



## YOU SPOKE - WE LISTENED!!

Booking Appointments by  
Phone 7 days in advance and  
Introducing Text Reminders 😊

Dear Patient

You may be aware that the Patient Participation Group (PPG) recently conducted a survey of patients' views. Whilst the full results will be shared with you over the coming weeks, it was clear that there were some obvious frustrations concerning access to appointments by phone.

Like many surgeries in the UK, when telephoning the surgery for an appointment, we currently only offer 'book-on-the-day' appointments and, once those appointments have been filled, it is then necessary for you to phone again the following day (although you can 'book ahead' up to 2 weeks in advance using the Patient Access or NHS App services).

The results of the 2023 Patient Survey, however, suggest that we need to review and improve your access to appointments. From Monday 5th June, therefore, when telephoning the surgery, and if an appointment is available, you will be able to book consultation appointments (i.e. both face-to-face and telephone consultations) up to 7 days in advance.

Naturally, we will only have the same number of daily appointments available, which may result in fewer appointments being available to 'book-on-the-day' since some patients will have pre-booked in advance, but over time we anticipate that this will even out.

We also plan to send text reminders to you about your booked appointments. If your appointment is no longer necessary, then you can cancel, thereby freeing up an appointment for someone else. If we don't have an up-to-date mobile number for you, then please contact a member of the reception team so that we can update our records.

We ask for your patience as we roll out these new processes, but we hope these changes will benefit your patient experience.

Village Surgeries Group

# BRENDAN NYSS - FAREWELL TO TATTENHALL



After 6 years in the village, it's time to mark the retirement and departure of our much-loved Pharmacist, Brendan Nyss.

A 'day in the life' of a community pharmacist has changed beyond recognition, with a skills base which is now regularly used to help reduce and complement some of the pressures in NHS services. Brendan, is part of the 'Community Pharmacy Consultation Service' whereby the Surgeries refer patients to Brendan; signposting which is well established for minor ailments.

This member of the PPG spent some time with Brendan before he passes the baton to a new Pharmacist and I asked him to recall some of his most recent challenges as our established Pharmacist Manager.

For many of us, the Covid-19 pandemic and the rolling out of the initial booster programme is hopefully a fading memory of times past, but for Brendan and his team, it presented untold challenges and acute stress in reconciling the delivery of government initiatives as well as ensuring that patients continued to receive their daily medications and needs. Without doubt, Brendan became one of THE crucial front-line healthcare workers in the village. The long hours, the excessive workload, the increased administrative tasks and the implementation of safety measures to keep us all safe, became the daily norm. For an entire year, Brendan supported the Covid roll-out programme, managing queue flows, installing and monitoring Covid fridge capacity, preparing the vaccine (including dilution where required), using techniques to ensure safety requirements in syringe use and always against strict time constraints; once removed from the Covid fridge, vials had a short shelf life. And all of this, before a single vaccine was administered and all before regular Pharmacy work could take place (often after 5pm)!

That Brendan and his team were fragile and overworked at that time is an understatement – it has made me question whether any of us fully appreciated the pressures involved in working at our local Pharmacy during the pandemic.

New challenges continue to emerge, not least the ongoing shortages and disruptions in the supply chain post-Brexit and because of the conflict in Ukraine. Over-the-counter products such as cold and flu medications as well as eye drops for conjunctivitis continue to be in short supply. I'm sure everyone also remembers recent press coverage regarding shortages of HRT products and during which Brendan recalls (with mild amusement) how one patient literally chased him down the High Street in the hope of obtaining some HRT treatments.

Ever youthful, Brendan is looking forward to an improved life-work balance though he will miss the tremendous support of his team, namely, 'Helen, Nikki and Hattie'; his dedicated driver 'Kevin' and other drivers who have served him so well with prescription deliveries to patients, and, of course, his daily conversations with the staff at the VSG Practice – all trying to provide a seamless service for the community. He is also mindful that the community which he has served have been wonderfully supportive and respectful and that intolerance relates to but a few!

Brendan would like to particularly thank the Medicines Manager, Louise, and the Meds Management Team at the Surgery, for enduring his daily telephone calls with such patience and forbearance and for working so efficiently with him.

He would also like to extend his thanks to everyone at the Village Surgeries Group. He is clear that together they have forged a very special relationship over the years and to the benefit of the patients.

Did you know .... Brendan is actually incredibly versatile .... He intends to ....

- Improve his golf handicap
- Find time to reacquaint with his passions of the guitar and saxophone. He shared a wonderful anecdotal comment. Whilst studying for Pharmacy in Liverpool, Brendan played in Widnes at what he fondly labelled 'The Holy Family Club, Las Vegas'. A young 'lad' joined the group at one session and Brendan commented that he had real talent and encouraged him to continue – and who was that youngster – Gary Barlow no less, of 'TAKE THAT'
- Resume some flying – yes, Brendan has flown Cessnas and other light aircraft
- Spend some time at Porthmadog – he has an offshore power boat licence too!

You may still see Brendan on occasional Saturdays at the Well Pharmacy since he wishes to help out and to maintain some presence. He has also been instrumental in recruiting his replacement; a pharmacist from the recently closed Lloyds Pharmacy in Sainsbury's and who lives locally. That Brendan will miss the wonderful people of Tattenhall is not in doubt and he intends to continue to stay in contact on a regular basis.



Brendan – we thank you for your ready smile and unwavering commitment - we shall miss you greatly - we wish you well in all that is ahead.

*Terri Hull, PPG Secretary.*



**Do you have your medication delivered in blister pack form?**

You can take your EMPTY packaging to Waverton or Tattenhall Pharmacies as they are involved with a recycling scheme for this.

*(Blister packs are unsuitable for recycling in normal household waste)*

The Sexual Health Hub provides free and confidential sexual health services in Cheshire West and Chester. Their services include providing free information and advice on all types of contraception and STI testing and treatment. The service is confidential, non-judgemental and for people of all ages, genders and orientations

Everyone is welcome and you don't need to see a GP first.

You can book an appointment online 24/7 or call them



**Call 0300 247 0020**

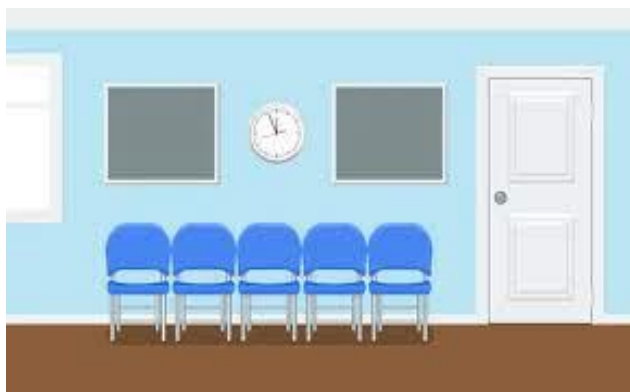
Monday - Thursday 9am- 5pm, Friday 9am-3:30pm & Saturday 9am-12:30pm

### Self Referral Vasectomy Clinic

A vasectomy is a popular method of family planning chosen by millions of men worldwide. It's safe, effective and offers a permanent solution to your contraceptive needs. The procedure takes about 15 minutes, and is one of the most effective methods that exists. To access our vasectomy services, patients need to self-refer by calling 0300 247 0020 to book an appointment where we offer a full vasectomy service including: Consultation (pre-operative assessment) either by phone or face-to-face, including advice on possible complications, aftercare and Post Vasectomy Semen Analysis (PVSA).

- Counselling by telephone
- Vasectomy procedure
- PVSA testing

<https://www.thesexualhealthhub.co.uk/services-near-you/cheshire-west-and-chester/>



Why did the doctor keep me waiting for my appointment when I was the only person in the waiting room?

Telephone consultations are still taking place as some patients prefer this convenience.

The GP will be on these calls and, unfortunately, circumstances might mean that our clinicians can run late; we appreciate your understanding when this happens.



**NHS**

## Find healthier swaps with Food Scanner

Download the free **NHS Food Scanner App** and scan, swipe, swap healthier choices for your family.

**Better Health** Let's do this

## Introducing our new Dementia Practitioner - Rachel Molony



My name is Rachel and I've recently started working as a Dementia Specialist Nurse alongside Stephanie Brown-Stewart for the Rural Alliance PCN, covering Farndon, Tattenhall, Bunbury and Malpas. Prior to this I have worked in both community and in-patient roles – working with both adults and older adults with functional and organic mental health issues. My area of special interest is Dementia and I am very passionate about improving the lives of older people with memory problems, and the lives of their carers. This is a new role that has scope for development which I am excited about; I have recently started offering cognitive assessments to people in their local surgery, which lessens the need for a referral to a memory clinic which can take several months.

I will also be completing the annual dementia reviews so there is more consistency, and I am really getting to know lots of my lovely patients on a deeper level. I am so passionate about my job and ensuring the best outcomes for my patients, and really do love being a nurse – I couldn't be anything else! In my spare time I enjoy going on adventures with my son Frankie, partner Jamie and our two dogs Winnie and Wilson.

## SUNSCREEN AND SUN SAFETY



Advice for adults and children on sunscreen and sun safety in the UK and abroad. Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy.

There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects. Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.



### How to enjoy the sun safely



#### Find shade

Take a break under trees, umbrellas or head indoors



#### Cover up

Wear a loose, long-sleeved top with a hat and sunglasses



#### Use sunscreen

On bits that aren't covered up. Use plenty with at least SPF 15 and a 4 or 5 star rating



Take extra care to protect babies and children and use at least factor 30 sunscreen. Their skin is much more sensitive than adult skin, and damage caused by repeated exposure to sunlight could lead to skin cancer developing in later life.

Children aged under 6 months should be kept out of direct sunlight.

Together we will beat cancer



## Are your contact details up to date??

Please ensure that if you have recently changed your mobile number, email address, or moved house, then you update the surgery so that they can always get in touch.

You also need to update any hospital you attend.



# HEALTHBOX

COMMUNITY WELLBEING SERVICES

Monday Chair Based Yoga Malpas

Tuesday Talking Tables Kelsall Wellbeing Hub

Healthbox Healthy Hearts Tattenhall

Wednesday Wellbeing Walk & Brain Yoga Tattenhall

Thursday Chatty Café Tarporley

Friday Brain Yoga Kelsall

Please contact reception for more information regarding attending these group activities!

## Update from Claire Lockerbie our Healthbox Social Prescriber.

Please join us for our Wellbeing Walk on Wednesdays - meet at the park in Tattenhall at 10.15ish. This is a gentle stroll and really accommodates all abilities (even if you want to come for a short slow loop around the park).

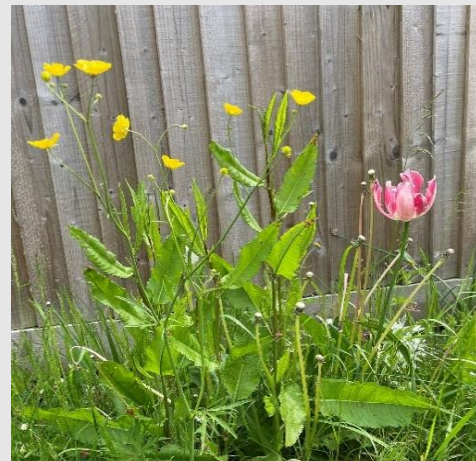
Everyone's friendly and some of the participants head to Alison's for coffee afterwards.

## Wildflower Project Tattenhall Surgery

Our spring flowers have bloomed and as we head into the summer months we do ask you to take a moment to sit on our 'Happy To Chat' Bench.

This is an ongoing project and we kindly ask pet-owners to keep their pets off the planted area as it matures.

Thank you for your understanding! 😊



**NHS**

“I just kept it all inside”

**NHS Talking Therapies can help**

Mental health matters  
Help us help you

## NHS Talking Therapies

NHS Talking Therapies - Talking Therapies, or psychological therapies, are effective and confidential treatments delivered by fully trained and accredited NHS practitioners. They can help with common mental health problems like stress, anxiety and depression.

You can access Talking Therapies for free on the NHS. You can refer yourself directly to an NHS Talking Therapies service without a referral from a GP, or a GP can refer you. Help is available in person, by video, over the phone or as an online course.

Search 'NHS Talking Therapies' online for more information.

*Please email [vsg.ppg@nhs.net](mailto:vsg.ppg@nhs.net) for more information about becoming involved with the VSG Patient Participation Group.*

*Meeting Dates from 6.30pm*

*Tuesday 13 June - Tattenhall, The Vault, St Alban's Church*

*Tuesday 11 July - Zoom*

*August no meeting (summer holidays)*

