

Newsletter

August 2022



Hello to you, our patients and welcome to our August newsletter.

GP Patient Survey 2022

The GP Patient Survey assesses patients' experience of healthcare services provided by GP practices, including experience of access, making appointments, the quality of care received from healthcare professionals, patient health and experience of NHS services when their GP practice was closed. The survey also includes a number of questions assessing patients' experience of NHS dental services.

The results of the survey are published by Ipsos on behalf of NHS England on the [Patient Experience \(gp-patient.co.uk\)](http://gp-patient.co.uk)

Comparing this years results against previous years, we thought it might be helpful to share the following information with you so that you are aware of all the changes we are working on to improve our service to all our patients.

In response to patients finding it difficult to get through to us on the telephone, we have implemented a new telephony system and although there have been initial operational issues, it is anticipated that this system will improve your experience and manage your expectations by stating your position in the queue.

In August we will be moving our GP appointments back to timed face-to face appointments with the option of that appointment being changed to telephone if a patient wishes. The appointments available are a mixture of prebookable and on the day appointments. It is worth noting that we are consulting with a higher number of patients than we ever did before the pandemic.

In regards to booking appointments online, we have as many of you are aware had a new website and this allows patients access to booking an appointment.

We have listened to our patients regarding how helpful they find our receptionists and as a result both our reception supervisors are now more on hand to assist with any questions that our reception team cannot answer.

With response to supporting our patient population we have expanded our staff pool to include health and wellbeing coaches, physiotherapists, pharmacists, advanced nurse practitioners and a home visiting service which supports all our housebound patients. This wider staff pool is highly skilled and can deal with a variety of medical problems. Many of these professions bring additional



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skills to primary care, with an eye for detail in their area of expertise that enhances the care offered to our patients.

Some patients have particularly complex needs due to psychological trauma, mental health issues, chronic pain, drug addiction, refugee status and nearing the end of life with frailty or terminal illness. Patients in these groups need additional input and continuity. To help meet the needs of these patients, we have dedicated practice teams that are able to offer a consistent approach with extended appointments.

Mask Wearing

The surgery has taken the decision to revert back to mask wearing. We ask that you wear a face covering whilst you are in our buildings.

Repeat Prescriptions

A GP must authorise every repeat prescription. This takes **2 FULL working days**.

Please note, at busy times, it may take a little longer.

We are closed on public holidays and weekends. Any prescription requests received during these times will be available for collection 2 days **after** the next working day.

See guide below:

Day request received	Day your [prescription / medication] is ready
Monday	Thursday
Tuesday	Friday
Wednesday	Monday
Thursday	Tuesday
Friday	Wednesday
Saturday	Wednesday
Sunday	Wednesday

Please either ring our dedicated Medicines Order Line on 01246 588860 or 0115 8550260 or alternatively you can download the NHS App – ask a member of staff for details.



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World Breastfeeding Week (1st to 7th August)

There are many benefits of breastfeeding, for both mother and baby, including reduced risks of various illnesses and diseases. In some cases, these benefits continue throughout life.

If you are breastfeeding and finding it challenging, there are plenty of options to find support.

World Breastfeeding Week 2022 is focused on promoting the warm chain of support for breastfeeding. Examining various roles, the warm chain demonstrates how each of us can affect the outcomes for mothers and infants in the first 1000 days of life.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/breastfeeding/benefits/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/breastfeeding-and-bottle-feeding/breastfeeding/help-and-support/>

<https://waba.org.my/warm-chain/>

Playday (3rd August)

The theme for this year's Playday is based around ensuring that all children have opportunities to play. It emphasises the importance of play for children's well being and mental health, and how it helps them to develop skills for later life.

It can be challenging to keep children entertained during the summer holidays, especially if you're on a budget. We've a host of ideas to keep your children occupied and learning without breaking the bank.

<https://www.playday.org.uk>

<https://activelittles.com/best-home-kids-activities-on-a-budget/>

Cycle to Work Day (4th August)

With huge benefits for the environment, and for your own individual health, it's worth considering whether you could commute by bike. Cycling should reduce the amount of time you spend queueing in traffic, and with changes to the Highway Code introduced this year, cycling safety is now very clearly a priority. <https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/cycletoworkday>

National Allotments Week (8th to 14th August)

It's National Allotments Week, and the theme this year is focused on counting bugs. Bugs, minibeasts or creepy crawlies are really important for a diverse environment. Spending time spotting a variety of bugs can be a mindful and relaxing activity. <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news-events-campaigns/national-allotments-week/>



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International Youth Day (12th August)

International Youth Day this year promotes the idea of intergenerational solidarity. Ageism presents in many forms and across the generations we can support each other to understand the difficulties faced by others of varying ages. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/iyd2022.html>

Children's eye health and safety

From birth to 18 (while in full time education), the NHS provides free eye tests to ensure that any issues are picked up quickly and treated appropriately.

You should take your child for an eye test if you have any concerns about their eyesight, for example if you notice squinting, frequent headaches or screwing their eyes up while watching TV.

<https://lookafteryoureyes.org/eye-care/childrens-eye-health/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/eye-tests-in-children/>

Hot weather advice

If you're outside with children, do you know how to make sure they are well-protected from the sun? Stay indoors during the middle of the day, ensure a good-quality high factor sun cream is applied regularly throughout the day, and keep skin covered by loose fitting clothing where possible.

For many of us, sun protection was only for holidays overseas when we were younger. As research has improved, so too has our understanding of the impact that sun damage can have on our long term health. This NHS page provides a wealth of information about sunscreen and sun safety. Do you know how much suncream you need to apply to make sure you have the level of protection stated on the bottle? Most people aren't applying enough sunscreen to have fully effective protection.

With 2022 having seen record temperatures for most areas of the UK, we need to think carefully about how to manage in a heatwave. Temperatures as high as we saw in the UK this year can result in serious problems, even among those who are normally fit and healthy.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/how-be-sun-safe>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>



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<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>

Stress in children

Children are reporting increased levels of stress and anxiety. The Children's Society has an informative page about managing stress with some useful links, including a booklet on managing stress written by young people to help others feeling under pressure from stress.

Young Minds offers help and support for young people who are struggling with their mental health, and also offers support tailored to their families.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/information/young-people/well-being/resources/stress>

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Accident prevention

In the UK over 6000 deaths per year occur within the home. More accidents occur in the living/sitting room than anywhere else in the house, and falls are the most common accidents.

We all like to feel safe at home, but feeling safe can lead to complacency about the dangers we may be exposed to in our own home. Every once in a while, think about the risks your home presents to you and others and spend a little time ensuring you've done what you can to minimise the risks.

<https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/general/facts-and-figures>

<https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/general/home-garden-safety-checklists>

Healthy eating and getting active

As families we can do a lot to look after the health of ourselves and our loved ones. Making simple food swaps and exercise choices can make a big difference over a lifetime.

If you know you could do with losing a few pounds, but find it difficult to do so, there are a few tips you can use to help you towards your goal. Firstly, moving more, simply increasing your exercise level, means you'll burn more calories.

If you're looking for ways to become more active, you could look at Couch to 5k, or Active 10: both easy ways to increase your activity levels.

Secondly, you might want to look at your portion sizes. It's easy to overestimate how much a portion is for some foods.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/>



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<https://blog.fitbit.com/healthy-servings-a-visual-guide-to-portion-sizes/> <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/>

Travelling abroad

If you're travelling abroad, you should ensure you have adequate travel insurance should the worst happen. Don't wait until you travel, you should buy insurance at the same time you book your trip to ensure you are covered.

If you're travelling in Europe, you'd be wise to organise a GHIC card. The card allows for lower cost access to some European healthcare. It won't replace your travel insurance, but your insurer may expect you to use it before you claim.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>

<https://www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card>

Vitamin D supplements

As we learn more about the need to protect our skin from the sun, it becomes more difficult to ensure we get enough vitamin D. Our bodies produce vitamin D when they are exposed to sunlight. Protecting our skin from sun damage and reducing the risk of skin cancer must be prioritised over getting enough sunlight exposure to produce vitamin D. Therefore, it may be necessary to look for a suitable vitamin D supplement. Most at risk of vitamin D deficiency are babies and children aged 4 and under, those who are pregnant and anyone who does not spend much time outdoors. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vitamins-and-minerals/vitamin-d/>

Back to work blues

Returning to the office after a summer break often comes with a feeling of "the blues". This might be because work is stressful, but also because we're facing the longest time until we're likely to get another break. So, how might we deal with the "back to work blues"? <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2012/sep/03/beat-back-to-work-blues>

If you've had a relaxing summer break, how can you keep that relaxed feeling going for a bit longer to boost your overall wellbeing? <https://www.mind.org.uk/information...-tips-on-returning-to-work-after-the-holiday/>

Organ donation

Organ donation is a difficult subject, often involving loved ones having to make decisions at a time when they are upset. While England and Wales now have an opt-out system, please make the time to discuss your wishes with those you care about. You can also register a preference. Understanding your wishes can make things easier for your family. <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk>



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Asthma and COPD

Asthma often starts in childhood, but can also be diagnosed as an adult. There are different symptoms and triggers, so if you're concerned that you or a child may have asthma, please ask at your doctor's surgery.

If you suffer from asthma or COPD and are invited to have a review, you might want to take a look at this information from Asthma + Lung UK about how to manage your condition and get the most out of your appointment.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/asthma/>

<https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/manage-your-asthma/adult-review/>

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/copd/managing-my-copd>

Meningitis catch-up

If you have children heading off to university for the first time, have they had their full quota of meningitis vaccinations? If you're not sure, you can use the NHS app to check, or you can contact your GP surgery. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/men-acwy-vaccine/>