



UnityHealth

PATIENT NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the September 2019 issue of the Unity Health Patient Newsletter. We hope that you find it full of useful information and that it helps you to access what you need from the practice.

I am Chair of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and we, together with the management team at the practice have compiled this newsletter. For those who don't know, the purpose of the PPG is to improve communication between the practice and the patients. This includes making positive suggestions for improvements and being an advocate for patient preferences when appropriate.



In particular in this issue we are alerting all carers – and those who think they might be carers – to the support and benefits (including financial) that are available to them. There is a significant amount of help out there for carers and we show you how to find it. Please read what we say inside – it could change your life.

Jackie Highe, Chair of the Unity Health PPG

EXCITING NEWS!

We have a brand new PPG email address!

Should you wish to get in touch with us to ask any questions or to suggest any discussion points for a future PPG meeting, please message us at:

ppg.unityhealth@gmail.com

Note: this is not an 'nhs.net' email, so please refrain from including any information that you would consider to be confidential.

Note: You can find a hard copy of this Newsletter in all of our surgeries or online at <https://www.unity-health.co.uk/about-us/patient-participation-group/>

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FLU VACCINATIONS – IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!

You should have the FREE flu vaccine if you are:

- aged 65 years or over
- pregnant
- are seriously overweight (have a BMI of 40 and above)
- living in a residential or nursing home
- the main carer of an older or disabled person
- a household contact of an immunocompromised person
- a frontline health or social care worker

...or if you have a long term condition such as:

- a heart problem
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema, COPD and severe asthma (if this requires using inhaled/tablet steroid treatment or has led to a hospital admission)
- a kidney disease
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
- liver disease
- had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- diabetes
- a neurological condition, e.g. multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy or learning disability
- a problem with your spleen, e.g. sickle cell disease or you have had your spleen removed

CLINIC DATES

- Princes Risborough – Wednesday 25th September 3.00pm - 5.30pm*
- Long Crendon – Wednesday 2nd October* 2.00pm - 4.30pm*
- *These first two clinics are STRICTLY for those aged over 65 due to a national delay in delivery of vaccines for those under 65 years. Also, for the Long Crendon clinic, appointments must be booked in advance.**
- Chinnor – Saturday 12th October 9.00am - 11.30am
- Princes Risborough – Saturday 26th October 9.00am - 11.30am
- Thame – Saturday 19th October 9.00am - 11.30am
- Chinnor – Tuesday 29th October 2.00pm - 4.30pm
- Thame – Wednesday 6th November 5.30pm - 7.30pm
- Brill – Saturday 9th November 9.00am - 11.30am
- Brill – Thursday 14th November 2.00pm - 4.30pm
- Long Crendon – Saturday 16th November 8.30am – 10.30am.
This clinic is STRICTLY for those aged over 65 and appointments must be booked in advance.



AM I ELIGIBLE FOR THE FLU VACCINATION?

- The flu vaccinations are only available to patients who are over 65 years old or are in one of the at-risk groups listed on the previous page. For those patients who are not in one of these categories, flu jabs are available at many of the local pharmacies, but will be chargeable.
- The clinics being held at the Long Crendon Surgery are limited to those over 65 or for younger patients who live in Long Crendon and are unable to travel to other sites. These are bookable appointment clinics, rather than drop-in clinics, since there is no car park at the surgery and there is limited space in the building for queues.
- Where possible please walk to the surgeries rather than drive, as there is limited parking at each site.
- There will be separate clinics arranged for children, so the clinics listed on the previous page are for **adults over the age of 18 only**. There is no date yet for when the flu vaccine will be available for children.

Note: Prescriptions will **NOT** be available for collection during the flu clinics.

DO YOU CURRENTLY LOOK AFTER SOMEONE ON A REGULAR / FULL TIME BASIS?

If so, **you may be missing out on a number of benefits**...read on to find out more:

Who is a Carer?

A carer is anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid.

Many people do not consider themselves to be a "carer" - they simply see it as looking after their loved one, family member or friend. If this sounds like you, you may be one of the thousands of wonderful people who are missing out on financial benefits such as Carer's Allowance, a network of like-minded people in a similar situation, practical support and much more.

If you think you may be a carer, please get in touch with the practice! We will add you to our carer's list thereby ensuring that you have access to assistance that the NHS, Carer's Bucks / Oxfordshire and other local organisations can provide.

See further details on the next page of various agencies that can provide you with support and advice.

Carers UK: their website provides lots of helpful information on practical help you can get as well as a supportive community for this very rewarding but sometimes

isolating role. See their website for lots of useful resources, or call their telephone advice and support service if you have any questions.

Website: <https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice>

Telephone helpline number: 0808 808 7777 (Mondays and Tuesdays: 10am -4pm)

Carers Bucks is an independent, free service for unpaid carers in Buckinghamshire. They support the wellbeing of carers of all ages and in different caring roles.

You can speak to an experienced Support Worker in confidence, either over the telephone 0300 777 2722; by email at mail@carersbucks.org; or by appointment at their office in Aylesbury.

Website: <https://www.carersbucks.org/>

For a Carers' Assessment either contact Carers Bucks for signposting or directly contact Buckinghamshire County Council:

<https://www.careadvicebuckinghamshire.org>

Carers Oxfordshire is a free service and provides support and information for adult carers (18 and over) looking after anyone aged 18 and over. They have an outreach support service, peer group support and training and wellbeing opportunities. For more information, see their contact details below.

For a Carers' Assessment, visit the main website below or click [here](#).

Website: <http://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/cms/>

Telephone: 0345 050 7666

The Young Carers Team, Oxfordshire is now part of the Family Solutions Service. Sometimes children providing care to another person can cause them to have support needs, or put their health, development, or education at risk. If you feel your child has support needs in relation to the care they are providing / intending to provide, then you can ask professionals such as schools / teachers to complete an [Early Help Assessment](#).

Website: <https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/service.page?id=H3ICXs8qKqM>

Email: young.carers@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council has a team of social workers and support staff working with disabled children and their families. If you are a parent carer, you can contact the Social and Health Care Team for an assessment of your situation to see what help and support you and your family might need, and who could best give that help.

Address: Social & Health Care Team, PO Box 780 Oxford OX1 9GX

Telephone Number: 0345 050 7666

There are many support groups available for carers including specifically for those who are Young Carers, and Carers of people with any form of dementia. Please see the next page for a list of some of the support groups available; or our website for all this information and more: <https://www.unity-health.co.uk/services/carers/>

We are having a Unity Health all staff training session on Carers in September. Following this, we plan to hold a session in the surgery for all of our carers.

CARER SUPPORT GROUPS

There are many support groups available to carers. Here are some that are local to you:

Organisation	Where	When	Summary
Dementia Carers' Support Group	Thame Library, North Street, OX9 3BH. Email: oxfordshire@alzheimers.org.uk Note: there are also groups in Aylesbury & Wycombe: https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/	1 st Wednesday of the month: 10.30 - 12.00pm (Please knock on arrival as it's closed.)	Peer support groups organised by the Alzheimer's Society. Led by a facilitator, the sessions offer a chance for people affected by dementia to ask questions, get information and share experiences in a safe and supportive environment.
Forget me Knot Café	Chinnor Village Centre, High Street, OX39 4DJ. Tel: 01844 353154	Twice a month on a Monday: 10.30 - 12.30pm	Open to anyone but targets people with dementia, mental health problems, elderly people and carers. Information, peer support and activities aimed to help with co-ordination, brain stimulation, and general health and well-being.
Thame Carers Support Group	Christchurch, Upper High St. Thame, OX9 2DN Tel: Sue Devine on 07468 862177	4th Monday of the month: 10.30 - 12.00pm	Organised by Carers Oxfordshire - offering information and support to all carers.
Haddenham Carers Support Group	Haddenham Medical Centre, Stanbridge Road, HP17 8JX.	2 nd Monday of the month: 13.30 - 15.30pm	Organised by Carers Bucks - offering information and support to all carers.
Young Carers Bucks	Aylesbury and High Wycombe Tel: 0300 7772722	Tailored sessions via invitation – please call for details.	Various regular clubs and activities, one-to-one support, targeted group work. Information, advice and signposting. Opportunity to meet with other young carers, support in schools.
Be Free YC	Harwell Innovation Centre, 173 Curie Avenue, Didcot OX11 0QG Tel: 01235 838554 https://befreeyc.org.uk/	Please call for details or visit their website.	Activities, information, advice and emotional support for young carers.
Lord Williams's School (young carers)	Lord Williams's School, Oxford Rd, Thame OX9 2AQ. Tel: Jane MacKerron, Young Carers Co-ordinator on 01844 210510	There are sessions for each year group which run every two weeks.	Opportunity for students at the school to meet others in similar situations, to befriend others and share experiences or just to have fun. Once or twice a year there are outings, where older students support Lower School students.

NEW – “PROXY” PATIENT ACCESS

- **Are you a parent to a child under 16 years old, a carer or someone who looks after a loved one?**
- **Would it help you to be able to order their repeat prescriptions, book their appointments and even access their medical record online together with your own?**

If the answer is yes to both of these questions, read on!

Proxy Access is a new feature designed for all users of Patient Access online services who would like to use this function on behalf of someone else. To access this, you will need to go to reception and complete a Proxy Access registration form.

Information for parents: depending on the age of your child, the process differs as below:

For children under 11 years of age: a parent/guardian can request access without the need for the child to co-sign the form. This access will be switched off on the child's 11th Birthday (reminders will be sent 3 months prior). The proxy will need to bring in ID with them.

For children aged 11-16 years old: a parent/guardian can set up proxy access but both the child and proxy must come into the surgery and sign the form **in front of a receptionist** and bring proof of ID. If instead, the child wishes to have their own online account then this will be sent to the GP for approval (to ascertain if they are competent). Also, if the child declines the proxy access but the parent/guardian feels it would be in the patient's best interest, then this will go to the GP for review and a decision made. Proxy access will turn off on the child's 16th Birthday (reminders will be sent 3 months prior).

Information for carers and those who look after loved ones:

Patients over 16 can grant proxy access to a carer / relative / friend on their behalf. Both the patient and the proxy will need to bring ID into the surgery and sign the forms giving explicit consent for the proxy to manage the patient's online access account.

What happens once I've completed the Proxy Access Registration form?

If you are an existing Patient Access online user then the next time you log into your account you will automatically be linked to the proxy account (under linked users).

If you are not an existing online user then you will have access to the linked patient at the point registration is complete.

DID YOU KNOW.....?

- If your **blood test / investigation result** is clear, you will not hear from the surgery. Sadly due to the volume of results we process, we are only able to contact those patients where further action is needed. However, if you sign up to Patient Access, you are able to see all test results online.
Note: For **routine blood tests**, reception may well offer you an available appointment up to approximately a month away. This is to allow flexibility for urgent blood test requests from our GPs.
- We require **2 days minimum to process a repeat prescription**. At Brill and Long Crendon surgeries where we also **dispense** medication, an extra day is required for this; so **3 working days** in total. We do, however, suggest that you put your request in approximately a week in advance to ensure there is some contingency in case of any issues. For example, sometimes we have to source alternative medication if our suppliers do not have this in stock. (Brexit is adding to these instances currently).
- You can take your **blood pressure (BP)** using the machine in each of our surgeries – please simply take your result to the reception desk for inclusion in your medical records and clinician review.
 - If your BP is 140/90 or under, this is a satisfactory result. Re-check every five years unless you are on blood pressure medication or are diabetic;
Note: if you have a known long term condition your target BP will be lower than 140/90 (as explained at your annual review).
 - If your BP is greater than 140/90 but under 180/110, you will be contacted by a clinician if required. Check blood pressure annually or sooner if advised;
 - If your BP is greater than 180/110, you may need to be seen by a clinician today. Please wait while our receptionist discusses this with a GP.

Please note: if you have Atrial Fibrillation, these machines should not be used.
- **We no longer do hearing tests** in surgery since best practice is for these to be done in a soundproof room (which we are not able to offer). Ask reception for details of where you can go to get a free hearing test or go to <https://www.unity-health.co.uk/services/audiology/>
- The results of our **2019 patient survey** are available on our website at: <https://www.unity-health.co.uk/about-us/patient-participation-group/>
Your feedback is invaluable to the practice, so thank you to all 1,224 of you who participated! If you have any questions, or would like a hardcopy of the results please contact the Patient Participation Group: ppg.unityhealth@gmail.com
- **Q Doctor, the secure video conferencing service** we are offering patients is now even easier than before! After your initial sign up, you no longer need a new code for each appointment booked. This therefore avoids you having to call reception to book an appointment. For more details go to: <https://www.unity-health.co.uk/q-doctor/>
- You can use the **log-in screens** in the surgery to check in for your appointment rather than waiting for the receptionist if they are busy.

ADVANCED PRACTITIONER URGENT CARE CLINICS

What is an Advanced Practitioner?

Advanced Practitioners (APs) are experienced healthcare professionals such as Registered Nurses who have undertaken significant extra training and academic study to be able to assess, diagnose, treat, prescribe and make referrals for patients presenting with undifferentiated and undiagnosed conditions. Many APs also have a specialist interest in more focused areas of clinical practice, for example skin conditions or minor injuries.

What is the Urgent Care Clinic?

Many of you will already be aware of the AP led Urgent Care Clinic as it has been running for some time now. In this clinic, our APs work alongside the doctors each day to provide care for those patients who require an urgent, same day appointment. We currently have three APs at Unity Health: Dean Whiting, Carol Horn and Charlie Zideman who work across our Thame and Chinnor sites. Evaluation of the clinic in early 2018 and 2019 showed 100% patient satisfaction with this service. This is a high benchmark and one we aspire to maintain.

How do I get an appointment in the Urgent Care Clinic?

To allow our reception team to make sure you are seen by the most appropriate clinician, you will be asked to explain a little about your problem when you call to make an appointment. The reception team are an essential link to the wider clinical team and are trained to navigate patients to the most appropriate service or clinician. They only offer appointments with the Urgent Care Clinic based on a strict set of criteria which is approved by our GPs and Lead AP in order to ensure your safety. The APs will be able to resolve the majority of concerns presented to them, but one of our GPs will always be available for further review if necessary.

Are there any other sources of advice for minor ailments?

The '3 before GP' mantra, which was developed by the Royal College of GPs is a great way of helping you make decisions about how to look after yourself before requesting an appointment. It is worth asking three questions before booking an appointment:-

Can you...?

1. Self-care – For most minor ailments you could safely treat your symptoms at home, for example through rest or with appropriate over the counter medicines.
2. Use the AskNHS App, NHS Choices or similar reputable websites/resources – online NHS services offer sensible advice on a range of health issues and are a useful place to turn for initial guidance. Simply visit www.nhs.uk.
3. Seek advice/treatment via a pharmacist – Pharmacists are highly skilled healthcare professionals who can offer valuable advice.

LEAD ADVANCED PRACTITIONER



DEAN WHITING

Originally from Yorkshire, I joined the British Army in 1997 and trained as a Combat Medical Technician and also as a Registered Adult Nurse at the Defence Medical Services Training Centre and the University of Portsmouth. I have worked within a variety of clinical areas including acute medicine, trauma, orthopaedics, coronary care, surgery, primary and pre-hospital care, burns and critical care, up and down the country and around the world.

When I left the British Army in 2012, I settled in the area with my family and worked in higher education as a senior lecturer and then went on to work as a manager and advanced practitioner in trauma at Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust. During this time I completed an MSc in Trauma Science and a Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Clinical Practice. Alongside this I worked with the Care Quality Commission as a specialist advisor for critical care.

I moved into primary care 3 years ago as an advanced practitioner as I had always wanted to come back to it following my exposure to it early in my military career. After 2 years working in central Aylesbury I moved to Unity Health in April 2018 and have thoroughly enjoyed it. I have recently been appointed as the lead advanced practitioner, which has only been possible because of the support and encouragement of an amazing team and partners. I enjoy all aspects of my role but I have a personal interest in musculoskeletal (bones, muscles and connecting bits!), sports and exercise medicine and I am currently undertaking an MSc in Sports and Exercise Medicine. I am a big rugby fan (both codes!) and, as if I am not busy enough, I provide “pitch side” immediate care for Chinnor RFC 1st XV.

PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

What are Primary Care Networks?

From 1 July 2019, all patients in England should be covered by a primary care network (PCN). New central NHS funding is being channelled through the networks to employ additional staff to deliver services to patients across the member practices. PCNs are comprised of groups of neighbouring GP surgeries, the aim of which is to provide care at a greater scale by sharing some staff and funding. It is hoped that PCNs will improve the range and effectiveness of primary care services by employing additional health professionals such as pharmacists, social prescribers and paramedics.

Networks are generally based around natural local communities typically serving populations of at least 30,000. Our PCN is Aylesbury Vale South and includes Unity Health, Haddenham Medical Centre and Cross Keys surgeries in Princes Risborough and Chinnor. The idea is that PCNs should be small enough to maintain the traditional strengths of general practice but at the same time large enough to provide resilience and support the development of integrated teams. The PCN should work very closely with the wider local system such as community pharmacy, optometrists, dental providers, social care providers, voluntary sector organisations, community services providers and local government.

What are PCNs designed to do?

Primary care networks will provide proactive, coordinated care to their local populations, in different ways to match different people's needs, with a strong focus on prevention and personalised care. This means supporting patients to make informed decisions about their own health and care and connecting them to a wide range of statutory and voluntary services to ensure they can access the care they need first time.

What does the introduction of PCNs mean for me as a patient?

In the short-term, you will not see a material change in the Practice's routine service provision. However, for example we are in the process of hiring an additional Pharmacist that will work across the PCN (together with our own Unity Health Pharmacist). We have also been able to offer a musculoskeletal triage (physio) service at Haddenham Medical Centre on alternate Saturdays which has been extremely popular

Over time you will notice that the PCN should allow us to operate a more flexible approach - providing advice and support for the population in order that they can make information decisions about their care, and joined up care provision (e.g. with the voluntary sector) for those with complex conditions.



**DO YOU HAVE COMMUNICATION NEEDS THAT WE CAN
HELP YOU WITH?**



We want to get better at communicating with our patients to make sure you can make the most of your appointments and can read and understand any information that we send you. We would like to hear from you if you have any communication difficulties that mean you would find it helpful to have support at your consultations (e.g. British Sign Language, use of communication aids) or need to receive communications from us in a specific way (e.g. email, text, letter) or a specific format (e.g. large print, easy read, braille).

Please contact reception who may ask you to complete a short questionnaire which will help us ascertain what your specific communication / information support needs are, if any.

Background: From July 2016, all NHS organisations were required to comply with the Accessible Information Standard. This standard sets out how organisations must ensure that patients with visual or hearing impairment, or any disability that makes communication more difficult, receive information in formats that they can understand and receive appropriate support to help them to communicate. This may require information to be provided in different formats, such as: large print, braille, easy read, email etc.

Further information can be found on NHS England's website at:
www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/patients/accessibleinfo/

Reminder: we have portable induction loops at all of our surgeries. If you are hearing impaired, please ask reception about these - you can take one with you into the consultation room to aid your appointment.

SURGERY OPENING TIMES

BRILL:	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday: Thursday:	8.30am - 6.00pm 8.30am - 1.00pm
LONG CRENDON:	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: Wednesday Saturday:	8.30am - 6.00pm 8.30am - 1.00pm 8.30am - 10.30am
THAME:	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday:	8.30am - 6.00pm
PRINCES RISBOROUGH:	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday: Wednesday:	8.30am - 6.00pm 8.30am - 1.00pm
CHINNOR:	Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday: Tuesday:	8.30am - 6.00pm 8.30am - 1.00pm

We also open for extended hours appointments at the following times:

BRILL:	Alternate Tuesdays:	6.30pm - 8.00pm
LONG CRENDON:	Saturday: (Also noted above as this is every week)	8.30am - 10.30am
THAME:	Alternate Wednesdays:	6.30pm - 8.00pm
PRINCES RISBOROUGH & CHINNOR:		6.30pm - 8.30pm

This operates on a three-weekly rotation, with one week on a Tuesday at Princes Risborough; the next on a Wednesday at Chinnor; and the final week on a Thursday at Princes Risborough.

Note: consultations during extended hours are only available by prior appointment. There is no ability for patients to 'drop in' and the telephones are not manned at this time.

TRAINING DAYS

In line with other practices in the area, all 5 surgeries will be closed for essential staff training one afternoon a month (excl. August and December). Upcoming dates are:

Wednesday 18th September 2019
Tuesday 15th October 2019
Thursday 21st November 2019

Wednesday 15th January 2020
Tuesday 11th February 2020
Thursday 19th March 2020