



WITTERINGS MEDICAL CENTRE
PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP



Christmas 2023 Newsletter

,Merry Christmas!

The decorations are going up, the tree in East Wittering is sparkling and it's definitely feeling a lot like Christmas.

You will all be rushing around so I'll just include important updates in the newsletter : Information about Surgery opening times, a reminder to order Prescriptions early, an update from Dr Tim Crane, and some news about changes in the NHS and at the Surgery.

Christmas is special but it can be the best of times or the worst of times, depending on your circumstances. If you, or anybody you know, might struggle this Christmas then please head to the Medical Centre and check out PIC. It's right in front of you when you enter and we are so lucky to have it. The volunteers who staff our PIC are amazing, thank you to all of them. It is by far the best Patient Information Centre of any surgery in the Chichester area and at Christmas PIC is full of information about Christmas services and support groups so please, don't struggle alone. Head into PIC and get all the help you deserve and they can offer.

It's been a torrid year for the NHS and this winter is looking especially challenging. In a recent survey, West Sussex has the longest Hospital Waiting Lists in the Country - not good if you are waiting to hear about a referral the



Worried about your housing or financial situation?

Needing practical or emotional support?

Feeling lonely or isolated?

Seeking employment or training opportunities?

Wanting to make some lifestyles changes?

If the answer is YES to any of the above, then why not consider speaking to a member of our friendly Chichester Social Prescribing team. You can be referred into our service by your GP, or through our online self-referral form www.chichester.gov.uk/socialprescribing. If you require any support in completing your self-referral, please contact the Chichester Wellbeing team on 01243 521041 or email socialprescribers@chichester.gov.uk



What is Social Prescribing?

It is an opportunity for you to talk through some of the non-medical issues in your life, which may be having a negative impact on your health and wellbeing. During your appointments, you can discuss ways to improve how you feel and explore opportunities for you to connect to the practical and emotional support available in your community.



Who do we work with?

We can currently support anyone over the age of 16, who is registered with a GP practice in the Chichester District (including Pulborough Medical Group). Our team are experienced in finding support for people in the following areas:

- Social isolation
- Housing issues
- Money, debt or benefits
- Carers support
- Lifestyle
- Employment, volunteering & training

Whatever your challenge, we're here to talk it through and enable you to make a plan.

'We connect you to the journey, not the journey to you'.



Wellness!!!! Surprise, surprise! It's time to take more responsibility for our own 'wellness and health' !!

I'm tired of hearing my own voice banging on about this but I'm delighted to say that your

Community Mental Health Liaison Service (CAMHS) -

0300 304 0304

ENT St Richard's Hospital - 01243 831548

ENT QA Hospital - 02392 286000 ext.4045

Radiology - 01243 788122 ext 31781

Referral Enquiries Email address: uhsussex.outpatientappointments@nhs.net



Since the 1st November this year, if you have signed up for access to your medical records you will be able to see them in full, not just summaries. The NHS app is the preferred route so, if you can, it's a good idea to upload the app and get started. To be clear, there aren't thousands of people inputting all the paper data records for everybody going back to their birthI think that was tried, wasted £££££££ and was dumped? But, going forward, you will be able to access your detailed health records which is very much in line with the way forward as we all take more personal responsibility for our health.

Welcoming Claudia Cavanagh to our surgery

Claudia is an enormously welcome addition to our community and Medical Centre as she works within those areas that directly affect health and wellbeing - but aren't viruses or bugs. Supporting Mental Health, people with Financial difficulties, housing needs, loneliness, lifestyle changes and much more. The things that make us ill but can't be treated with a pill. **Claudia is in the Medical Centre every Thursday** and she has already made a big impact since she joined. Don't struggle in silence, sit with Claudia and I'm sure she can help.

Surgery Opening Times Christmas 2023

The Surgery will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years day.
Otherwise, open as usual.



FINAL DATE FOR CHRISTMAS PRESCRIPTIONS

There are 2 Bank Holidays over Christmas so please make sure you get your **Prescription requests** in promptly. **Prescriptions take 5-8 days to fulfil.** Starting from 1st January 2024, The Repeat Prescription Service on the Medical Centre website will no longer be available - but don't worry! You can still request your medication online using either SystmOnline or the NHS App. To get started with SystmOnline you will need login details. Please contact the Reception team at the surgery via phone or email and they will get you up and running.

reception.witterings@nhs.net

01243 671833

Hospital Referrals

The Medical Centre team are working very hard to improve the availability of appointments and to direct patients to the right medical professional. I've already drawn attention to the fact that hospital waiting lists in West Sussex are the highest in the UK - this is obviously causing distressbut our doctors can't do anything to speed things up and booking appointments at the Medical Centre to chase referral updates just clogs up the available appointments. Don't chase the Medical Centre - chase our MP!

gillian.keegan.mp@parliament.uk

PLEASE NOTE: Once a GP has referred a patient, the Medical Centre is not informed of their hospital appointment date/time. Therefore, please do not contact the Medical Centre to discuss your hospital appointment. If you have a query regarding a hospital referral appointment, please contact the relevant numbers below.

Referral Support Team Chichester – 01903 708670
(11-4pm)

QA Hospital, Portsmouth Outpatient Booking Team –
02392 681700

Western Sussex Hospitals Outpatient Booking Team (SRH, Worthing Hospitals,
Southlands) – 01273 446067
Cancer Referrals (2 week rule) –
01903 205111 ext. 85613

Medical Centre has made on your behalf. I'm enclosing a list of phone numbers so you can chase up your own hospital appointment. Once your GP has referred you it's out of their hands and they can't speed things up for you so please don't clog up their appointment book with 'chase my referral' requests. Do it yourself, you are going to have to get used to this!

GP's are in short supply nationally so we are very lucky to have a good quota, brilliantly supported by a team of Medical Specialists. When you book an appointment you will be asked a few questions so that you get to see the right person - GP, Nurse, Physiotherapist, Pharmacist, Paramedicthe days of 'GP does it all' are long gone so let's embrace the full team we have and trust the Receptionists to guide us to the right professional.

If you are eligible, Covid and Flu jabs are still available so check the NHS App, lots of Covid about and you don't want that over Christmas.

Our Medical Centre Website is excellent, and full of helpful information - my first port of call with anything 'Medical' and I know you would all find it incredibly useful, so please check it out before reaching for the phone

witteringsmedicalcentre.co.uk

Finally, I'm sad to say a very fond 'Farewell' to the lovely Becky Grace who is leaving her job as our Practice Manager and returning to her beloved role within Hospice care. Becky has been a real trooper, helping our Medical Centre - and us all - navigate our way through the somewhat chaotic NHS situation. Thank you Becky, from us all. You have been great and we will miss you.

Stay healthy, enjoy your friends and family and on behalf of the PPG I wish you a very Merry Christmas.

Lesley Mair

Chair, WMCPPG



A message from our Senior Partner, Dr Tim Crane

Dear Everyone

As Christmas 2023 approaches and we begin to face the new year of 2024, once again I think we are all commenting on how time flies and saying "where has the year gone....?".

This year has been challenging for you as patients and us as a practice for various reasons; some problems are within our control and all our staff really do work very hard to do what they can to help; unfortunately, many issues and problems are well beyond our control and are symptomatic of the challenging state of the local and national NHS as a whole. For those patients who are reasonable and understanding given the difficulties we all face within the NHS presently, we are most grateful!

As a practice, we have recently had new "Care Coordinators" start work who you will get to know over the next few months – we really hope they will improve our efficiency and the care we can provide for you all. There are further changes within staffing at the practice which will emerge in early 2024 – we will keep you posted!

As the holiday season approaches, and with the associated bank holidays in mind, please think about matters such as your medication and plan ahead with requests to avoid last minute panics. Please may I also ask that you are kind to and reasonable with all our staff – they are all working tirelessly for your benefit.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy and Healthy New Year!

Medical Centre and PPG are doing their utmost to help you navigate the changes within the NHS so please add a DIARY DATE to your calendar.

Saturday 2nd March 2024 10am-2pm

The Medical Centre will be hosting a 'Wellness Day'.

There will be cakes, tea and coffee, time to chat and a host of 'wellness' opportunities to discover:

Fitness classes, Diabetes support, Smoking, Cervical Screening, Blood Pressure, Heart, Prostate, Physiotherapy, Fire Brigade, Age Concern, Alzheimers Society, Carers Support, Chichester Wellbeing, Vaping support, Dementia supportthe list keeps growing and we hope to cover most of the conditions/concerns that affect the patients in the surgery.

It will be a brilliant opportunity to discover all the help that is available - and I may ask you to bake a cake! So please pop the date in your 2024 diary and I hope to see you there.

Lesley x

Witterings Medical Centre Patient Participation Group · Witterings Medical Centre, Cakeham Road · East Wittering · Chichester, West Sussex PO20 8BH · United Kingdom
contact@wittppg.co.uk

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Witterings Medical Centre Patient Participation Group · Witterings Medical Centre, Cakeham Road · East Wittering · Chichester, West Sussex
PO20 8BH · United Kingdom