



Winter Edition



Newbury Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group

Church Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group

JOINT NEWSLETTER Number 7 – November/December 2023



Dear All,

If you have visited the Health Centre recently we are sure you will agree all the building works and disruption was worth it in the end (just like we said it would be.) We would like to record our thanks to all the staff who have soldiered on through the necessary upheaval to try to continue to provide exemplary service for Church Street and Newbury Street patients. Whilst, no doubt, there will still be a few tweaks over the next few months the Health Centre facilities have definitely improved – we'd love to hear what you think about the changes - especially about the 'self-serve health kiosk' offering the benefit of integrating diagnostic sensors capable of measuring blood pressure, heart rate as well as BMI.

If you would like to get in touch with us, please email:

NSPG@Wantage.com / churchstreetppg@gmail.com

Best wishes,

Sandie Helm

Secretary, Newbury Street PPG

Annie Dee

Editor, Church Street PPG

Reminder:

Joint Talk Thursday 16th November 2023 at 7.30pm at the Mably Way Health Centre. Come and see the new Reception Area at the Health Centre and hear from Dr Carrie Ladd about '**General Practice is changing - How Newbury Street Practice is changing.**'

All Health Centre patients are welcome to the talk which is also available by Zoom. (Zoom Meeting ID: 891 3320 5264 Passcode: 369751)

PCN News

During October Practices have been busy with their Flu and Covid vaccination clinics and Matthew and Emma our Advanced Practitioners, have been busy visiting the housebound patients.



We will be wishing Dr Kate Bramall well for her maternity leave which starts in December. Dr Bramall has been the Clinical Director for the PCN since January 2023. Dr Bramall is handing over the Clinical Director reins to Dr Elaine Barber. Welcome to Dr Barber.

We welcome Kirsty Gough who will be joining us on 1 November. Kirsty will be working alongside Jenny Bahar as a care co-ordinator.

- Care Co-ordinators support our patients with learning disabilities, unpaid carers and anyone else who needs extra support with managing their appointments. Care co-ordinators help to co-ordinate and navigate care across the health and care system, helping people make the right connections, with the right teams at the right time. They can support people to become more active in their own health and care and are skilled in assessing people's changing needs.
- Care co-ordinators are effective in bringing together multidisciplinary teams to support people's complex health and care needs. They can be an effective intervention in supporting people to stay well particularly those with long term conditions, multiple long-term conditions, and people living with or at risk of frailty.'

Congratulations to Toyosi Akinbami our Clinical Pharmacist who has successfully completed his prescribing course.



Did you know?

We have been told of some concerns with regard to Covid & Flu vaccines not appearing on patient records very quickly. This is because vaccines delivered by other providers ie Pharmacies will be using a national data collecting platform that records demographics of the patient and vaccine details of which type/batch/expiry date. This data should be transferred to patient records in the Practice in a week or two. If this information has not appeared on a patient record, patients **should not** contact the practice but should instead **contact the provider** who offered the vaccine.

Watch this space ...

NHS England has announced a new initiative “Pharmacy First”, due to be launched at the end of 2023. It will allow local pharmacists to provide prescription medication to patients for several common conditions, without patients needing to see a GP beforehand. **Please be aware this initiative is not yet live!**

However, both Church Street and Newbury Practices are supporting the roll out of something similar - the **Community Pharmacy Consultation Scheme**. In this;

- Practices refer patients who contact them, to local pharmacies for an appointment for discussing a limited number of minor illness issues (such as hay fever or insect bites).
- The Pharmacists then contact the patient and deal with the issue, then send a document back to the practice summarising the consultation which goes back into the patient's notes.

We are hoping to go live with this in November.

Are you ‘Winter Ready?’

Patients and residents across the BOB region (Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire areas) are being urged to do everything they can to get ‘winter ready’ by:



- Taking up the offer of free flu and COVID vaccinations if they are in eligible groups
- Using NHS 111 for advice on the most appropriate service for their needs
- Continuing to contact their GP practice about worrying symptoms
- Speaking to a pharmacist about minor illnesses
- Only using 999 and hospital Emergency Departments for life-threatening conditions
- Making sure they get repeat prescriptions in time for weekends and bank holidays
- Stocking up on over-the-counter medicines
- Looking out for vulnerable family members, friends, and neighbours.

One of the best ways of keeping yourself and those around you well is to make sure you're up-to-date with your flu vaccination and COVID-19 booster vaccination if you are in the groups these are recommended for. To help reduce the impact of this season's changeable weather, there are several ways to boost your energy levels and ensure your immune system is as healthy as possible.

Make sure you're getting enough vitamin D

During colder months, decreased sunlight exposure can cut your main source of vitamin D, which is essential for a healthy immune system. You can obtain vitamin D naturally from oily fish like salmon and mackerel, mushrooms and egg yolks. In addition, some staple products such as dairy and plant-based milks, cereals and orange juice can be fortified with the vitamin. Vitamin D supplements are also a good idea during the less sunny months, especially for people whose diets are mostly vegetarian or vegan. The NHS recommends everyone, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D during autumn and winter.



Dress for the weather

The body's core temperature needs to remain within a narrow range for optimal function. Prolonged exposure to cold can increase the risk of illnesses such as the common cold or flu.

Maintain a healthy diet

Consuming a well-balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean protein and whole grains will provide essential nutrients to support immune function. Probiotics from yoghurt or kefir are also great for helping to maintain a healthy gut microbiome, which plays a significant role in immune health.

Stay hydrated

It's important to drink plenty of water or sugar-free soft drinks, even in the autumn and winter, as good hydration also plays a role in keeping the immune system healthy.

Get some rest

Sleep is crucial for the production of antibodies, which in turn recognise and neutralise pathogens such as viruses and bacteria.

Avoiding flu

This can be difficult, especially as it can be passed on through sneezing, coughing and even hand contact, so it's really important you wash your hands regularly.



Making the most of your appointment at the Health Centre.

Your doctor has been joined by a host of different health professionals to make sure you get the support and treatment you need. GP practices have evolved. Nowadays there are not only more ways to get an appointment (honestly!), but also more health experts you may be able to see.

You might not always see a doctor first because new health and care staff have been introduced into GP surgeries. This ensures that people can be seen by the right professional first time. So, if it's appropriate, you may be offered an appointment with a physiotherapist, paramedic or nurse.

Or you may be advised to see someone outside of the surgery, such as a pharmacist or optician. Not only does this get you the help you need as quickly as possible, it also helps tackle the '8am rush' for an appointment and it frees GPs to concentrate on the complex and serious cases that really need their expertise.

Whichever way you contact the Practice; trained members of the reception team will ask you what you need help with. It's not because they're nosy – it's because they need to know who it's best to book you in with and **it's entirely confidential**. Once they know why you're requesting an appointment, they can determine who's the most suitable person for you to see. It's all done under the supervision and guidance of GPs, so if someone is unsure about your case, it will be passed on to a doctor or another senior clinician to assess. It's important people realise the team at both Practices just want to help. They are all there to help patients get the right care with the right professional as quickly as they can.

Making the most of your appointment at the Health Centre (cont)

When you do get an appointment with the GP (or whichever care professional you see) it's important to go prepared. Many people are understandably anxious and often forget to mention something that was troubling them until after they have left the consultation, which is frustrating for you and may not have provided the doctor/clinician with all the information s/he needs. So to make the best of your appointment we hope you will find the following suggestions helpful;

Plan ahead as people will often forget details of what is wrong with them which is simply due to "anxiety".

Preparation is not just useful for the doctor but it saves the patient time as well. It definitely helps to go with a clear idea of what they are going to say and have it written down as a check list.



Before your appointment:

- Write down your 2 or 3 most important questions.
- List or bring all your medicines and pills – including vitamins and supplements.
- Write down details of your symptoms, including when they started and what makes them better or worse.
- Ask your hospital or surgery for an interpreter or communication support if needed and/or ask a friend or family member to come with you, if you like.

During your appointment the questions you are likely to be asked may include ones such as:

- When did it start?
- What have you tried?
- Does anything make it better or worse?
- What are you most worried about?
- What do you hope the GP/Clinician can do for you?

Before you leave your appointment check:

- Do not be afraid to ask if you do not understand. For example: "Can you say that again? I still do not understand."
- If you do not understand any words, ask for them to be written down and explained.
- Write things down, or ask a family member or friend to take notes.
- You have covered everything on your list.
- You understand, for example: "Can I just check I understood what you said?"

And finally Ask:

- What happens next?
- Do I need to come back and see you? If so, when?
- Who do I contact if things get worse?
- Do you have any written information?
- Where can I go for more information?
- Is there a support group or any other source of help?
- Who to contact if you have any more problems or questions.

A pharmacist can also help you answer questions about medicines you have been prescribed.



We understand getting to the Health Centre can sometimes be a problem for some of our patients. Hopefully the following will be of help;

Getting to the Health Centre by bus

Buses to the Surgery: **X1** – 2 times per hour via Mill Street and Denchworth Road. Drops on same side as Surgery. Travels to Grove via Main Street.



S9 – 3 times per hour. Travels towards Grove via Grove Road. From Health Centre across airfield to Brereton Drive and centre of Grove.

Vale Community Impact – VCI Volunteer Transport Service

- We use volunteer drivers in their own cars.
- We can transport clients to local medical appointments.
- We can transport clients to the Oxford, Great Western and a number of other hospitals.
- Transport must be booked in advance.
- We cannot take booking requests for the following week after 4pm on the Thursday before.
- There is a charge for the transport, which is used to reimburse the drivers petrol costs.
- There is a range of fares but for example a local return trip from Wantage/Grove is £6.00 and a return trip to the Oxford hospitals is £28.00.

VCI also has an advice & good neighbour service if you need any help, advice or transport please contact Transport@vci.org.uk

Help@vci.org.uk www.vci.org.uk 01235 765348

Please also make contact if you have any spare time and would like to help others in your community, we have various volunteer roles available.



Health Checks Oxfordshire are running NHS Health Checks clinics in Wantage on Thursday 23 November. Even if you are feeling great a NHS Health Check can help spot early signs of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, diabetes or dementia.

Think of it as an MOT for your body. The aim of the check is to keep you as healthy as possible and reduce the chances of problems in the future. Find out if you're eligible and register for a community NHS Health Check: <https://www.healthchecksoxfordshire.org/>

Did you know Parents and carers across Oxfordshire have new online help for dealing with common childhood conditions. Designed by parents, GPs and paediatricians, the Healthier Together App provides clear, reliable advice from the NHS and is designed to be a handy guide, accessible at home or on the go. It offers an easy-to-use self-triage assessment for parents and carers when their child is unwell to ensure the most appropriate healthcare setting when it is needed. The **Oxfordshire Healthier Together** website provides parents with clear guidance on what action to take when their child is unwell.



www.oxfordshire-healthiertogether.nhs.uk

Watch this space Wantage Community Hospital update

(Whilst the Health Centre is not involved with any of this we thought you might be interested in the latest developments). You may be aware that since June of this year, Oxford Health Trust, Wantage Town Council Health Sub-Committee and the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) have been working together to prepare a proposal for the delivery of hospital-like services in the OX12 area using the Hospital as a base. There have recently been some workshops and a survey to gauge the views of a wider group of residents to these initial options which are;

- Clinic-based services for planned care appointments
- Community inpatient beds and alternatives when care in your own home isn't appropriate.
- Urgent care access needs on the same day. For minor injury, illness or mental health issues.

Since November 2021, a significant number and range of outpatient services have been piloted within Wantage Community Hospital to name just a few such as; *Ophthalmology, including intravitreal (eye) injections* *Audiology & Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT) *** Adult mental health *** psychological therapies *** Oxfordshire Talking Therapies *** Learning disabilities *** Diabetes screening *** Health visiting clinics including group sessions* **There will be no changes to maternity services which operate upstairs.**

And Finally as this will be the last newsletter before the New Year may we take this opportunity to wish you early Season's Greetings and hope that you were able to take advantage of a lie in when the clocks went back!

