



Woodbridge Practice  
Patient Participation Group  
*"Working together"*



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/woodbridgeppg/>

***Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our fellow  
patients from the PPG Members!***



## **Welcome to The Patient Participation Group's (PPG) Winter Newsletter 2023**

The Patient Group members would like to take this opportunity to wish patients and all The Practice staff a Merry Christmas and Happy Healthy New Year.

We held our quarterly meetings throughout the year with many issues discussed. There have also been changes in attendees, with some patients leaving and new ones joining us. We send our good wishes to those who have left for their time and contributions and give a warm welcome to new members.



We work together with The Practice to help promote and improve the services giving them the benefit of the patient experience, which we hope influences those improvements. It also gives us an insight into the challenges the Practice faces some of which are out of their control. We are not however a complaints forum nor able to take up issues for patients.

If you are interested in joining the Patient Participation Group (PPG), please complete the form online on the Practice website (scroll down on the home page to the picture of a PPG group) or email us at [woodbridgeppg@gmail.com](mailto:woodbridgeppg@gmail.com). Our next meeting is on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 10:00am at Thornaby.

Also if you would like us to pass on thanks or compliments to the Practice, please email us at: [woodbridgeppg@gmail.com](mailto:woodbridgeppg@gmail.com). The Practice itself does not have a generic contact email address.

## Car Parking at Ingleby Barwick Site



The new car parking charges at Ingleby Barwick surgery were implemented by the land owner, not The Practice, who have absolutely no control over it. Please remember to input your car details to avoid fines if you are staying on the site longer than 30 minutes, don't forget to do it even if you are popping in to the Phlebotomy Clinic. Electronic screens are in both locations to enable you to do this.

## Join Our Patient's Facebook Page



We have a busy FaceBook Page with lots of medical information, it also includes information on local services and events on health and well being as well as the occasional non medical post. All of which we hope you find interesting, give the post a like if you do, and see above for the link. If you want to post on the page it will be approved or otherwise by the page's admin team.

# Woodbridge Practice: Information on Appointments

The Practice in an average week across both Thornaby and Ingleby Sites offers many appointments with its various clinicians and we would like to thank those patients who attend and those who do cancel appointments they no longer need so they can be offered to other patients.

Month	Did Not Attend Appointments	Wasted Clinical Time in Hours
August 2023	129	39
September 2023	155	47
October 2023	164	49

Also, during usual opening hours, you can **cancel** appointments by phone from 8.00am although actual appointments cannot be made until 8.30am and later. If you booked online or on the NHS App (or whichever App you use), you should also be able to cancel it if you no longer need it. There have been some technical issues recently which we are reassured have been resolved.

Please see leaflets in Reception areas on how to get access to SystmOnline and e-consults. There is a system in place for access to records for children and cared for patients, please seek advice from the Receptionist.

Unfortunately there has been an increase in abuse towards staff which will not be tolerated by the Practice and they have advised that aggressive abusive behaviour may result in patients being removed from the Practice list.

**Why does the receptionist need to ask what's wrong with me?**

**It is not a case of the receptionists being nosy!**

The reception staff are members of the practice team and it has been agreed they should ask patients 'why they need to be seen'. Reception staff are trained to ask certain questions in order to ensure that you receive:

- the most appropriate medical care,
- from the most appropriate health professional,
- at the most appropriate time.

**Receptionists are asked to collect brief information from patients:**

1. To help doctors prioritise house visits and phone calls
2. To ensure that all patients receive the appropriate level of care
3. To direct patients to see the nurse or other health professional rather than a doctor where appropriate.

**Reception staff, like all members of the team, are bound by confidentiality rules**

- Any information given by you is treated **strictly confidentially**.
- The Practice would take any breach of confidentiality very seriously and deal with accordingly.
- You can ask to speak to a receptionist in private away from reception.
- However if you feel an issue is very private and do not wish to say what this is then this will be respected.

**Thank you for your support**

# Practice Opening Times - Including Christmas Holidays

## Practice Opening : Core times

**Monday - Friday: 8:00am (8:30am for appointments) to 6:00pm.**

**Evening and weekend appointments are also available**

**Weekends and Bank Holidays: Closed**

**E-Consultations on Practice Website 8:00am to 12 noon\***

\* (once the daily limit is reached this will be switched off until the next working day)



## Christmas & New Year Opening Hours:

Christmas holidays the Surgery will close at 6pm on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023 and re-open at 8:00am (8:30am for appointments) on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> December 2023

The surgery will close at 6pm on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and re-open on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 – closed Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 - New Year's Day

**Out of Hours medical issues ring 111 or go online [www.111.nhs.net](http://www.111.nhs.net)**

**In Emergencies ring 999**

**Please order repeat prescriptions in good time from The Practice  
and for collection from the Chemist**

**Also don't forget to stock up with over the counter medications**



## Pharmacy First News

The Department of Health and Social Care has just announced their plans to expand pharmacy services to make it quicker and easier to get treatment. Changes agreed with NHS England and pharmacies will:

- From December 2023 – initial oral contraception appointment and more blood pressure checks
- From February 2024 – treatment for sinusitis, sore throat, earache, infected insect bites, impetigo, shingles and uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

More information is available at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2023/11/pharmacy-reforms-to-bring-new-services-to-the-high-street/>



# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



## Could you do with someone to talk to?

Are you going through a tough time?

Come along and join us at one of our Walk & Talk groups, 1-1 Sessions are also available. It's completely free and you don't need to book, just show up on the day. Our volunteers have lived experience and use this to offer Peer Support and can offer a safe, non-judgemental space for you

- Sundays - 1pm Stewart Park (meet at the Car Park)
- Mondays - 2pm Billingham John Whitehead Park (meet outside the Cafe)
- Tuesdays - 1pm South Park Darlington (meet outside the Cafe)
- Tuesdays - 6.15pm Norton (meet outside Pondview Cafe)
- Wednesdays - 9.30am Preston Park (Museum Entrance)
- Thursdays - 10.30am Ropner Park (The Fountain)
- Fridays - 11am Stewart Park (meet at the Car Park)
- Saturdays - 10am Tees Barrage (meet at Whitewater Way Car Park)

If you're interested in finding out more send us an email or call on the number below

[www.redballoons.org.uk](http://www.redballoons.org.uk)  
[Kylie.redballoons@gmail.com](mailto:Kylie.redballoons@gmail.com)

## AndyManClub : #ITSOKTOTALK

At ANDYSMANCLUB they want to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health and create a judgement-free, confidential space where men can be open about the storms in their lives. They aim to achieve this through weekly, free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups for men aged over 18. They meet on a Monday (except bank holidays) night at 7pm and have a range of locations locally – Stockton, Middlesbrough and Hartlepool. Checkout their website for details. [Find your nearest group | Andy's Man Club \(andysmanclub.co.uk\)](#)

## Stockton's New Diagnostic Centre

Stockton Council has announced progress on the New Diagnostic Centre due to open in Summer 2024. A new NHS health hub offering rapid scans, tests and check is going ahead as a key part of the Stockton Waterfront development. The community diagnostic centre will be a one-stop shop offering tests to help speed up a diagnosis of health conditions.

The new state-of-the-art building will offer a range of diagnostic tests and will help create around 130 new roles.

Discussions are ongoing for the new NHS facility to meet the needs of North Tees and Hartlepool hospitals NHS Trust to move non-clinical and administration services to a town centre location are also taking place.

## Did you miss it?

Check out previous newsletters on the PPG section of the Practice website for full information:-

- **Council Tax Reductions for People with Severe mental impairment (things like dementia and Alzheimers) and/or Disabilities.** Please contact Stockton Council.
- **Not Just a GP Service – We have Social Prescribers**
- **Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) - [Save money with a prescription prepayment certificate \(PPC\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)**
- **HRT – save money on prescription charges by getting a Hormone Replace Therapy Prescription Prepayment Certificate (HRT PPC) – go to GOV.UK and type in HRT PPC**
- **Changes to the fit note (sick note) - From July 2022 the Department for Work and Pensions has updated the law for the fit note : [The fit note: guidance for patients and employees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)**
- **Great North Care Record - [Home - Great North Care Record](#)**
- **AAA: Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening (for men during the year they turn 65)**

## Stay well this winter

If you're worried about your health, don't delay, your NHS wants to see you – help us help you get the care you need this winter.

Winter conditions can be bad for our health, especially for people aged 65 or older, and people with long-term conditions such as heart or kidney disease, COPD (including emphysema and chronic bronchitis), asthma or diabetes.

Being cold can raise the risk of increased blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes.

The cold and damp weather, ice, snow and high winds can all aggravate any existing health problems, increase the risk of a fall, and make us more vulnerable to respiratory winter illnesses. But there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

### Keeping yourself and your home warm

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Age UK and UKHSA suggest heating your home to a temperature that is comfortable for you. This should be at least 18°C in the rooms that you regularly use such as your living room and bedroom. Low indoor temperatures can have a serious impact on your health, especially if you have medical conditions or are older.

With the rising cost of living, simple changes can help to keep you and your home warm now.

- Try to reduce draughts – you can fit draught excluders around doors cheaply.
- Keep your bedroom windows closed at night.
- Wear several layers of thinner clothing – this will keep you warmer than one thicker layer.
- Ensure you are eating enough and having hot drinks.

And remember to check that your heating and cooking appliances are safe. Contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to make sure they're operating properly. Visit [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) and [www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk](http://www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk) for more information.

# WHO SHOULD I SEE?

It's not always clear who the best person is to deal with your problem or requirement. This quick guide might help.

If you need further advice or clarification, please just ask for help at reception.

Health Care Assistant	Practice Nurse	Nurse Practitioner	Doctor
Hypertension Review Checks, Blood pressure	Chronic Disease Clinics: Asthma, COPD, Diabetes, Heart Disease, stroke / TIA, Hypertension	Minor illnesses: coughs, colds, sore throats, chest infections etc.	Complex, Multiple or On-going illnesses: inc breathing difficulties, severe headaches, vague symptoms, chest pain
Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Risk Assessments initial & Yearly	Mens Health	Minor Injuries: Falls, upper / lower limb injuries, Head Injuries, Lower limb injuries* (* depending on nurse)	Follow Up's from Initial Assessment with Nurse Practitioner
New Patient checks	Cardiovascular Disease Risk Assessments	Blood Pressure problems	Sick Notes
ECG (Heart Tracing)	Baby Clinics/ Vaccinations	Acute Asthma & COPD Problems	Onward Referrals to Specialist Teams
Flu, Pneumonia and Shingles Injections/ Vaccinations	Smears Tests & Swabs	Sexual Health Advice	Complex Contraception & Coil Fitting
Repeat Vitamin B12 Injections	Travel Vaccines	Skin Problems (eczema and rashes)	Pregnancy-Related Problems
Rheumatoid Arthritis Reviews	Contraception/ Pill	Water Infections / Cystitis Abdominal Pain	Breast Lumps
Smoking Cessation Advice Follow Up	Flu, Pneumonia & Shingles Injections/ Vaccinations	Basic Women's Health	Menopause
Dressings, Follow up Dressing including 4 Layer Bandaging	First time Vitamin B12 Injections	Acute Asthma & COPD Problems	Women's Health- Gynaecological Problems
Suture & Clip Removal	Dressings- First time & follow up	Ear & Eye Infections	Men's Health Concerns
Coil Fits with GP	4 Layer Bandaging	Acute Anxiety / Depression that cannot wait to see a GP	Medicals
Minor Operations with GP	Sexual Health Advice	Sick Notes (but then need to be signed by GP)	Complex Medication Reviews Anxiety & Depression
Lung Health Checks	Smoking Cessation Advice		
Breathing Test (Spirometry)	ECG (Heart Tracing)		
Well Person Checks	Ear Syringing		
Weight Management			