



May, June, July & August Edition



**Newbury Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**

JOINT NEWSLETTER Number 2 2025

**Church Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**



Dear All,

We hope many of you were able to join us at the recent Health and Wellbeing Event at The Beacon. We would welcome any feedback to enable us to make sure the next event meets the needs of our growing community.

If you were unable to attend but would like to have the details of the organisations taking part, please email us and we will send you the programme that has all the contact details. Hard copies are available at the Health Centre.

Contents	Page	Contents	Page
Patient Participation Group	2	24/7 Mental Health Support	4
Oxford Advice Navigator		Vaccinations	5
Health Research		Healthwatch	
NHS Update	3	Message in a Bottle	5/6
		Awareness Campaigns	6
Patient GP Records Health	4	Hay Fever	7
For Me		Useful Contacts / Transport	8

Please contact us at;

NSPG@Wantage.com or churchstreetppg@gmail.com

Andrew Lewcock
Newbury Street PPG

Best wishes,

Annie Dee
Church Street PPG

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Did you know that as a patient registered at either Church Street or Newbury Street you are automatically a member of the PPG? If you are interested in improving healthcare in our community, why don't you consider joining your Practice's PPG committee?

WHY JOIN? Become a voice for your community and help create a better healthcare experience for all.

WHAT'S INVOLVED? Regular (but informal) meetings with open discussions to share your ideas and views with the Practice.

If you are interested in joining us or would like to find out more please contact us via NSPG@Wantage.com or via churchstreetppg@gmail.com alternatively give your details to Reception staff and we will get back to you.

OXFORDSHIRE ADVICE NAVIGATOR OVERVIEW

Whether you're navigating unemployment, debt, physical or mental health issues or caregiving responsibilities, or you're worried about money or having difficulty doing certain everyday tasks, the Oxfordshire Advice Navigator offers a user-friendly experience to ensure you receive the support available to you. **The Oxfordshire Advice Navigator** is provided by the Oxfordshire Advice Partnership which brings together a variety of independent agencies, including Age UK Oxfordshire, four Oxfordshire-based Citizens Advice branches, Oxfordshire Welfare Rights and three local advice centres. Oxfordshire County Council have set up a new web site the "Advice navigator" to signpost residents to sources of advice including on health issues.

<https://www.oxmindguide.org.uk/minditem/oxfordshire-advice-navigator/>

HEALTH RESEARCH

Both Church Street and Newbury Street Practices are involved in medical research and from time to time you may be approached to take part.

Taking part in research is voluntary: you can freely accept or decline, and this will not affect the care that you receive in any way. Even if you agree to take part, you can still withdraw at any time, without having to provide justification. Withdrawing from a study will NOT affect the care we provide for you.

All research projects carried out at both Practices have been thoroughly checked and approved by the relevant health authorities & ethical committees ensuring it is appropriate and safe to perform. You will always receive clear information about what taking part in a research study would involve and will have the opportunity to ask questions and obtain further details about a study. All projects are fully compliant with all UK laws including General Data Protection Regulation.

NHS UPDATE

This year sees huge changes and challenges ahead for our health and care services. The NHS Ten Year Plan will be published by the government in summer 2025 and will set the direction for the future. This includes three significant 'shifts':

- Moving care from hospitals to communities
- Making better use of technology
- Focus on prevention of ill health

As always we, as PPGs, will aim to keep you fully informed of any changes.

ARE YOUR GP RECORDS UP TO DATE?

Do not assume that any issue you are seen about at the Central hospitals in Oxford or elsewhere will be automatically transmitted to your GP. You need to ask for it to happen.

According to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at the John Radcliffe there is a standard expectation that hospitals will share relevant information with a patient's GP following attendance at A&E, elective surgery, or other medical treatment. However, the extent and nature of the information shared may vary depending on the type of care received.

- **A&E Attendances:** Typically, a summary of the visit, including any diagnosis and treatment given, is sent to the patient's GP.
- **Elective Surgery or Medical Treatment:** Discharge summaries are routinely sent to GPs detailing the procedure, follow-up requirements, and any prescribed medication.
- **Medication Prescriptions:** If medication is prescribed during a hospital stay or as part of outpatient care, the GP is usually informed. However, in some cases (e.g., short courses of medication prescribed in A&E), this may not always happen.

The goal is to ensure that GPs have the necessary information to provide ongoing care, but the specifics may vary depending on the case and clinical judgment. Be aware it may take some weeks to appear in your medical history in the NHS app.



HEALTH FOR ME

If you attend any of the Oxford Universities Hospitals, the **Health for Me** is an online system that allows you to easily view parts of your digital health record safely and securely from your computer or smartphone.

The aims of **Health for Me** are to:

- make it easier to find information about your care
- provide one location for most of your hospital records
- enable you to check your appointments
- offer access to your hospital letters in digital format
- allow your medical team to share information with you.

If you are interested in getting an account, please ask about **Health for Me** at your next hospital appointment.

24/7 TEXT SERVICE FOR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Urgent mental health support is now available by text message to people of all ages across Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The service offers free, confidential, 24/7 support via text message for anyone struggling to cope. Anyone experiencing anxiety, stress, loneliness, depression, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, or other mental health challenges can use the service by texting the word 'SUNRISE' to 85258 at any time of day or night.

It is a simple, straightforward way to get mental health support from a mental health professional when people need it most.

The text service is in addition to a range of in-person and telephone-based urgent mental health services locally offering another, alternative way for people to access immediate, anonymous support. It can be used at any time, day or night. You can read more about this on the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust website. www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

VACCINATIONS - Getting vaccinated when offered not only helps you avoid the worst symptoms, it also reduces the rate at which infection spreads. It was very reassuring to see so many take up the offer of vaccinations at the recent clinics round of Covid Vaccinations in Spring 2025. The virus mutates over time, and the vaccines are changed to try to combat this. Clinically vulnerable people in the 18 to 64 age groups are urged to take up the offer of vaccination when they are invited to attend.

The shingles vaccine helps protect against shingles. It's recommended for all adults turning 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system. Find out more here or ask the Practice. <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/shingles-vaccine/>



Healthwatch have produced a new leaflet providing oral health guidance for parents and carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). The guide, produced together with Community Dental Services, offers practical advice and tips on brushing, diet and visiting the dentist. It follows a project carried out last year asking parents and caregivers of under 10s about how they help support their children's oral health, during which we heard there was limited information

tailored to the needs of oral health and SEND. To find out more see our website here, or if you would like a copy sending out please get in touch with us on 01865 520520 or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

Come to our next webinar on **Tuesday 13th May** to hear about the wide range of support available to help you stay healthy and well in Oxfordshire. Living Well in Oxfordshire, which will run from 1pm - 2pm, Services being showcased will include:

- Financial help, including information about benefits and entitlements
- Help for people with drug and alcohol problems
- Support for residents to keep warm, stay safe and live well in their homes
- Free home energy visits to help residents improve energy efficiency

For full details, including a Zoom joining link, see our website healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk



MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE - Emergency Information Scheme

The Message in a Bottle scheme is supported by all emergency services and allows people to store essential information about themselves like allergies, medication, emergency contact details, in a recognisable bottle that our crews know to look for.

HOW THE SCHEME WORKS

- ❖ A bottle is supplied which contains a pre-printed form and two green cross stickers. The user fills in the form that contains information that clearly identifies them, basic medical details, emergency contact numbers, any allergies, etc.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE (CONT)

- ❖ The form is put back in the bottle and then stored in the fridge. One of the green cross stickers is put on the door of the fridge and the other is put on the inside of the front door. If two people live in the house, then they both fill out a form and both forms are stored in the same bottle.
- ❖ In an emergency, the presence of the green cross stickers will alert the emergency services to the presence of the “Message in a Bottle” and they would search for it in the fridge. The message will give the emergency services information on any conditions or allergies that the patient suffers from. If a patient is taken to hospital, then the form is taken with them and given to the hospital staff on arrival. The “Message” helps the hospital staff find the relevant records and arrange treatment as quickly as possible.

Local Lions Clubs promote this scheme because they believe that this gives older or vulnerable people more confidence about their treatment in an emergency. It also gives peace of mind to relatives and friends that essential information will be available in an emergency situation.

The form is light green in colour to easily distinguish it from other forms used in the NHS. The bottle and leaflets, forms, etc are free to the user and supplied by the Lions Clubs organisation. The Lions message in a Bottle is also often available free of charge from pharmacists or GP surgeries – just ask! [Message in a Bottle - Providing Lifesaving Information from Lions Clubs British Isles](#)

HEALTH AWARENESS DAYS/WEEKS/MONTHS

Various campaigns are organised to raise awareness and to promote a better understanding of the many challenges faced by members of our communities. These are just a few that will be taking place over the coming months – some may affect you or someone you know



MAY is Coeliac Awareness Month ~ 6th – 12th Deaf Awareness Week
8th World Ovarian Cancer Day ~ 10th World Lupus Day
12th-18th Mental Health Awareness ~ 19th- 25th Dementia Action Week
26th-1st June National Epilepsy Week

JUNE 9th-15th marks Carers Week
10th-16th Men's Health Week ~ Diabetes Week
16th- 20th National Blood Week

JULY 3rd - 9th Sarcoma Awareness Week ~ 28th World Hepatitis Day

AUGUST 19th – 25th National Eye Health Week (UK)

HAY FEVER

Were you able to enjoy the lovely sunny weather at the beginning of April or did sneezing, coughing and itchy eyes make it difficult? Hay fever is a common allergy that causes sneezing, coughing and itchy eyes.

You cannot cure it, but there are things you can do to help your symptoms, or medicines you can take to help. Check if you have hay fever. Symptoms (which can develop at any time) include:

sneezing and coughing - a runny or blocked nose - itchy, red or watery eyes - itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears - loss of smell – headache - pain around the sides of your head and your forehead - feeling tired.

Symptoms are usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest. Hay fever can last for weeks or months, unlike a cold, which usually goes away after 1 to 2 weeks.

Unfortunately, there's currently no cure for hay fever and you cannot prevent it, but you can do things to ease your symptoms when the pollen count is high.

Do;

- ✓ put petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) around your nostrils to trap pollen
- ✓ wear wraparound sunglasses, a mask or a wide-brimmed hat to stop pollen getting into your nose and eyes
- ✓ shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off
- ✓ keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
- ✓ vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth
- ✓ try to use a pollen filter in the air vents of your car, if you have one, and a HEPA filter in your vacuum cleaner

Try to avoid;

- cutting the grass or walk on grass
- spending too much time outside
- keeping fresh flowers in the house
- not smoking or being around smoke – it makes your symptoms worse
- not drying clothes outside – they can catch pollen

Speak to a pharmacist if you have hay fever. They can give you advice and suggest the best treatments to help with symptoms, such as:

antihistamine drops - tablets or nasal sprays - steroid nasal sprays.

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-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/Oxford_Timetables/S9_current.pdf

x35 bus runs Market Square to Health centre twice per hour but must check you are going in the correct direction or you end up in Harwell!

AND FINALLY You may have noticed that this edition covers a slightly longer period. We will be back in September but would like to take the opportunity to wish all of you an enjoyable few months and summer break and remind you to take care in the sun if you are lucky enough to get away on holiday here or abroad. (I am told every day is a holiday when you're retired like me!)



Remember to spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.

Make sure you cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses.

Take extra care with children and use at least factor 30 sunscreen