



# Take Stock *Your Newsletter from Stock Hill's Patient Participation Group (PPG)*

Issue 29 - February 2024

**Your PPG wants to hear from you.**

Communicate with your PPG by either completing a form and popping it in the box marked 'PPG' which can be found in Reception at the Surgery or email us at: [ppgshs@gmail.com](mailto:ppgshs@gmail.com)

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**Open: 8.30am to 6.30pm  
Monday to Friday**

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**For more information visit:  
[www.stockhillmedicalcentre.nhs.uk](http://www.stockhillmedicalcentre.nhs.uk)**



**Dr Wong sets the scene as this issue focuses on.....**

# DISEASE PREVENTION

Not all diseases can be prevented, and many are multifactorial, however, most chronic illnesses seen by us are in some significant ways influenced by our lifestyle choices.

The availability of vaccinations have been a gift to humanity and saving countless lives, so we must not take that for granted and is covered in our article about the re-emergence of measles cases. At this time of year especially, the taking of vitamin D supplements protects our bones and immune systems.

It is well-known about tobacco smoke and its causation of lung cancer and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), so we are delighted to announce the new "SmokeFree Bromley" service inside.

A healthy lifestyle including regular physical exercise, adequate sleep, healthy way of eating and stress management can lead to a longer life. Our "Blue Zones" article inside shows how these specific communities achieve this and reduce their chances of developing conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis, inflammatory conditions, depression, and dementia.

Our Social Prescribers and Health and Wellbeing coach (see inside) can offer you support to make the changes you feel you need. Our team of clinicians is growing larger to help meet your needs. We now have a First-Contact Physiotherapist, so any patients with joint or muscle symptoms, including back or neck pain can be booked with him directly, instead of seeing a GP. Likewise, our Mental Health Practitioners can see adult patients without them needing to see the GP first and Clinical Pharmacists can do medication reviews.



We know that doctors are in short supply across the country and getting a GP appointment can be difficult, so we are doing all we can to expand our team with allied roles. The Patient advisors can make use of our Paramedic and Nurse Practitioner for minor illnesses, so please give them the information about why you need an appointment so they can direct you to the right person.

If you are having difficulty making an appointment and your problem is urgent (needing same-day treatment) please do mention this to the Patient Advisor on the phone as they will need to discuss your case with the Duty Doctor.



**Melanie Chang (BSc,  
MSc, NMP)**

I joined the Stock Hill team last September as your new Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP). I'm a nurse by background, and originally qualified from King's College London. I spent the majority of my career working within the Emergency Department of the Princess Royal University Hospital. In my role at the surgery, I will independently see, diagnose, and treat patients across a variety of health complaints whilst also working synergistically with GP colleagues to ensure that your medical needs are met.

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Why do people in these “Blue Zones” live longer than the rest of the world and on average – longer than most of us in Biggin Hill?

“Blue Zone” is a non-scientific term given to geographic regions around the world that are home to some of the world’s oldest people. They have lower rates of chronic diseases and exceptionally long-life expectancy. They are called Blue Zones because scientists, who identified these areas, drew blue circles around them on a map.

### Four things the world’s longest-living people do for good health and happiness.



**They move naturally** - and most don’t rely on technology for transportation to get things done. They walk from place to place, build things by hand or are into gardening. These low-intensity physical activities prove to be more valuable than exercising for these residents because they remain active for most of their day.

**They eat wisely** - using plant-based diets of mostly vegetables, fruits, nuts, and tubers like sweet potatoes. They also typically aim to eat in moderation and aren’t prone to overindulge in eating. Because several Blue Zones prioritize gardening, they often eat fresh foods straight from the source.



**They have a positive outlook on life** - often maintaining an optimistic perspective by practicing a faith, either religious or spiritual. Pausing when necessary to have intentional rest. But perhaps the biggest contributor to their positive outlook is their connections to their purpose and their true calling and use it as fuel to keep going in life.

**They value connection** – and value family first and will often prioritize spending time with their family over working extra hours. Partnership is significant to them: Blue Zone people make their partners a priority, nurture their relationships and invest in them. They actively maintain the right social circle. “Having the right friends, that is the biggest secret to help these people do the right things and avoid the wrong things.”



If you, or your family, are lucky enough to have access to the TV channel Netflix, search for the series: “**Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones**” or you can get a feel for the concept by clicking on the link below:

[Live to 100: Secrets of the Blue Zones Documentary Explores Areas of the World Where More People Live Longer - Netflix Tudum](#)

Proof some will say, that generating your own good health and well-being, and taking charge of living to these values in all aspects of your life, will help to increase your own longevity, through **Prevention**, rather than **Cure**.

“What is clear, is that the same things that help us live long and healthy lives, are the same things that make our lives worth living.”

**Makes you think, doesn’t it?** For more information click here: [Home - Live Better, Longer - Blue Zones](#)

Back by Popular Demand!

Mastering the



Workshops

Last year your PPG ran a series of workshops designed to help patients migrate to, and utilise the benefits of the NHS App. Given the positive feedback it has been decided to run some more in Spring of this year. Interested? If so, please email Liz Bussey at: [ppgshs@gmail.com](mailto:ppgshs@gmail.com) and register your name. Meanwhile, if you need any help with NHS App services please contact or visit the Surgery **after** 10am on weekdays and either a Patient Advisor, or member of the Admin team, will be on hand to help you.

## REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DEVELOPING TYPE 2 DIABETES

“Because preventing it is much better than spending the rest of your life trying to manage it”

**FACT:** There are over more than 540 patients living with Type 2 Diabetes currently registered at Stock Hill with another 850 diagnosed with Pre-diabetes, which is also called Non-Diabetic Hyperglycaemia (NDH).....

...and that means a greater risk of potentially serious health complications and shorter life expectancy. Modern life can make it hard to be healthy but for many people type 2 diabetes can be prevented by making small lifestyle changes. Diabetes is a leading cause of sight loss in people of working age. It is also the source of most cases of kidney failure and lower limb amputation (other than accidents). People with diabetes are up to five times more likely to develop heart disease or have a stroke than those without diabetes.

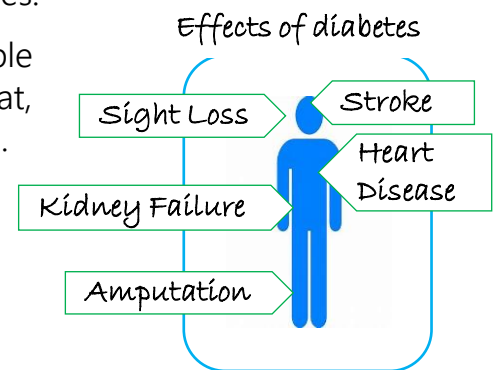
*However,* Prediabetes and early Type 2 Diabetes are reversible conditions. By making lifestyle changes and losing excess body fat, a person can bring their blood sugars back into the normal range.

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented by:

- Managing your weight,
  - Eating healthily and
  - Being more active

If you are over the age of 40 years and especially if you are overweight, it is worth having an annual blood test for HbA1c to check if you are at risk of developing diabetes.

“The Healthier You” National Diabetes Prevention Programme (NDPP) is a free 9-month programme for those who are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Through behaviour change, support and education around nutrition, movement, mindset, alcohol and sleep you will learn to make small healthy changes that will significantly reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes



For more information and registration please **Click here:**

[Home < Healthier You](#)

Or go to:

<https://healthieryou.org.uk>

To complete registration you will need:

1. Your NHS Number
2. HbA1c blood test result
3. Date of Blood Test (must be within the past 12 months)
4. Your height & weight (take locally)

This information should be available on your NHS App. If not, please email the surgery at: [selicb.stockhillreception@nhs.net](mailto:selicb.stockhillreception@nhs.net)



Marissa Simmonds

The above Diabetes prevention programme is supported by Marissa Simmonds who, as a health and wellbeing coach for Five Elms PCN, supports patients at Stock Hill through a range of health challenges. Her role involves providing guidance and support on diabetes management, menopause symptoms, obesity, bereavement, anxiety, depression, nutrition, healthy lifestyle habits, end of life care and cancer support. She works closely with patients at Stock Hill to empower us to make informed decisions about our health and lifestyle and to support us to navigate our health journey with confidence and resilience.





Dr Hopkins life message to us all:

**“ONE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECK A YEAR COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!”**

High blood pressure (hypertension) is very common. Some people don't know they have high blood pressure, as they might not experience any symptoms. Being aware that you have high blood pressure and having it treated to a normal level could prevent life-threatening events in the future, such as a stroke or heart attack.

It is important to make sure your blood pressure is well-controlled. If you have been diagnosed and already take medication for it – Check it ...at least every 6 months!! Therefore, we are delighted to offer our patients free access to the blood pressure machine in the waiting area, it's easy to use, and can be used whenever you like.

We are also very grateful that your PPG were happy to support us fund the purchase of our machine, to the tune of £2000.

It also measures height, weight and body mass index. Your readings are printed on a paper slip. Hand this over to the front desk patient advisor who will pass onto a clinician. If the reading is high, you will be contacted at a later date, if necessary.

Please use the machine, a Patient Advisor will be help if you are unsure about how to use it.



**Remember - “Prevention of Heart disease is better than Curing it!!”**

Why would you lose about 10 years of your life, when by stopping smoking, you can help address the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England?



**smokefree Bromley**

**Want to quit smoking for good?**



**Quitline**  
Weekly consultation via telephone, text or face-to-face video chat



**Free 12-week programme**  
Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) or vape starter kit alongside behavioural support



**Quit with Bella app**  
Stop smoking AI, trained by experts who have helped thousands quit

**Text: QUIT to 66777**

**Phone: 0800 999 1072**

**Email: Smokefree.Bromley@nhs.net**

**Web: Bromley.gov.uk/StopSmoking**

**Scan QR:**



**“Prevention not Cure”** is definitely the mantra when it comes to protecting the children in your family from the extremely infectious disease:

## **MEASLES ALERT**

It's something your children will thank you for, as they go through life knowing you have protected them from not becoming that one person, in the 1 in 15 people, who becomes seriously unwell with the after-effects and complications of measles.

Caused by a virus, very easily spread by close contact between people of all ages, especially children, measles makes you unwell very quickly. Once the symptoms, high temperature, runny nose, sneezing and, a cough with a rash appearing 2-4 days later come out, it could be too late.

**Contact the surgery today to organise your child's health protection through 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.**

Don't leave it to chance – **One positive case can affect 18 people** - it's the best way to protect them – and they will thank you!

For more information go to: [MMR vaccinations](#).