

# STATION ROAD SURGERY NEWS

Summer 2022

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY STATION ROAD SURGERY  
PATIENTS PARTICIPATION GROUP**

EDITION 5

## STATION ROAD SURGERY (SRS) PPG NEEDS YOU!

### WHAT IS A PPG AND WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

Since April 2015 it has been a requirement of NHS England that all GP practices have a Patient Participation Group (PPG). The current SRS PPG was set up in 2018. We are a diverse group of approximately 20 patients. We regularly meet, with staff from the practice, to raise awareness of patient experiences, services and concerns. We make constructive suggestions, and work with the practice, to help improve care and services. Our role is to be a critical friend. We also endeavour to keep patients informed of developments in the SRS Practice and support health awareness. Our overall aim is to build good two-way communication between the practice and patients for the benefit of all.

### WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

- We requested that test results be made available online, so patients didn't have to phone the surgery to get them. This is now possible.
- Following a visit by one of our members, who uses a wheelchair, disabled access has been improved. A buzzer has been installed outside, at the bottom of the ramp, so anyone needing it can buzz for assistance. Inside furniture has been moved around to make access to the waiting room, and the check-in screen, more accessible to wheelchair users.
- After raising concerns that patients didn't know whether their online prescriptions requests had been received, an automated response is now issued.
- We write a twice-yearly newsletter to keep patients informed of health care issues, and to keep them up to date with changes to the practice that might impact upon them.
- Revenue raised by advertisements in the first few newsletters enabled us to fund an automatic light in the patient toilet.
- We assist at the yearly flu clinics, stewarding and supporting patients as needed.
- We painted the patient waiting room so that it is a more pleasant area to sit in. Photographs, kindly loaned to us by the West Wickham Photographic Society, have also improved the room.
- We painted an unsightly outside wall outside Dr Anthony Pillai's room.
- We have introduced 2 flowerpots outside the surgery to lift visitors' spirits. We also tackle the ongoing problem of weeds and litter on the forecourt from time to time.

### WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

If you are a patient or carer and would like to join the PPG, or find out more about it, please contact the practice, who will put you in touch with us. We have 4 main meetings a year. These are currently held in the evenings via Zoom. The meetings are not a forum for individual complaints but are a place for open and honest communication about issues affecting patients. We always respect patient and practice confidentiality.

### Welcome to the latest edition on the SRS newsletter

Life has now virtually returned to 'normal' following the worst of the pandemic and the restrictions it brought. However, as I write this, covid cases are, once again, rising rapidly, reminding us that we are not yet out of the woods and, sadly, it is still exerting huge pressures on the NHS. Despite this, the surgery continues to cope well with the pressures.

As you may be aware, nationally there is a huge shortage of both GPs and nurses. SRS is not immune to this but, happily, when DR Purwar left in March, to enjoy a well-deserved retirement, Dr Amin was able to increase his hours to replace him.

Flu clinics will be starting again from September. As always, PPG members will be assisting as stewards. Read our main article to find out more about how else we support the surgery. There will be covid boosters too but, as yet, the surgery has been given no details.

Howard Borley  
Chair SRS PPG

SRS PPG



WORKING TOGETHER  
TO MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE

# Practice News

## A message from Erica, our SOCIAL PRESCRIBER

Your doctor is not the only one who can make you feel better. I am Erica Jacobs, a Social Prescribing Link Worker. I work for the Hayeswick Primary Care Network and provide support for patients at three local surgeries – Pickhurst, Wickham Park and Station Road. I enjoy my job and find it extremely rewarding helping people.

In the UK, one in five GP appointments is now related to wider social needs, rather than purely medical issues. Social Prescribers, like myself, work with the doctors to ensure that the wider needs of patients are being addressed. There are times in life when we all need a bit of support to deal with problems that are making our lives difficult.

Factors such as unemployment, debt, housing issues, caring responsibilities, loneliness, bereavement and long-term health conditions can cause us stress and can hugely affect our health and wellbeing. If you are affected by any of these issues you can ask to be referred to me by any member of the practice team. I can help connect you to local services, groups and organisations that focus on your specific social, emotional and practical needs.

Remember, whatever you are facing, you do not have to face it alone. Ask for a social prescribing referral from any member of the practice team and we can start working together to get you the support you need.



## CHECK YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

If you have been to the surgery lately, you may have noticed this new device in the corner of the waiting room. It is the new blood pressure monitoring machine. By following the instructions provided, you can now easily check your own blood pressure, if you would like to. Once you have done so there is a form that you can fill in to feedback your results to the practice team. Simply give your completed form to one of the receptionists.

High blood pressure rarely has any noticeable symptoms but, if left untreated, can increase your risk of serious health problems like heart attacks and strokes. Check yours out next time you are in the surgery.

## SICK NOTES – STOP PRESS

From July 1st, in addition to doctors, fit notes can also be provided by nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists and physiotherapists. Fit notes provide evidence to employers about a person's absence and advise employers how to support employees to remain in, or return to work. The healthcare professional issuing it will need to assess the employee's fitness to work. Fit notes are free of charge providing the employee has been ill for more than 7 days.

# FOCUS ON HEALTH – achieving a healthy weight

Gaining weight is often a gradual process, your weight can creep up over a number of months and years. Most of us will know that carrying extra weight can have an adverse effect on health, fat can build up around the vital organs making it harder for the body to fight against diseases such as cancers, heart disease and now covid-19. Extra tummy fat, in particular, is associated with a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. So what can we do to get back to, and then maintain, a healthy weight?

The NHS gives the following 12 tips to help you lose weight:

- **Don't skip breakfast** – you could miss out on essential nutrients and you may be tempted to snack more because you're hungry.
- **Eat regular meals** – eating at regular times helps burn calories at a faster rate.
- **Eat plenty of fruit and veg** – these are low in fat and calories and high in fibre. They're also a great source of essential vitamins and minerals.
- **Get more active** - this is key to losing weight and keeping it off.
- **Drink more water** – we often confuse thirst for hunger.
- **Eat high fibre foods** - wholegrain bread and pasta, oats, fruit and veg. Fibre helps to keep you feeling full.
- **Read food labels** - calorie info on packets can help you work out how a particular food fits into your weight loss plan.
- **Use a smaller plate** – this can help you maintain a sensible portion size. Eat slowly and stop eating before you feel full up – it can take 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain it's full.
- **Do not ban certain foods completely** – it will make you crave them more. Build occasional treats into your weight loss plan.
- **Don't stockpile junk food** – if your cupboard is full of crisps, biscuits and sweets you'll be more tempted to eat them.
- **Cut down on alcohol** – most alcoholic drinks are high in calories.
- **Plan your meals** – planning your meals for the week can ensure you stick to your calorie allowance.



To find out more and get help setting goals and planning meals, download the free NHS Weight Loss Plan. The app is available for Apple or Android and is available through the usual app providers.

## Need additional help to lose weight?

Adults with a BMI of over 30 (27.5 for people from Black, Asian, and ethnic minority backgrounds) who also have diabetes, high blood pressure, or both, can be referred to the NHS Digital Weight Loss Program. To be referred speak to your GP or a local pharmacist. To access the program you will need a smartphone, tablet, or computer with internet access.

To calculate your BMI visit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/>

## Station Road Surgery

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### LATEST NEWS *Covid safety at the Practice*



The SRS website contains a wealth of information about the surgery and other local health care services available to you. Visit it to get all the latest practice news and health care information.

The PPG has its own tab on the website, where you can find out more about our role and read past and current newsletters.

**In addition to visiting the website you can get regular patient information updates by liking or following the SRS Facebook page.**

If you have downloaded, and set up, the NHS App you **can now use it to book either a telephone or a face-to-face appointment.**

Please phone the surgery if you have booked a face-to-face appointment and you have any symptoms of covid on the day. Do not come to the surgery.



The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), working with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), has found poliovirus in sewage samples collected from the London Beckton Sewage Treatment Works.

Whilst risk to the public overall is very low it does have the potential to spread to people who are not fully vaccinated.

**If you or your child are not up to date with your polio vaccinations it is important that you contact the surgery to catch up.**

Polio can cause serious illness and paralysis in people who are not fully vaccinated.

**Disclaimer: Whilst we have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy and validity of all the information provided in this newsletter, neither the practice nor the PPG accept responsibility for events arising from the use of the information.**