

Patient Newsletter



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WELCOME To your patient newsletter!

Goodbye Dr O.S Singh

After almost 50 years serving the NHS, Dr O.S Singh (Mr) has recently retired. Most of you will have met Dr Singh at some point in his career. He has been a huge part of the community with 33 years of providing healthcare services for the people of Lordswood and Walderslade. He has seen you and treated your children and seen your children grow into adults and have children of their own.

We would like to thank Dr Singh for his many years of service to the NHS and the local community. His knowledge, expertise and dedication has been astounding and we as a practice, colleagues and friends are grateful for his contribution to the success of the practice.

We wish him a very happy and healthy retirement which I think we can all agree is well deserved.

Goodbye Dr Singh!

Happy Retirement!

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Our PPG is a very important part of Reach Healthcare. It is a group of patients who allow us to hear comments, views, ideas, and patient experience to support improving patient service.

If you would like to become a **member** of our PPG, please pass your details to our reception team, OR send request for information to

kmicb.feedback.reachhealthcare@nhs.net

Help us to help you.

NHS App

Do you have the NHS App yet?

If a healthcare professional requests for you to have tests you can check the NHS app for your results.

You can also request repeat prescriptions. When you do this via the app, your request goes directly into our clinical system for our team to process. You can also nominate a pharmacy for us to send your prescription to as well as view your prescription barcode.

You can download the NHS app via the App Store (Apple devices) or via Google Play (Android devices). Or you can access the service online by visiting <https://www.nhsapp.service.nhs.uk/login>

Referrals

If you have been referred to a service at Medway Maritime Hospital and wish to chase your referral or appointment - please call the Patient Service Centre on 01634 969 800. Lines are open Monday - Friday between 8am and 6pm.

Please make sure you have your booking reference number and password/access code available and an operator will be able to assist you.

Are your contact details up to date?

Please contact the surgery to update your details if you or a member of your household move address or change your phone number or email address.

Upcoming Surgery

Afternoon Closures

Practices across Kent and Medway close one afternoon a month for Protected Learning Time (PLT). On these afternoons, cover is put in place by MedOCC and NHS 111 so that our patients can still access medical care if required.

Afternoon Closure Dates will be posted on our Facebook page and displayed on posters in reception at each surgery

Merger

As you already know, we are looking to merge with Medway Medical Centre (MMC). We would like to thank you for submitting your feedback via our recent surveys. Understandably, some questions and concerns were raised so we would like to give you some more information to hopefully ease the worries and concerns you may have.

In September 2023 the partners and managers at Reach were asked to step in and assist MMC following a CQC inspection and have made a huge difference to their practice already.

If the merge goes ahead there will be no change in how you can contact us. MMC also use Anima and our telephone number will remain the same.

We would continue to operate from our 3 current practice locations with the addition of MMC's practice sites. You will not be expected to travel to Gillingham for routine medical appointments unless this is your preferred practice location. We try our best to offer appointments based on patients addresses and this will not change.

Reach currently have 3 practice locations serving approximately 21,000 patients:

- Lordswood- Lordswood Healthy Living Centre
- Walderslade- Walderslade Village Surgery
- Gillingham- Blue Suite, Balmoral Gardens Healthy Living Centre

MMC have 3 practice locations all based in Gillingham serving approximately 10,000 patients:

- Malvern Road
- Railside
- Canterbury Street

You may recognise some of the team at MMC as both of their GP partners, Dr V Murthy and Dr M Carpenter, were once trainees of the GP partners at Reach Healthcare and Dr Carpenter has worked with Reach as a locum for a number of years.

They will bring with them a team of approximately 25 staff including 5 GP's, an Advanced Nurse Practitioner, 3 Nurse's, a Mental Health Practitioner, a prescribing Pharmacist, Administrators and Receptionists.

Hay-Fever

Between January and December 2023, NHS Kent and Medway spent over £3.7million on medications for hay-fever.

Antihistamines and hay-fever relief products are available to purchase without a prescription at supermarkets, convenience stores and local pharmacies. For more information on hay-fever, speak to your local pharmacist or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hay-fever/>

Summer Skincare

The weather is getting warmer and the sun is shining again! But are you protecting your skin?

Sunburn can increase your risk of skin cancer so it is important to protect your skin when you can. You should wear at least factor 30 sunscreen to help keep your skin safe and this should be applied to all exposed areas of skin and should be reapplied regularly. It also helps to spend time in the shade through the hottest part of the day between 11am and 3pm.

For more information on sun safety, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

For more information on skin cancer, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/non-melanoma-skin-cancer/what-is-non-melanoma-skin-cancer/>

Missed Appointments

When a patient misses an appointment it is marked as a "did not attend" (DNA). Each GP appointment costs around £30 meaning that did not attends (DNA's) cost the NHS approximately £216 million a year.

Reach Healthcare DNA Data

February 2024: 184 missed appointments

March 2024: 179 missed appointments

April 2024: 206 missed appointments

We understand sometimes unavoidable situations or emergency's come up but if you are unable to attend an appointment it is vital that you contact us to cancel the appointment as soon as possible to make it available for another patient. You can cancel in the following ways:

- Via the NHS App
- Responding to your appointment reminder message (the message will usually ask you to respond "cancel" if you can no longer attend your appointment)
- Call us on 01634 687200 to cancel and/or rearrange your appointment.
- Come in to the practice to speak to reception.