

April 2021 Patient Newsletter

Welcome to the April edition of our patient newsletter. In this issue:

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COVID 19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

March saw us surpass the phenomenal milestone of administering

★★★ 25,000 VACCINATIONS!! ★★★

On Sunday 21 March our staff vaccinated a record ****2040**** of our patients.

We're beyond proud of our staff as well as extremely grateful to our patients for bearing with us as we work through the cohorts and for patiently waiting in turn to receive jabs.

We are now contacting patients who had their first vaccination in early January for their second vaccinations. Please be reassured that our second dose supply of vaccine is already factored in and we have clinics planned so all patients will receive their second dose at around 11 weeks from their first. Unless otherwise advised by our website or social media streams, please do not contact us regarding your second vaccination – we will contact you.

There is still a long way to go with our vaccination programme, and over the coming weeks, we will be looking to move to the next cohort, the under 50s. We remain confident that all patients over 18 will be vaccinated by the end of the summer.

THE CINNAMON TRUST

<https://cinnamon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CT-12-pager.pdf>

The Cinnamon Trust is a national charity that works with elderly and/or terminally ill pet owners to work in partnership with them and help them overcome any difficulties they might encounter. Due to illness, a pet owner may no longer be able to take their beloved dog for a walk, or they may be worried about what will happen to their pet should they need to go into hospital, or if they die. The Cinnamon Trust can provide short term and long term care for pets whose owners are unable to care for them. The Cinnamon Trust relies on donations and volunteer helpers. To find out more about their work, or to volunteer, click their link <https://cinnamon.org.uk/home/>

INCOMING PHONE CALLS

We receive around 1,000 calls each day, which is more than normal for this time of year. Our patient co-ordinator team do respond to calls as quickly as they can and are working hard to minimise wait times.

Mondays are our busiest day and the mornings generally have more calls than the afternoons. For non-urgent queries you may find there is less of a wait after lunch, and if you wish you can book online for blood tests, and use our eConsult system also.

Domestic Abuse

Coronavirus has thrown domestic abuse into the spotlight as the UK entered a lockdown, overnight, over a year ago. Victims lost their means of getting support, their chance to confide in other parents at the school gate, and the opportunity to reach out to friends, family and co-workers. Survivors need to be able to access support remotely and safely.

If you are concerned about your safety and need help and support, contact **Next Link**

Next Link North Somerset domestic abuse telephone help lines are **open 10am – 4pm**
Monday to Friday
0800 4700 280

<https://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk/northsomerset/>

Refuge have a free national helpline 0808 2000 247

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

Bright Sky is a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else. The app can be downloaded for free via the app stores. Please only download the app if it is safe for you to do so and if you are sure that your phone isn't being monitored.

<https://www.bright-sky.org.uk/>

Safe Spaces is an online portal providing a discreet service that helps victims to access support and advice while leaving no internet history trace. Safe Spaces is open and ready for you to use.

How to access a Safe Space

- Walk into any participating pharmacy in the UK.
- Ask at the healthcare counter to use their Safe Space.
- A pharmacist will show you to the Safe Space, which will be the consultancy room.
- Once inside, you will find displayed specialist domestic abuse support information for you to access, to make that call or access Bright Sky safely.

<https://uksaysnomore.org/safespaces/>

Please remember you can **speak to one of our clinicians** who will listen to you and refer you on for help and support if that is what you want them to do.

If you believe there is an immediate risk of harm, or it is an emergency, always call 999.



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<https://www.mendipvale.nhs.uk/>

PATIENT TEST RESULTS

Please remember you can request to access your blood tests and other results via the NHS App or Patient Access website. There is no need for you to ring the surgery for your results if you are set up for this on either of these sites.

<https://www.mendipvale.nhs.uk/patient-services/online-services/>

GP APPOINTMENTS

<https://www.mendipvale.nhs.uk/appointments/>

A reminder to our patients that in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and guidance issued by NHS England and Public Health England, we are currently operating a phone first appointment model for our GP appointments but are seeing patients face to face whenever needed.

We are very much still undertaking all 'normal' general practice work too. So for medication reviews, contraception services and anything else you need us for we are here for you.



April Awareness Days

April 1 to 30 Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

Bowel Cancer is the second biggest UK's killer cancer. This shouldn't be the case since it is treatable and curable, especially when diagnosed at an early stage. Early diagnosis for Bowel Cancer and any other type of cancer saves lives. This is the reason why April has been set aside to educate the public and raise awareness of Bowel Cancer symptoms.

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

April 1 to 30 IBS Awareness Month

If you have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), you are not alone – IBS is common with prevalence estimated at 10% to 15%. Yet many people remain undiagnosed and unaware that their symptoms indicate a medically recognized disorder.

In 1997, IFFGD designated April as IBS Awareness Month. During this time, we work to focus attention on important health messages about IBS diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life issues. <https://aboutibs.org/living-with-ibs-main/ibs-awareness-month.html>

April 1 to 30 Stress Awareness Month

Stress Awareness Month has been held every April since 1992 to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. Despite this running for 29 years we have got a long way to go. According to the Mental health Foundation 74% of UK adults have felt so stressed at some point over the last year they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope.

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

April 2 World Autism Day

World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) aims to put a spotlight on the hurdles that people with autism and others living with autism face every day. As a growing global health issue owing to its increasing exposure in the press and common knowledge, autism is an issue that is only gaining more



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understanding and WAAD activities are planned every year to further increase and develop world knowledge of children and adults who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

What's more, World Autism Awareness Day goes one step further to celebrate the unique talents of those with autism, while putting a huge focus on the warm embrace and welcome that these skills deserve through community events around the globe.

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/world-autism-awareness-day>

April 11-17 Parkinson's Awareness Week

Parkinson's Awareness Week kicks starts on World Parkinson's Day, Sunday 11 April 2021 and ends on Saturday 17 April. As there is no cure for Parkinson's, this is an annual opportunity to raise awareness and much needed funds to support people with living with the condition, to improve quality of life and to ensure that people live better for longer.

<https://parkinsonscare.org.uk/>

April 20 to 25 Orchid Male Cancer Awareness Week

Orchid's annual Male Cancer Awareness Week gives us the opportunity to highlight essential health awareness messages for men at risk of testicular, prostate or penile cancer. With low awareness of male cancer and the number of men diagnosed each year rising, the annual campaign is more important than ever.

Each year we highlight health messages about the three male specific cancers to improve awareness and give opportunities for men, families and healthcare professionals to learn about male cancer and improve their understanding of the signs and symptoms. Through the promotion of our services and resources we hope men and their families will gain a better understanding of where to go for help and treatment.

<https://orchid-cancer.org.uk/awareness-education/male-cancer-awareness-week/>

April 20 to 25 World Immunisation Week

While the world focuses on critically important new vaccines to protect against COVID-19, there remains a need to ensure routine vaccinations are not missed. Many children have not been vaccinated during the global pandemic, leaving them at risk of serious diseases like measles and polio. Rapidly circulating misinformation around the topic of vaccination adds to this threat. In this context, this year's campaign will aim to build solidarity and trust in vaccination as a public good that saves lives and protects health.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2021/04/24/default-calendar/world-immunization-week-2021>

April 20 to 25 MS Awareness Week

MS services have been hit hard over the last 12 months, with many missing appointments and waiting lists growing. This year for MSAW we want to impress the urgent need to get MS services back on track by highlighting the humans 'behind the statistics'.

We are looking for people with MS to tell us their story of the last 12 months. How have you coped with life in lockdown? What have you found most difficult? Which people have you relied upon? Have you changed your life in some way to help you get through? Has your condition been affected due to missing appointments with your MS specialist?

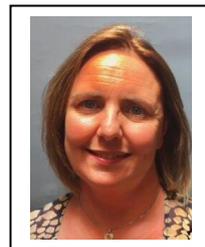
We would love to hear your story and to share it with our supporters. We want to make sure people hear your story. <https://mstrust.org.uk/get-involved/ms-awareness-week>

April 20 to 25 Allergy Awareness Week

It's Allergy Awareness Week and this year the topic will be on childhood food allergy, with a focus on the weaning journey.

SURGERY NEWS

We said farewell to Dr Louise McCloskey of our Sunnyside Surgery at the end of last month who has left the practice for pastures new, to work closer to where she lives. Dr McCloskey has been a highly valued member of the Mendip Vale team and will be much missed by colleagues and patients alike. We wish her all the very best in her new role and very much look forward to hearing how she's getting on.



We will be welcoming two new GP partners to the Practice over the course of this year.

FIRST CONTACT PHYSIO

<https://www.mendipvale.nhs.uk/your-health-and-wellbeing/msk-physio/>

Claire and Vicci are First Contact Physiotherapists (FCP) who joined us in the autumn of 2020 as part of a nationwide scheme being rolled out to increase capacity within Primary Care and help patients with musculoskeletal problems.

Patients can now directly access assessment, diagnosis and management of a range of musculoskeletal problems including new sprains, strains and pains involving muscles, nerves, bones and joints by booking directly with our FCPs.

You can book to see Claire or Vicci by calling the surgery and asking for an appointment.

HAVE WE GOT YOUR MOST UP TO DATE DETAILS?

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and guidance issued by NHS England and Public Health England, we are operating a phone first appointment model but are seeing patients face to face whenever needed. We are also contacting patients by phone to book covid vaccination appointments. It is extremely important that we have your most up to date contact details to avoid delays in appointments.

We want to hear from you!

We would very much like to involve our patients in this newsletter – after all, it's written for you and for your benefit! Please send us your suggestions for future topics and also any feedback on how we're doing.

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