 6 ways we can get involved, using readily available equipment.

1. Oxygen monitor (Oximeter) –this has become more relevant in the Covid crisis when breathing difficulties hit the headlines. A simple device placed on the finger measures the *colour* of the blood and gives an estimate on the level of oxygen.
2. Pulse rate. Take your own pulse to check it is steady and beating at the correct rate. John showed us the correct way to take our own pulse. And the good news was that everybody seemed OK.
3. Respiratory rate. 12 -20 breaths per minute is average for an adult when resting.
4. Peak flow – for asthma and COPD patients – pain prevents them from doing stuff
5. Temperature. Average is 36.8°C
6. Blood pressure. 120/78 is good. Simple machines check blood pressure and heart rate.

Suzanne thanked John for his very interesting and informative talk and then went on to the business side of the meeting – which included the opportunity for us all to do some knitting. CFWI have suggested that during lockdown, WI's find a local landmark – perhaps like the bridge at Danebridge, Wincle Church or Wincle School – measure some aspect of the landmark and then all knit scarves which, when added together, will be the same length. The scarves will be donated to a local charity.

Our next meeting will be on March 2nd when we hear from Mike Taylor, a wine importer. Always innovative, the committee will ensure every member can sample a taste of the wine in our own home!

I have recently been collecting photos of the bulbs our ladies were given in a 'goody bag' before Christmas. The results are a taste of what is in store for us all when spring arrives! To quote the lovely Captain Sir Tom Moore "tomorrow will be a better day!"

Suzanne Henshall

