



30th October 2006

**Local People Have a Chance to see Behind the Scenes of the Local Hospital Pharmacy
(as part of Ask About Medicines Week 2006)**

On Tuesday 7th November from 6.30pm, the James Paget University Hospital will open its doors to give local people the chance to see what goes on behind the scenes in a busy hospital pharmacy.

Helen Denny, Senior Pharmacy Technician at the James Paget University Hospital said: 'Local people will have the chance to see what goes on behind the scenes in our busy hospital pharmacy. Visitors will have a full guided tour and see how medicines are dispensed and look at how we manufacture chemotherapy drugs. Most importantly, they can talk to the experts. Just phone me on 01493 452391 to book a place now.'

The event is being held as part of Ask About Medicines Week 2006. Attending the open evening will give people the chance to learn how to use medicines safely and effectively. Ask About Medicines Week runs from 6 to 10 November 2005. The national initiative aims to promote better communication between people and their healthcare professionals by encouraging them to ask questions about medicines. This year the focus is on asking about medicines as we get older.

Helen Denny continued: 'Some people, particularly those in the oldest age groups, need to be encouraged to ask questions about their medicines especially as they are more likely to take a number of different medicines.' She added: 'It's not just the public that we want to reach. We need health professionals, whether they are nurses, pharmacists or doctors, to encourage their patients to ask questions about medicines and other possible treatment options too.'

David Todd, Chief Pharmacist at JPUH said: 'Confusion about medicines can lead to inappropriate use of medicines which is potentially dangerous to patients and costly to the NHS. As many as 50% of older people may not be taking their medicines as intended. Between 5 and 17% of hospital admissions are due to adverse drug reactions, and once in hospital 6-17% of older people suffer an adverse drug reaction during their stay.'

The best way to find out more information about medicines is to ask the right questions. These questions (below) have been developed for people to ask health professionals about their medicines.

Questions to Ask About Your Medicines

WHAT does this medicine do?

WHY is it important that I take this medicine? Are there any other treatment options?

WHEN and how should I take it?

HOW long should I take it for?

WHAT should I be aware of when taking this medicine? *Possible risks, side effects, taking medicine with certain foods/drinks/activities, what to do if I don't feel well while taking it, how should I store it safely etc*

WHERE can I go for more information?

For advice on where to find information about medicines and health, an online Health and Medicines Information Guide and Directory, updated in real time, is available online at: www.askaboutmedicines.org.

Notes for Editors

This is a fantastic photo opportunity – Tuesday 7th November from 6.30pm in the JPUH pharmacy.

Both David Todd and Helen Denny are available for interviews.

Please advertise the booking line for pharmacy tours – 01493 452391. Visits from secondary schools are particularly welcome.

For further information please contact:

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