



VSG PPG



Village Surgeries Patient Participation Group
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TATTENHALL & FARNDON NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2020 ISSUE 11 - email – vsg.ppg@nhs.net



On behalf of the VSG the PPG would like to say a big thank you to all patients for their forbearance during the rapidly changing times of Covid-19.

The move to change the way appointments were handled was swift and enabled both staff and patients to be protected. The Surgeries have never been closed but the way that patients accessed the buildings and medical staff needed to be rolled out quickly.

On the whole it has proved a great success with many more patients using the digital platform, Patient Access, and accepting telephone and video triage as the new way to seek medical help. The way forward has yet to be decided but undoubtedly there will be changes in the future throughout the country and your PPG will work hard to ensure new systems work for you.

Another huge thank you must go to our local pharmacies, in particular, Graham and staff at The Pharmacy in Farndon, Brendan and his staff in Tattenhall and Tanveer and his staff in Waverton.

Their workload has increased dramatically and they, along with community volunteers, have worked incredibly hard to keep us safe, organise deliveries to those shielding as well as offering advice to us all. You are much appreciated.

PPG Meeting July 2020

In September 2017 we saw the formation of the VSG PPG - a group of patients working as a 'critical friend' to The Village Surgeries Group. Over time we have worked closely with the practice to facilitate new ideas, work on systems and, as patients, provide the surgery with the ability to "see things through a different set of eyes".



We have a core committee who meet monthly, but during lockdown these sessions have taken place via Zoom. We feel that with the current climate we have huge potential to bring together a wider 'virtual' Patient Participation Group who could meet four times a year to share thoughts and ideas and keep updated on developments within the two surgeries.

Maybe you are new to the village, have always lived in the village (or just love your village!), are a parent, retired, or work full time. Would you be passionate about becoming a PPG member for your Doctors? Working together we have become a powerful voice so your commitment would be valuable.



Our next Zoom PPG session is taking place on Tuesday 21st July at 6.30pm. We realise you may still be juggling things with life then but if you would be interested in receiving the link to join and listen in to find out a little bit more about what we do, please email vsg.ppg@nhs.net for more information.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please keep safe.

VSG PPG

JOIN US ON  zoom

Telephone triage appointments with our GPs and Nurses

To maintain the safety of our patients and staff with the current Covid-19 ongoing situation all appointments made are initially by telephone, it is then a decision taken by the clinician if they feel that they need to see you 'face to face'.



The surgery also has the facility to send text messages for the patient to respond with a photograph if the concern is relating to rashes, lumps, bumps, wounds etc. When calling the patient will be given an idea of the time that the call may take place allowing flexibility if the clinician is running early/late. Sadly the VSG have reported an increase in calls from patients to say that they have missed the call. Clinicians make a couple of attempts to the numbers provided when a patient has booked an appointment but this is a time-consuming and frustrating situation for them to experience.

These are new and unsettling times but the VSG ask that if you book an appointment you keep your phone with you at all times and, if it is a mobile, ensure you have a good signal. The VSG have updated the telephone system so that the phone number is displayed when calling to help alleviate any withheld number/call blocking situations people may have.

It is a requirement that a reason for your appointment is given; this is in your interest and ensures the appropriate clinician appointment is booked e.g. GP, Nurse Practitioner, Health Care Assistant, Physio etc. or it may be that a call to 111 or even 999 is more appropriate. Please understand this request is about taking care of you in the best way and is not meant as an intrusion of your privacy. All reception staff are bound by the same confidentiality clauses that bind the clinicians.

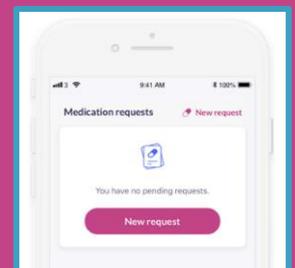


Please also be aware that if you do attend the surgery for a face to face appointment you will be obliged to wear a mask, either one of your own or the clinician you are seeing will provide one when they collect you.

Can we also please ask that on your arrival at the surgeries you telephone from your car and wait to be collected. This avoids any unnecessary contact and also keeps you dry if we are experiencing poor weather.

Prescriptions

Do you order your repeat medication on line? If you do you then thank you, this process means that you are being efficient and effective with your time and also helping the surgeries. Ordering this way means that the Doctor can sign your request quicker than by a paper request and it is then sent electronically to a Pharmacy of your choice in England.



Dr Siddorn has asked that when making requests via your paper slips you only submit them when you are a few days from running out. Requests that are weeks away from re-issue are not able to be authorised. You do not need to be concerned that you will run out, prescriptions are inputted daily and if ordered correctly your items will be available.

Unfortunately an early request may cause you, as the patient, more of an issue as you may be expecting your medication and make an unnecessary trip to the Pharmacy to find that it is not there.

every mind matters

Taking care of your mind as well as your body is really important during these difficult and uncertain times.

You may feel bored, frustrated or lonely. You may also be low, worried or anxious, or concerned about your finances, your health or those close to you. It's important to remember that it's OK to feel this way and that everyone reacts differently. Remember, for most of us, these feelings will pass.

Stay connected with others

Maintaining healthy relationships with people you trust is important for your mental wellbeing. Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family. If you or they need to stay at home contact them by phone, messaging, video calls or social media. This way you can stay in touch whether it's people you usually see often, or reconnecting with old friends.



Talk about your worries



It's normal to feel a bit worried, scared or helpless about the current situation. Remember, it is OK to share your concerns with others you trust and doing so may help them too. If you cannot speak to someone you know or if doing so has not helped, there are plenty of helplines you can try instead.

Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

Look after your body

Our physical health has a big impact on how we feel. At times like these it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns of behaviour that end up making you feel worse. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink enough water and exercise regularly. Avoid smoking or drugs and try not to drink too much alcohol. Going for a walk, run or bike ride is a great way to lift your mood and clear your head, just make sure you stay at least 2 metres apart from others.



Stay on top of difficult feelings



Concern about the coronavirus outbreak is perfectly normal. However, some people may experience intense anxiety that can affect their day-to-day life. Try to focus on the things you can control, such as how you act, who you speak to and where you get information from. It's fine to acknowledge that some things are outside of your control, but if constant thoughts about the situation are making you feel anxious or overwhelmed, find some [ideas online to help manage your anxiety](#) or try listening to an [audio guide](#).

Think about your new daily routine

Life has been changing for a while and it's likely your normal routine has been disrupted. Think about how you can adapt and create positive new routines and set yourself goals. You might find it helpful to write a plan for your day or your week. If you're working from home, try to get up and get ready in the same way as normal, keep to the same hours you would normally work and stick to the same sleeping schedule. You could set a new time for a daily home workout and pick a regular time to clean, read, watch a TV programme or film, or cook.



Dr Siddorn and colleagues would like to ask for your help and understanding

In this current climate and as rural practices we want to prioritise our elderly patients. If you require an urgent blood test you may be asked to attend the Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH) for the test. We will ask you to collect a form to take with you from the nearest surgery to you and then you can access the COCH Blood test booking facility online service and organise an appointment that is convenient to you. On average they have 150 weekly appointments available. This will help hugely with the pressure at the surgeries and will ensure we can allocate appointments for those more frail and elderly who need the local facilities for their convenience.

We hope you will be supportive of this; so far those we have asked to use this service have been really obliging, so thank you for your understanding.

Please visit <https://www.coch.nhs.uk/blood-test-booking>



CORONAVIRUS **STAY ALERT TO** **THE SYMPTOMS**

**HIGH TEMPERATURE OR
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**

Find out how to get a test, and how long to isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus



AT HOME SHOULDN'T MEAN AT RISK OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

If you are controlled or physically, sexually, economically or emotionally abused by a partner, ex-partner or family member, this is domestic abuse. Household isolation rules do not apply.

#YOUARENOTALONE



IRIS

**IDENTIFICATION AND
REFERRAL TO
IMPROVE SAFETY**

Domestic Abuse Aware Practice

If you are being hurt or controlled by your current or ex-partner, are afraid of someone at home or a member of your family, you can talk to doctors, nurses and other staff working here, in private.

FOR SUPPORT CALL
Cheshire West and Chester
Domestic Abuse services
ON
0300 1237047 opt2
AND ASK FOR
THE IRIS WORKER

IF YOU ARE A WOMAN YOU CAN CALL
**THE 24 HOUR NATIONAL DOMESTIC
ABUSE HELPLINE ON 0808 2000 247**

IF YOU ARE A MAN YOU CAN CALL THE
MEN'S ADVICE LINE ON 0808 8010 327

IF YOU HAVE BEEN VIOLENT OR ARE
WORRIED ABOUT YOUR BEHAVIOUR,
CALL **RESPECT ON 0808 802 4040**