



September, October,
November & December
Edition



**Newbury Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**

**JOINT NEWSLETTER
Number 3 2025**

**Church Street Practice
Patient Participation
Group**



Dear All,

This edition of the newsletter will take us up to Christmas so please note the advance notification of Practice Talks, AGMs as well as vaccinations and save the dates in your diaries. Our purpose is, wherever possible, to inform you of news from both Practices and any relevant NHS Primary Care news where it might affect you. Please let us know if there is anything you would like us to include or if you have any comments.

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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) Your Practice needs you! As a patient registered at either Church Street or Newbury Street you are automatically a member of the PPG and we would like to encourage more of you to join us on the committee. 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.

TALKS & PPG DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 16th September 7.30pm *'All you need to know about Vaccines.'*

Dr. Ladd & Caroline Burgess Newbury Street Practice Nurse Team Lead.

Zoom Meeting ID: 896 8057 3659 Passcode: 071187

You are very welcome to join any of the Talks regardless of which Practice you are registered with. The following talks will be followed by the PPG AGMs.

Church Street	Newbury Street
Talk Dr Jacobson: Hear Better, Live Better: Practical Tips for Hearing Loss When? Thurs 2 nd Oct '25 7:15pm Where? The Health Centre	Talk Dr Ladd: Future-proofing Healthcare in Wantage: When? Thurs 20 th Nov '25 7pm Where? The Health Centre

Our role as a PPG committee is one of support for the Practices and also one of patient advocacy so that the Practices are aware of any matters of general concern (not "personal cases") that might be raised and suggest ways they can be addressed. We are very aware that occasionally some people resort to social media to air their grievances but that's not really the way to provide feedback to either Practice.

Due to rules of confidentiality, the Practices are unable to respond directly on the local community Facebook site to any issues raised there. Nor is it a suitable forum for such discussion, which could include personal medical details.

Please use the Practices' own comments/complaints routes if you are not happy with something at either of the Practices. They can't do anything about it unless they know! Both Practices have procedures in place to investigate complaints, which are taken seriously, and they will take appropriate action.

- For Newbury Street the online link is <https://www.newburystreetPractice.co.uk/feedback-suggestions--complaints>
- For Church Street the link is <https://wantagechurchstreet.co.uk/make-a-complaint/>

AUTUMN VACCINATIONS

Church Street Practice and Newbury Street Practice Teams are gearing up for the Autumn vaccination campaign, offering protection against Flu, COVID-19, as well as promoting the year round invite against: Pneumococcal / Shingles / RSV (respiratory syncytial virus).

These vaccines help reduce serious illness, hospitalisation, and pressure on the NHS during colder months. Eligible groups include older adults, those with underlying health conditions or taking immunosuppressant medication and pregnant women.

Pregnant women are eligible for Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination from 20 weeks of pregnancy, and RSV from 28 weeks – the midwife team will advise women where and when they can have these vaccines.

People over 65yrs who are eligible for Pneumococcal/Shingles/ RSV vaccines will also be invited but this is an all-year-round programme.

Covid and Flu Clinics will start in October **(with Saturday Clinics 5th and 12th provisionally booked)** so look out for more information on the Practice websites / Facebook pages. The Practices will invite those who are eligible ***so please wait for your text invite or phone call from the Practice.***

Please note pregnant women and children aged 2 to 3years old will be offered flu vaccination from September 1st.

Remember these vaccines are safe, effective and can usually be given at the same time. **Protect yourself and others** — especially the vulnerable — by getting vaccinated this Autumn. Thank you for working with the Practices to achieve widespread community immunity!

APPOINTMENTS

Whilst there is sometimes concern with regard to the time it takes to get an appointment, it is very frustrating and wastes valuable time and resources, when appointments, for whatever reason, are missed without notification. If you are unable to attend an appointment, please let the Practices know as soon as possible so the appointment can be rearranged and/or offered to someone else.



HEALTH PODS

Both Practices have the “health pods” of similar design, and they work in the same way. Both pods are available during normal Practice hours for patients to go in and use. The really beneficial part is that the information gets added to patients notes and if there is an issue, for example high Blood Pressure, an alert is sent to the reception team to book an appointment to have this checked out.



Blood Pressure Monitoring

The British Heart Foundation notes that if your arm is much larger or smaller than normal, the “standard” sized cuff may not be suitable.

If your home BP is giving you high readings, it is worth getting a medical professional to take a manual reading to check the accuracy of your home device as well as review the cuff size. For those of you with home Blood Pressure monitors, you should have them serviced and calibrated in line with the manufacturer’s instruction, typically this may be every one or two years. This may involve sending them to the manufacturer or service agent. You should also check the device is approved by the British and Irish Hypertension society. (BIHS)

WEIGHT LOSS INJECTIONS ON THE NHS

There has been a lot of media coverage with regard to GPs being able to prescribe weight loss injections such as Mounjaro on the NHS.

The Practices receive many requests for this type of medication but there are only a very few patients are actually eligible. The Practices are aware of the few patients who qualify and have made contact with them offering this medication. If you haven’t been approached then, unfortunately, you do not qualify, however much the media may suggest otherwise.

Many Pharmacies do offer private prescriptions but, please be aware, weight loss injections obtained privately cannot be counselled by NHS GPs

HEALTHIER TOGETHER

The Healthier Together programme relies upon patients and healthcare professionals working together to improve how local healthcare is delivered. The website provides advice for parents, and clinical resources to support healthcare professionals – which means that your child is likely to receive consistently high-quality care, irrespective of which healthcare professional they see. For more information, visit;

<https://www.oxfordshire-healthiertogether.nhs.uk/>

NHS APP – DIGITAL SUPPORT

We keep mentioning the NHS App because patient information and services continue to grow. We also recognise that many of you are still unsure how to make the best of the functions the App offers. If you would like to try to use the NHS App but have got stuck with an issue or don't feel confident, both Practices can offer "one to one" support.

Ask at Reception and an appointment will be arranged to help you.

With full access using the NHS App you can;

- order repeat prescriptions and nominate a pharmacy where you would like to collect them
- book and manage appointments
- view your GP health record to see information like your allergies and medicines (if your GP has given you access to your detailed medical record, you can also see information like test results)
- book and manage COVID-19 vaccinations
- register your organ donation decision
- choose how the NHS uses your data
- view your NHS number (find out what your NHS number is)
- use NHS 111 online to answer questions and get instant advice or medical help near you
- search trusted NHS information and advice on hundreds of conditions and treatments

If you have arranged proxy access – all this can be done for you by the person you have nominated. The NHS App functions are increasing and it is the safest way to manage your health information. Both Practices are happy to help – it makes their lives easier too but rest assured, if you are not in a position to or quite simply don't wish to go digital you will be supported by the Practices and will not miss out on any treatments.



CHECK YOUR MEDICINE CUPBOARD.

It does feel strange writing this as the sun is shining in the midst of summer but, as the autumn and winter months approach, you should check your medicine cupboard and ask the pharmacy to dispose of any out of date medication.

All medicines in their original packaging will have some indication of a use by date, that should not be exceeded. It's a good idea to stock up on those items you may need for coughs and colds during the winter months. Your pharmacist will provide advice on how to treat minor ailments and suggest ways to minimise the effects of the many dreaded winter bugs.

STROKE

Did you know stroke strikes someone every five minutes? 100,000 people have strokes each year.

The main symptoms of a stroke can happen suddenly. They may include:

- face weakness – one side of your face may droop (fall) and it might be hard to smile
- arm weakness – you may not be able to fully lift both arms and keep them there because of weakness or numbness in one arm
- speech problems – you may slur your words or sound confused

Suspect a stroke?
Act **FAST** and call 999.



The easiest way to remember these symptoms is the word **FAST**.

This stands for: Face, Arms, Speech and Time to call 999.

There are other signs and symptoms that you should always take seriously. These include:

- Sudden weakness or numbness on one side of the body, including legs, hands or feet.
- Difficulty finding words or speaking in clear sentences.
- Sudden blurred vision or loss of sight in one or both eyes.
- Sudden memory loss or confusion.
- Sudden dizziness, unsteadiness or a sudden fall.
- A sudden, severe headache.

If you spot any one of these signs or symptoms, **don't wait. Call 999!**

If the cause of a stroke is identified as a blood clot, then time is of the essence to administer a 'clot busting drug.' The stroke patient (if conscious) or an accompanying relative will be asked for permission to administer the drug at a time when they are traumatised by what is happening and probably not in a position to grasp the meaning or necessity of speed of the medical decision required.

Whilst we hope you and/or your loved ones are never in this position we feel it's worth mentioning as it's something that has been personally experienced and we hope you may therefore be better prepared.

Stroke Helpline For information about stroke and support. Call 0303 3033 100 or email helpline@stroke.org.uk

NHS HEALTH CAMPAIGNS OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

October 2025 is National Cholesterol Month

- National Cholesterol Month, is an awareness campaign aimed at raising understanding about the importance of maintaining healthy cholesterol levels and promoting heart health.
- Organised by HEART UK, this initiative encourages people to get their cholesterol checked, learn about the impact of high cholesterol on their health, and adopt lifestyle changes that can reduce cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease.
- High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, yet many people are unaware of their cholesterol levels. Do you know yours?
- **‘Movember’**, is 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.

November is also Lung Cancer Awareness Month

- 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.

NHS 10 YEAR PLAN

Many of you might have seen in the news that the Government has issued a 10-year plan for the NHS. A core element is to get Health Care closer to home. The ‘Plan’ is based on delivering more services in community settings, with Primary Care (e.g. GP Practices) and community services at its heart.

The details of implementation of the changes have not been announced, will vary from region to region and will be dependent on local infrastructure already in place.

In the OX12 area we have two GP Practices in the Health Centre, the Community Hospital (currently being refurbished), as well as some other Primary Care services.

Whilst we applaud the ambition of the plan please do not assume our hard-working Practices have either the resources or the manpower to immediately bring in the aspirations detailed in the plan – any changes take time and, as a PPG, we will keep you informed as much as we can.

MATURE DRIVERS. There has been quite a lot of press coverage recently with regard to the more mature drivers amongst us. Did you know when you reach the age of 70, your driving licence expires? You're then required to renew your driving licence, and then every 3 years after that. You don't have to retake your driving test at 70, but you do have to make a health declaration when renewing your licence. It is well worth having a hearing and eyesight check so you're up to date. If you have a health condition or disability, you may have to have your driving ability assessed. For tips on driving safely, for longer Visit: www.olderdrivers.org.uk



Call: 0808 801 0822 Email: info@olderdrivers.org.uk

There's no fee for renewing your driving licence after 70 so do make sure you go through the official DVLA website if you're renewing online, as some unofficial websites will try to charge you to renew your licence. Don't forget to apply for any extra categories of vehicle covered on your old licence if you still want to be able to drive them.

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



AND FINALLY As joint editors of the newsletters we are keen to provide you, the patients at both the Church Street Practice and the Newbury Street Practice, with up-to-date information about Primary Health Care in and around our area. Some of this comes from the Practices themselves, some comes from NHS and other reliable sources.

The newsletter is now distributed in both paper form and as a QR code, which means you can download an electronic version of the newsletter to your smart phone, and read it on that device, thus saving paper.

Do please let us know whether:

- ❖ **You find the newsletter easy to get hold of and where from?**
- ❖ **What topics would you like addressed in the newsletters in 2026.**