



Project: The Development of Satellite Clinics in Primary Care to Empower Patients with Dyspepsia to Self Manage Symptoms, Use Medication Effectively and Partner With HCP's in an Appropriate and Effective Manner

'I am thrilled to win the Falk/Core Nurses grant. The grant will help to fund attendance at University in September this year. This Masters level module will enable me to extend my independent practice which will benefit patients by contributing to reducing waiting time for treatment.'

Alison Thomas is a Clinical Nurse Specialist/Nurse Endoscopist at the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport, South Wales.

'Around one-third of adults experience frequent dyspepsia. In South Wales 5-10% take prescribed medication and many have a long history of exacerbations,' explains Clinical Nurse Specialist Thomas.

'In response to NICE Dyspepsia guidance (2005), I developed clinics in primary care to work with patients in developing strategies for managing exacerbations, using medication effectively and understanding when to report symptoms to GP.

'Clinics are open to patients taking regular acid suppressing medication. Consultations include arranging tests, reviewing medication and giving patients tailored symptom self management plans. Use of motivational interviewing techniques enables patients to engage with lifestyle modification leading to improved symptom control.

'The service involves 25 GP practices and had 12,584 patient attendances between 2006 and 2014. Attendance rate is 92%, including a weekly slot for GPs to fast track patients with symptom relapse. GP time is freed, and 98% of patients did not need to re-appoint for dyspepsia in the 12 months following clinic). Outcomes are shared with GP partners. Financial savings are achieved as prescribing becomes more appropriate and symptoms improve.

'This Nurse-Led service reduces time to treatment, delivers care closer to the patient and promotes health/disease prevention.

This work is an example of "prudent healthcare" which underpins the work of the NHS in Wales.'

Ms Thomas's manager Dr Miles Allison states:

'Alison was appointed to Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust in 2004 as a shared appointment with Newport Local Health Board. This Wanless post was created to improve the primary-secondary care interface with regard to management of patients with dyspepsia. In addition to her work in primary care she undertakes upper GI endoscopy, new and follow-up outpatient clinics and training on courses and during routine endoscopy lists.

'Initially her sessions in primary care were dedicated to reviews of prescribing patterns and the diagnosis and treatment of H pylori in those with a history of ulcer disease on maintenance acid suppression. There is now far more patient contact, with very large numbers of patients reviewed and advised over ten years. These consultations extend to patients with Barrett's oesophagus (who are educated on the pros and cons of endoscopic surveillance), eosinophilic oesophagitis and those requiring regular non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. Major financial savings in addition to doctor and patient satisfaction have been demonstrated.

'Despite the increased pressures on the NHS in Wales, the service continues to progress, with measurable positive outcomes consistently achieved. It continues to develop in line with government policies of reducing time to treatment, delivery of care closer to the patient in primary care and promotion of health/disease prevention. Indeed Alison has developed an uncanny knack for homing in on relevant lifestyle issues that commonly underlie gastro-oesophageal reflux and functional dyspepsia. Her work is an excellent example of "prudent healthcare" which is meant to underpin the work of the NHS in Wales.'