



Vida

HEALTHCARE  
CARING FOR YOUR HEALTH

# Practice Newsletter

Autumn 2024

# Contents

Patient Participation Groups	3
Recent Starters and Leavers	4
Friend of The Doctors Surgery (FODS)	4
NHS Friends and Family Survey	5
National Patient Survey	5
Appointment Attendance	6
Updating Your Details	6
Test Results	6-7
PATCHS - Online Consultations	8
The Hollies - Online Consultations	9
Telephone System	10
Improved Wi-Fi	11
Christmas Jumper Day 2024	11
Stay Healthy This Flu Season	12
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	12-13
Dispensary	14
Shared Care and Private Providers Notice	14
Pharmacies - How Can They Help?	15
Surgery Information	16

## **Patient Participation Groups**

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are representatives of the practice population, (including carers of registered patients) who meet with the practice and provide patient experience and feedback.

These groups generally meet with the practice team several times a year.

PPGs can play a number of roles, including:

- Advising the practice on the patient perspective – a critical friend
- Organising or assisting with health promotion events and helping to share health related messages and understanding of services
- Communicating with the wider patient population
- Carrying out research (survey) into the views of those who use the practice (and their carers)
- Influencing the practice or the wider NHS to improve commissioning
- Fundraising to improve the services provided by the practice

We have a Patient Participation Group at The Hollies, Carole Brown, Hunstanton and within King's Lynn.

You can get involved with the PPG and it is completely free, however you must be a patient or carer at the practice to be eligible.

Meetings are held on a quarterly basis, or you may wish to participate as a virtual member only and receive emails and feedback electronically.

If you wish to join one of our PPGs, then please contact the practice and express your interest and a member of the PPG committee will be in touch with you soon. The Practice is hugely grateful for the work and support these groups make.

## **Recent Starters and leavers**

### **Starters:**

Jessica Spencer - Community Support Team

### **Leavers:**

Aderonke Ojo - GP

Saira Karim - GP

Sayedur Rahman - GP

Jo Ord - Nurse

Tracey Creasey - Triage Nurse

## **Friends of the Doctors Surgery (FODS)**

Friends of the Doctors Surgery are a group of volunteers who are registered at Gayton Road Health Centre and specifically fund raise and support us at the practice.

"For those of you who do not know who we are; we are a small and friendly group who raise funds for the benefit of the patients of Gayton Road Health Centre. We have a stall, for three days every month, in the waiting room of the surgery. You can find the dates on the notice board in the waiting room or ask at the stall for a list.

Unfortunately, our numbers are dwindling and desperately need more helpers. If you feel you can spare a few hours, (no matter how few) each month, please email [fodsfundraiser@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fodsfundraiser@yahoo.co.uk). We would also welcome any good quality bric a brac or books for sale on the stall."

### **NHS Friends and Family Survey**

The friends and family survey is now available via an online form. You can find it by looking for our posters around the surgery or by using the link below. Alternatively there are paper copies available to fill in at reception.

<https://forms.office.com/e/Yi7QYPdTir>

### **We would really appreciate your feedback!**

Your feedback gives us a great indication of how we are doing, and of anything that we can do to improve our services for you in the future. Let us know what kind of experience you have had at the surgery today.

### **National Patient Survey**

The annual results for the national patient survey are now published online. This survey is centrally run by MORI every year, with questionnaires being sent out to a random selection of our patients. The results are discussed within the practice and with PPG members. This year's results are not as good as we would have hoped but we will be working hard to address the areas identified.

To find the practice's results use the link below and when prompted type in our name.

<https://gp-patient.co.uk/>

# Appointment Attendance

As we head towards the end of the year we would like to remind all patients that if you are unable to attend your appointment to let us know with as much notice as possible.

Not attending appointments not only costs the NHS money, but it also stops patients who would have been able to attend at your appointment time from being able to be seen.

From the 1st January to the 19th September this year alone, we have already had 4771 appointments that were not attended. This accounts for 18.49% of all appointments offered, and is estimated to have cost the NHS over £143,130.



## Updating Your Details

Please ensure that all of your contact information is up to date with the latest name, address and contact details.

This is especially important when using our online services, as much of the functionality of these services relies on having up to date contact information.

We have been experiencing an increase in the number of patients that have changed mobile numbers without letting their practice know. This in turn causes delays in responding to patients as if the details do not match our records, extra time has to be spent trying to match the patient to their online requests.

## Test Results

### **Receiving/Viewing Results**

Most test results take 2-5 working days to come back to the practice, although some results can take longer. Once the result has been reviewed, it will be available to view under your GP record.

We ask all patients to view their results online via the NHS App. If you have a query about your test results, please submit an online query via our online consultation system.

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

If a result is urgently abnormal, we will contact a patient directly over the phone. Please ensure that the telephone number we have for you is correct.

## **Who reviews the test results**

Every result is reviewed when it arrives back in the practice by one of our clinical team.

We do have a Results Team of staff, who have had training to support the clinicians with managing test results. They are available between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday.

Our reception staff are not qualified to comment on results, it is therefore your responsibility to check them.

As we receive a large number of test results each day, it is not possible for each individual to be contacted directly about their result.

If your test result indicates the need for urgent attention, we will contact you using the number you provided us on record.

## **Being given results**

We have a strict policy regarding confidentiality and will not give results out to anyone other than the patient, unless express prior permission has been given or the patient concerned would not be capable of understanding them.

We will undertake some confirmation of identity checks before giving out results by telephone.

## **Hospital, Specialist or Consultant requests**

It is the responsibility of the doctor ordering a test to check and follow-up the result. This means that the specialist or hospital service will review the results of the tests that they have requested. You may be informed of this by a follow up outpatient appointment or by letter.

In rare circumstances the GP may be asked by the hospital to follow up tests, they would write to the GP.



## PATCHS - Online Consultations

Our online consultation service, PATCHS seems to be growing in popularity, we now have well over 5000 patients using it on a regular basis. However, there are many more of you that haven't signed up yet. If you haven't signed up yet, then please have a look and see if it appeals to you and can save you time and effort when trying to contact us.

***This will apply to all sites except The Hollies Surgery, for more information see article on the previous page.***

### **What is the appeal of PATCHS to patients?**

- Register from home
- Quick and easy to use - just answer a few simple questions to get started
- Avoid long waits for a GP appointment
- Access PATCHS via our website, any time of day

You can sign up and make use of PATCHS by visiting the following webpage:

<https://patches.ai/practice/vidahealthcare>

### **Feedback**

PATCHS is rated 4.0 stars from over 5300 reviews across Vida Healthcare

Almost two thirds of Vida patients would recommend our practices from over 1,900 votes







## The Hollies - Online Consultations

The Hollies Surgery are now using Accurx/Patient Triage.

Patient Triage can be used to submit medical queries and administration requests to The Hollies for yourself or on behalf of someone you care for.

Patient Triage can be accessed directly or via the NHS App.

Please note that Patient Triage should never be used in an emergency. If your medical query is urgent then contact '111' or for a medical emergency contact, '999'

***Patient Triage will only be available to patients at The Hollies Surgery. All other sites should continue to use PATCHs. See our website for more details.***



To submit a request via Accurx (The Hollies Surgery patients only) first head to our website [www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk) and select the 'Accurx - The Hollies' button below the search bar in the top right of the web page.

When selecting the link you will be able to see the name and address of your practice (The Hollies Surgery) and information on what to do if your query is a medical emergency.

Below this information are three choices to select from based on the nature of your query;

- Admin Query
- Medical Request
- Online Advice

Simply select the type of request you wish to submit and fill in the accompanying form, remembering to select whether the request is for yourself or for someone you care for before finally pressing submit to send your request to your GP practice.

# Telephone System - Update

## New System

Over the past few months we have been working towards getting our new telephone system installed and operational. The new telephone system is now in place and live.

Within this system we have enabled a new call-back feature. Patients can use this call-back feature to retain their position in the call queue and hang up the phone, rather than sitting on hold in the call queue. You will then be called back automatically once your original position in the queue has been reached.

***Please make sure if you request a call back, that you keep the phone you have dialled from close by and are available to take the call.***

We would appreciate any feedback regarding the new telephone system, good or bad, in order to continue improving our service to you.

## Call Blocking Software

We have experienced a few issues when trying to call certain patients. The issue arises from patients having call blocking software setup on their home telephone system.

In most cases, patients will need to either add the practice number(s) to their allowed telephone numbers list, or alternatively patients can contact their telephone supplier to ask them to add the practice number(s) to their allowed telephone list.

The practice numbers to add to the allowed list are listed below. Please note that on occasion you may be contacted from a different site to your usual registered practice, so it may be beneficial adding all of the below numbers:

Carole Brown Health Centre: 01485 500 139

Gayton Road Health Centre: 01553 600 075

Hunstanton Medical Practice: 01485 532 859

St Augustine's Surgery: 01553 769 614

The Hollies Surgery: 01366 310 301



# Improved Wi-Fi

If you have visited us recently, you may have noticed some telecoms engineers installing new access points in various locations around our practices. These access points form part of an ongoing project to improve our Wi-Fi services for both staff and patients.

The project is already well underway, with an aim to have all of our sites up and running on the new Wi-Fi network by the end of the year.

The new Wi-Fi service will remain free to use, as it always has done in the past.



## Christmas Jumper Day 2024

All Vida sites will be participating in the Christmas jumper day on the 12th December.

Patients are welcome to join in the fun too!

Donation boxes will be placed on reception at each site should you wish to donate.

All donations will be sent to the charity behind the event, 'Save The Children'. More information can be found on their website below:

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



**Save the Children**

# Stay Healthy This Flu Season!



**Book Your Flu Clinic Appointment Now!**

Location (Surgery)	Day	Date	Start Time	End Time
Carole Brown Health Centre	Saturday	05/10/24	08:00	13:30
Carole Brown Health Centre	Wednesday	09/10/24	09:00	12:00
Carole Brown Health Centre	Thursday	24/10/24	13:30	17:00
Gayton Road Health Centre	Saturday	05/10/24	08:00	13:30
Gayton Road Health Centre	Wednesday	16/10/24	13:30	16:30
Hunstanton Medical Practice	Saturday	05/10/24	08:00	13:30
Hunstanton Medical Practice	Thursday	10/10/24	09:00	12:00
Hunstanton Medical Practice	Thursday	24/10/24	13:30	16:30
St Augustine's Surgery	Friday	11/10/24	09:00	12:00
St Augustine's Surgery	Wednesday	16/10/24	14:00	16:00
The Hollies Surgery	Saturday	05/10/24	08:00	13:30
The Hollies Surgery	Wednesday	16/10/24	13:30	16:30

To find out if you are eligible, or to book an appointment, please speak to one of our receptionists.

## RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)

### What is RSV?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs.

RSV infection often causes symptoms similar to a cold, including cough, sore throat, sneezing and runny or blocked nose. It can also make you become wheezy or short of breath and lead to pneumonia and other life-threatening conditions.

There is no specific treatment, and most infections will get better by themselves. Every year thousands of older adults need hospital care for RSV, and some of them will die. RSV can be more severe in people with medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or a weakened immune system.

RSV infection is common in young children but is most serious for small babies and for older people.

### **How do you catch RSV?**

RSV infections can occur all year round but cases peak every winter.

RSV can spread through coughs and sneezes. You can help to prevent the spread of the virus by covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze (ideally with a tissue, or else into the bend of your elbow), and you can wash your hands frequently to reduce the risk of picking up the virus. Even with these measures it can be difficult to avoid RSV infection.

The best way to protect yourself is to have the vaccine.

### **Who should have the RSV vaccination?**

Everyone turning 75 years old on or after the 1 September 2024 will be offered a single dose of RSV vaccine. This is because older adults are more at risk of serious complications from RSV. You can still get the vaccine up to the day before you turn 80.

For the first year of the programme, the vaccine will also be offered to those who are already aged 75 to 79 years on 1 September 2024 as part of a catch up programme.

### **What should I do now?**

Your GP will invite you for vaccination once you turn 75, or if you are already aged 75 to 79 years.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Speak to your practice nurse, GP or your health team, or visit:

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/rsv-older-adult](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/rsv-older-adult)

# Dispensary

We can dispense your prescriptions if you live a mile from a retail Pharmacy as the crow flies. Please see the posters at the prescription desk.

Please contact the dispensary at Carole Brown Health Centre or the Gayton Road Health Centre prescribing desk to sign up, or alternatively you can call the Dispensary on 01485 500 139

We offer a 28 day managed repeat and full delivery service.

The Dispensary opening times are:

08:30 - 13:00 and 14:00 – 18:00 Monday to Friday.

In case of emergency medication, please contact the out of hour's service (111). Information on local Pharmacy opening times during Bank and Public Holidays will be displayed at the main entrance and on the website.

## **Full list of villages that we deliver to:**

Anmer, Ashwicken, Babingley, Bawsey, Blackborough End, Castle Rising, Clenchwarton, Congham, East Winch, East Walton, Fritcham, Gayton, Gayton Thorpe, Grimston, Hillington, Leziate, Middleton, North Runcton, Pott Row, Roydon, Saddlebow, Sandringham, Setchy, Shernbourne, Terrington St Clement, Tilney St Lawrence, Tilney All Saints, Tilney High End, West Lynn, West Newton, West Winch, West Bilney, Wiggenghall St German, Wiggenghall St Mary the Virgin, Wiggenghall St Peter, Wolferton, Wormegay

## Shared Care and Private Providers Notice

Our GPs will not provide medications requested by private providers.

We do not currently prescribe the medications that have been in the news recently for weight loss indications.

**"Prescribing of GLP1s for weight management alone is ONLY commissioned via a Tier 3 weight management service and NOT via primary care"**

# Pharmacies - How Can They help?

In many cases, pharmacies can offer advice and treatments rather than attending your GP surgery.

## **Advice and Treatments**

Pharmacies can offer advice on coughs, colds, sore throats, ear infections and aches and pains.

They can also give advice about medicines. This includes how to use your medicine, worries about side effects or any other questions you have.

Pharmacists can suggest treatments that do not need a prescription for a range of conditions. Pharmacists can also offer prescription medications for certain conditions.

## **Emergency Contraception/Contraceptive Pill**

Some pharmacies offer the emergency contraceptive pill for free. If you're aged 16 or over, you can also buy it from most pharmacies.

Some pharmacies may offer the contraceptive pill for free without a prescription. If you are aged 18 years or older, you can also buy the progesterone-only pill from most pharmacies.

## **Free Blood Pressure Check**

Some pharmacies offer a free blood pressure check.

## **Disposing of Old Medicines**

If your medicine is out of date or unwanted, do not put it in the bin or flush it down the toilet. Take it to your pharmacy to be disposed of safely.

## **And Much More!**

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/how-pharmacies-can-help/>

# Surgery Information



## Carole Brown Health Centre

St Nicholas Court,  
Church Lane,  
Dersingham,  
PE31 6GZ

Weekdays: 08:00 - 18:30

Tel: 01485 500 139



## Gayton Road Health Centre

Gayton Road,  
King's Lynn,  
Norfolk,  
PE30 4DY

Weekdays: 08:00 - 18:30

Tel: 01553 600 075



## Hunstanton Medical Practice\*

Valentine Road,  
Hunstanton,  
Norfolk,  
PE36 5DN

Weekdays: 08:00 - 18:30

Tel: 01485 532 859



## St. Augustine's Surgery\*\*

Columbia Way,  
King's Lynn,  
Norfolk,  
PE30 2LB

Weekdays: 08:00 - 17:30

Tel: 01553 769 614



## The Hollies Surgery

Paradise Road,  
Downham Market,  
Norfolk,  
PE38 9JE

Weekdays: 08:30 - 18:30

Tel: 01366 310 301

\* The surgery is closed between 13:00 - 14:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays

\*\* The surgery is closed everyday between 13:00 - 14:00

Visit [www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk) for more information.

## Extended Hours

The surgery offers extended opening hours through the week at our sites. These clinics are for pre-booked appointments only.