



Winter Edition



**Newbury Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**

**JOINT NEWSLETTER
Number 4 2024**

**Church Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**



Dear All,

By now we are hoping you are finding the Accurx Total Triage system in use at both Practices helpful. The Patient Groups would be delighted to hear your feedback. As we move towards the dark winter months we hope you will find the contents of this newsletter helpful to make sure you stay safe and well.

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If you have any comments or ideas we would love to hear from you, especially our younger families. Please contact us via

NSPG@Wantage.com or via churchstreetppg@gmail.com

Andrew Lewcock
Newbury Street PPG

Best wishes,

Annie Dee
Church Street PPG

VACCINATIONS

We hope many of you have taken up the offers of both flu and Covid vaccinations over the past few weeks. In addition, since last year, anyone reaching their 70th Birthdays will subsequently be offered the **shingles vaccination** on the NHS by their GP.

It is also made available to anyone over 50 years of age with a severely weakened immune system. It may take a couple of months to receive your invitation, but if you have not heard after three months it is worth asking your Practice about it.

PRESCRIPTIONS

By now we are sure that you are aware that, as part of their '**Green Practice Initiative**' both Practices are going paper free as much as possible in order to support patient safety and reduce unnecessary wastage of medications.

1st October marked the move to start a Paperless Prescription drive, and this has prompted more people to come to the Practices and ask for help to get the NHS app. Both Practices have staff trained to help people to get set up on the NHS App. Digital clinics to help patients understand and/or access the App are also being held and they can be booked using the QR code or by contacting the Practice.

Patients with access to the internet can request prescriptions electronically via the NHS App, submitting a Triage Form via the NHS App or their own Practice website or if these routes are not an option, they can speak to the Practice teams for more support in requesting a prescription. Medications requested by any of these methods can be collected from any of the four local pharmacies. Patients can also contact their own Pharmacy to discuss direct requests to the Practices.

Patients with no access via any other route are having their prescription attached to a paper triage form, and then the Practice is processing the prescription via the Total Triage system. The Practices are reassuring people about the support for the digitally excluded, but find a lot of new uptake for Proxy access to the NHS App to help in this transition.

AND FINALLY AND IMPORTANTLY DO NOT PANIC

Both Practices are well aware that there are some patients who do not / cannot use the internet or NHS App as well as those who are vulnerable. Contact the surgery and be assured help will be readily available.

Chuch Street 01235 770245 -- Newbury Street 01235 639521

ARE YOU WINTER READY?

Winter conditions can be bad for our health, but there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter. Those aged 65 and over; those who are pregnant; or people who have health conditions that put them at risk; as well as unpaid carers and household contacts of those at risk, will be able to get protected ahead of winter by getting their flu and COVID-19 vaccinations.



It's important to come forward if you are eligible, even if you have had previous flu and COVID-19 vaccinations or have had one of the viruses, as protection will fade and both viruses can change over time. This year's vaccine protects against new Covid Variants. It is important that children get protected against flu to protect them from getting seriously ill and spreading the virus onto those who are vulnerable. The nasal spray flu vaccine is offered free through schools and community venues for school-aged children, so parents should keep an eye out for the consent form that will get sent to them. All children aged 2 or 3 can get the vaccine through their GP practice.

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. With the rising cost of living, simple changes can help to keep you and your home warm now. Keep an eye out for weather updates so you are prepared.

- 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.



MAKE SURE YOU'RE GETTING ENOUGH VITAMIN D

During colder months, decreased sunlight exposure can cut your main source of vitamin D, which is essential for a healthy immune system. You can obtain vitamin D naturally from oily fish like salmon and mackerel, mushrooms and egg yolks. Vitamin D supplements are also a good idea during the less sunny months, especially for people whose diets are mostly vegetarian or vegan.



CHECK YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help you and your family this winter. Many over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and ibuprofen are available to relieve symptoms of common winter illnesses such as colds, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache) – ***just be aware of the limitation on how many you can buy at one time.***

Your pharmacist can help if you need any advice.

To manage winter illness symptoms at home, you should keep warm, rest, drink plenty of fluids, have at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up and use over-the-counter medicines to help give relief. It's a good idea to keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet (then you won't have to go out when you're feeling poorly!)

Your cabinet could contain the following:

- * Paracetamol or ibuprofen for pain and fever
- * Antihistamine for allergies
- * Oral rehydration sachets for when you've been sick or suffering from diarrhoea
- * Indigestion remedies
- * Constipation relief
- * Treatment for insect bites and stings, as well as cuts and grazes
- * Plasters and dressings
- * A clinical thermometer

Make sure your medicines are kept in the right conditions (e.g. out of direct sunlight and out of reach of children) and return them to your pharmacy if they're past their use-by date.

Check them regularly and stock up when needed, particularly before public holidays when pharmacies may have reduced opening hours

SEEKING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Make sure you're receiving all the help you're entitled to this winter. There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to help you make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help manage energy bills. There are also support measures in place to help with the cost of living, especially for those on low incomes.

For example, if you claim certain benefits or tax credits, you may be eligible for an extra payment from the government to help with the cost of living. The government has published energy saving tips to help save money on bills at www.helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk

For further advice on these support measures, visit Age UK's website or call 0800 169 6565.

Vale Community Impact can offer advice re benefit entitlements in total confidence. Call 01235 765 348 www.vci.org.uk

CONSIDER GETTING A PERSONAL ALARM.

We can all feel less confident particularly over the winter months. You might not feel as steady on your feet, and you might feel a little more isolated than usual. If so, a personal alarm can help reassure you and your loved ones. If you fall or become unwell, it can connect you to a 24-hour response centre. There are many different types ranging from watches which not only tell you the time and measure blood pressure and heart rate but will alert a monitoring service if you fall, to pendants where you simply press a button on a pendant you wear around your neck and talk to someone who'll contact a chosen person to help you – usually a neighbour, friend, relative or the emergency services.

For further information;

Age UK 0800 011 3846 [Personal Alarm Service for the elderly | Age UK](https://www.ageuk.org.uk)
Careline 0808 304 5088 <https://www.careline.co.uk>

KEY SAFE

Unfortunately, we all fall ill at some time or another so in the event of an Emergency have you thought about

- How would Health Care Professionals access your home?
- Who would they contact as your next of kin?



Some people consider installing a "key safe" at their home, or that of their elderly or vulnerable relative. A key safe is a secure container designed to hold keys and keep them safe. It is typically installed on a wall outside your home. To access the keys, you enter a pre-set code on a keypad or combination lock.

Did you know you can share the details with your GP Practice who can share with others such as the South Central Ambulance Service? Both Newbury Street Practice & Church Street Practice encourage the sharing of such details with them so they can record them onto their patient records. This information can be shared securely with other professionals by way of a "care plan" so that in the event of such an emergency there is no delay in accessing a person's home or contacting their next of kin.

For more information, please contact your GP Practice – NB the Practice will need your name, date of birth and the key safe code, not your address.

are holding an online open forum on **Wednesday 20th November from 7pm – 8pm** via Zoom. All are welcome! Please do come along to:

- Have your say about local health and care services
- Hear about our work and tell us your views
- Meet our board of trustees and put your questions to them.

If you are unable to attend the forum but have some feedback you would like to share or a question to ask, please get in touch via hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk or 01865 520520.

NOVEMBER HEALTH AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Lung Cancer

Lung cancer is one of the most common types of cancer worldwide and a leading cause of cancer-related deaths. Despite its prevalence, lung cancer often carries a stigma associated with smoking, leading to misconceptions and delays in diagnosis and treatment for non-smokers and former smokers. Find out more about signs and symptoms, and where you can find information and support. Symptoms of lung cancer include a cough, repeated chest infections, breathlessness, unexplained pain, weight loss or tiredness. If you have any of these symptoms, it is important to get them checked by your GP.

COPD Awareness Month 2024 is a dedicated time to raise awareness about Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and its impact on individuals and communities. COPD, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, is a term used to describe chronic lung diseases, that include emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. The overarching symptom is difficulty breathing. Some people with COPD also experience tiredness and chronic cough with or without mucus. This month-long campaign seeks to educate the public about COPD, its risk factors, symptoms, and available treatments. COPD Awareness Month also emphasizes the importance of early diagnosis, prevention measures, and improved quality of life for individuals living with this chronic lung condition.

November has become familiar to many but continues to have a very important message where men around the world grow moustaches (and in some cases full beards!) throughout November to raise awareness and funds for men's health issues, particularly prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention.

NHS App



We have been very encouraged with the number of people signing up for the Digital Café sessions to download and use the NHS App. If you want advice or help... just sign up for one of the sessions by just

asking Reception staff to book you in for an appointment.

Did you know ... Both Church Street and Newbury Street Practices have started to roll out proxy access for Care Home Staff which will mean easier access for Care Home Staff to request medication for patients – check with your Practice for further information.

Are you a Carer? If so, we hope you may find the following contact information helpful;

Community Catalysts supporting carers, disabled and other people with care needs. **Facebook.com/CommCatsValeofWhiteHorse**
a.wingad@communitycatalysts.co.uk

Carers Oxfordshire www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk

Carers Oxfordshire is a free service that offers information, advice and support to unpaid adult carers of someone living in Oxfordshire. If another adult, child or both, relies on you for help to do everyday things, and you are 18 or older, support is available for you. The support we provide is personalised, enabling you to identify your own needs and make choices about how and when you are supported. We know that your health and wellbeing are important, so whatever your situation, we want to make caring easier for you.

FOLKLORE recently, scientific study has lent a bit of credence to some of the wisdom of remedies of old - however; it's important to recognise that while these remedies can contribute to overall health and well-being, they should complement, not replace, modern medical practices.

Chicken Soup for Colds - Chicken soup is a go-to remedy for colds. It has anti-inflammatory properties which have been scientifically proven to reduce inflammation by slowing down the white blood cell activity and helps soothe sore throats and clear nasal congestion. The warm broth also keeps you hydrated, aiding in recovery.

Honey Soothes a Sore Throat - Honey is a natural remedy for sore throats. It has antibacterial properties and can coat the throat, reducing irritation. A spoonful of honey can be just as effective as over-the-counter cough syrups.

USEFUL CONTACTS:

Boots 50-51 Market Pl, Wantage OX12 8AW .

Tel: 01235 765227

Bretts Pharmacy 11-12 Millbrook Square Grove

OX12 7JZ Tel: 01235 763941

Cleggs Pharmacy 3, Kings Walk, Wantage,

OX12 9AJ, Tel: 01235 763046

Allied Pharmacy New Health Centre Mably Way.

OX12 9BN. Tel: 01235 763028



Vale Community Impact 01235 765 348

www.vci.org.uk 16 Market Place, Wantage OX12 8AE

VCI offers a variety of essential services such as lifts, companionship, etc. Please contact VCI for further information if you need advice on any of the services they offer – equally they are always looking for volunteers!



BUSES TO THE SURGERY:

Please ask Driver if unsure of direction of bus.

X1 – once per hour via Mill Street and Denchworth Road.

Drops on same side as Surgery. Travels to Grove via Main Street.

<https://www.oxfordbus.co.uk/services/OXBC/X1>

S9 – 3 times per hour *from Wantage Market Place* via Grove Road. *Drops opposite the Health Centre. From Grove via Oxford Lane and Brereton Drive and drops outside the Health Centre.*

[https://tiscon-maps-](https://tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/Oxford_Timetables/S9_current.pdf)

[stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/Oxford_Timetables/S9_current.pdf](https://tiscon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/Oxford_Timetables/S9_current.pdf) (NB The timetable may change in December)

Follow the arrows!

Please follow the traffic one-way system that is in operation at the Health Centre. The arrows on the road should help you. There is no drop off in front of the entrance.



Your cooperation is appreciated and makes it safer for everyone.

AND FINALLY.... Save the date!

HEALTH & WELLBEING EVENTSATURDAY 26TH APRIL 2025