

2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report

Welcome to our Patient Group @ Streatham Hill Group Practice
2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report



PG at SHGP

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2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report



Please Note

The Patient Group's "Xmas Meeting / 2023 End of Year Report" will be issued in parallel and coincide with the launch of the new Streatham Hill Group Practice website.

For best viewing results, please view with internet connection. Thank you.

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A message from the Patient Group Co-Chairs – Fraser and Graham Syme

28th February 2024

We would like to acknowledge that from the start of Covid until now, the Patient Group had been in abeyance for logistical as well as health concerns but we hope this 20th December 2023 meeting marks the start of a new improved series of Patient Group meetings moving forward.

Although it may not appear so for the casual observer, it takes quite a lot of time and effort to organise a meeting such as this. This effort is not limited to the Co-Chairs but includes practice staff, in particular the Practice Manager, Viliam Holicka.

In some general discussions during the meeting, and without going into detail just now, it appears that there may be a disconnect between some patients understanding or expectation of the SHGP experience and the actual offering by the practice. Some of this may be down to a simple lack of communications and this is something that will merit looking into.

Unfortunately the practice has had to change its procedures to keep in line with the expectations of and funding from NHS England. These changes may not have been communicated effectively to the patient body but we all have to be dynamic and understanding in response to change. Long gone are the days of arranging a face to face appointment at short notice with one of the GPs and being able to spend some time having a chat.

The notion of triage may seem a little cold and impersonal but it is essential to maintain the fair and efficient flow of patients and to direct us to an appropriate member of staff in order to resolve any issues we might have.

Unfortunately, imposition by NHS England seems to be creating an environment where only efficient practices can survive. Those of us, of a certain age, might remember practices like with Dr Andlaw, which were single GP practices... where are they now?

Technology is another area for consideration and we are of the belief that the NHS app should be adopted by both patients and the practice as the core communication mechanism.

Once you understand how the NHS app works there are many features that can make our lives easier such as ordering repeat prescriptions and getting appointment reminders from the practice. From our understanding the NHS is committed to investment in the app so it is likely to get better and better with additional investment and functionality.

The NHS app is available via the link below or via our QR code for the NHS app:-

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>



Although not so enthusiastic at first, we have been using it for a while now and it has a lot of positive elements but possibly falls a little short because of some unreasonable (in our estimation) expectation by the NHS that people should just install it of their phone and it becomes immediately obvious how one should best make use of it.

This is one of the topics the Co-Chairs would like to organise some kind of training session to cover.

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Moving forward we would like to organise a number of meetings in 2024 which not only cover issues relating to the 'SHGP experience' but also any concern that we, the patients, might identify. Saying that we don't want to appear to just be a complaints conduit so if you identify a 'problem', please consider why it is a problem, would it affect more patients than just yourself and what might a practical solution be to resolve it!

We have regular meeting with Viliam to discuss practice matters and want to keep the practice advised on matters of concern and to monitor how they might get resolved.

It will be our intention to invite guest speakers (internal or external) to future meetings because we feel it makes for a good focal point for casual attendees.

Several of the staff members that were introduced today have special interests or specialities that would merit a guest speaker invitation, but we would also like to consider external medical or wellbeing specialists for an invitation. If you have any ideas, please email us at the email address below.

For our Christmas meeting, we once again wandered around the locale seeking raffle prizes for our (virtually traditional) Christmas Raffle. Apart from a few cagey glances when first broaching the subject, we found many of the local businesses were happy to contribute something to the event. You can find full details later in this report but on behalf of all the patients we would like to again offer all our thanks for their participation in making the meeting a little special.

In conclusion we would like to thank the Practice for allowing staff to participate and/or attend the meeting and a huge thanks to those patients who took a leap of faith to come out into the cold to attend this meeting. A special thanks goes out to Viliam Holicka, our practice manager, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the practice does everything reasonable to accommodate and support the Patient Group.

We hope everybody reading though this report enjoys it or, at the very least, finds one or two areas of interest. We hope to be in touch soon about the timetable for the next meeting but until then please stay safe and healthy.

Kindest regards,

Fraser & Graham Syme
Co-Chairs
The Patient Group at Streatham Hill Group Practice

Chair.PGatSHGP@gmail.com



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A message from the Practice Manager - Viliam Holicka

28th February 2024

For those of you that don't know me, I'm Viliam Holicka – the SHGP Practice Manager (and lead Manager for the Streatham Primary Care Network (PCN)).

Most patients probably don't need know me or need to meet me but I am always extremely busy behind the scenes trying my very best, in conjunction with our very strong administration & front of house teams, to ensure, as much as humanly possible, that the practice runs like clockwork in order to look after all of our patients the best that we can.

I would like to thank everyone who made the effort to attend the Patient Group meeting on 20th December 2023 and who assisted with the whole infrastructure, behind the scenes, required to make the event happen.

I would especially thank the Patient Group's Co-Chairs for all the hard work that they put in over the course of the year trying to ensure the best possible experiences for their fellow patients when they are in need of Primary Care services (i.e. assistance from SHGP).

In terms of what the status of both the Practice and its Primary Care offering is, I would like you to be aware of the following...

Our team at The Streatham Hill Group Practice (SHGP) wishes to express our care and appreciation of you.

We have been treating the local community for many years and we are proud of the trust and relationship we have built with you. We also want to acknowledge the challenges we face in light of the constant changes in the Health Sector and the guidance and financial restrictions that affect our work, which one of your Co-Chairs alluded to earlier.

Please rest assured, our Team is both currently doing our very best to adapt and provide the best possible care and options for you, your family and your loved ones and we will continue to do so in the future.

As part of our efforts to improve our services, we are excited to announce that we will be upgrading our website and online consulting tool in February/March 2024.

The new website is now active and can be found at the link below:-

<https://www.streathamhillgrouppractice.nhs.uk/>

We believe this will provide a significant improvement in the access and convenience of primary care services. You will be able to book appointments, order prescriptions, view your medical records, and communicate with your GP online.

I would also like to inform/remind you that SHGP had already changed its telephone provider to **X-On**, which is the leader in the industry. What does this mean to you? This means that you will experience less waiting time, better sound quality, and more options when you telephone our surgery. You may be interested to note that we have received a substantial number of positive feedback from patients, especially about the Call Queuing and Call- Back systems.

The team at SHGP and your Patient Group Co-Chairs strongly encourage you to download the NHS app if you have a smart-phone and use it regularly as it will make your life considerably easier. The app is free, secure, and easy to use. You can find more information and download links on our Practice website or directly from the NHS website:

Option 1: <https://www.streathamhillgrouppractice.nhs.uk/contact/>

Option 2: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>

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Download NHS App Now!



As an indication of the excellence of our partners, the SHGP has been promoted to training practice from teaching practice. SHGP has been teaching medical students for many years and has more recently started training junior doctors. Our Dr Jay has taken on the role of the principal Trainer and Educator. This is excellent news as it means that our Practice is involved in helping to ensure that the NHS is here for many years to come.

We also have many new specialist roles working here at the practice. These include prescribing practice pharmacists, practice nurses, health care assistant, first contact practitioner, health and wellbeing coach, and care coordinators.

All these new Specialist roles are filled by highly qualified and experienced professionals who can help you with a range of health issues and needs should you or your family require them.

I hope you are all staying safe and healthy in these challenging times. The SHGP Team want you to know that we truly care about you and that we are here to support all of our registered patients like you, your family and/or your loved ones as and when you require us to do so.

Kindest regards,

Viliam Holicka
Practice Manager
Streatham Hill Group Practice

Intro to the Patient Group Meeting of 20th December 2023

Action packed session today so here are some Quick House Notes:

Fraser Syme introduced the meeting to the patient population present.

First off, Fraser thanked everyone present – some 34 patients at the start, rising to over 41 during the course of the meeting - for the great turnout for today's meeting so close to Christmas.

He stated that there would be some photographs taken today for possible use on the forthcoming new SHGP website and for use in the report the Co-Chairs will be creating (in the New Year) to publicise the topics covered etc during today's Xmas Patient Group's meeting. Fraser explained that if anyone did not wish to appear in any potential photos that they should position themselves to the back of the room so that they will not be caught by the camera lens. The Co-Chairs & our Patient Group respects patient's right to privacy which is why Fraser took his time explaining this important House Note.

He then announced that the windows would be open today to provide as much air circulation & ventilation as possible in order to lessen the chances of any infections spreading and the Practice has kindly provided FP2 facemasks for anyone wishing to wear one during the meeting (which the patients can obviously keep).

Fraser stated on behalf of the Patient Group that they wished to thank the Practice Partners & Management for making the necessary provisions for today's event.

Fraser went on to state that one of the main reasons behind today's meeting was the Co-Chair's recognition that the patient population at SHGP were likely unaware of all the changes that had taken place since our last Patient Group Christmas meeting and since the lockdowns and disruptions due to Covid etc since early 2020.

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Next up... There are two surveys to be completed anonymously today and you get a free pen (which you can keep) to assist you in recording your answers. Fraser requested that Patient Group members please complete these and hand both of them back in at the comfort break.

Our Patient Group Survey : 2024 Health & Wellbeing Education Interest Form

What would YOU or YOUR family like to KNOW more about in 2024?

To help promote and improve an excellent Lifestyle, Healthcare, Self-Care and Wellbeing of ALL our Patients

Instructions: Please TICK as many Boxes as are appropriate to you or your family

<input type="checkbox"/> Hypertension / High Blood Pressure		<input type="checkbox"/> Heart Matters (Nominate Specific Type below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health / Stress / Anxiety etc.		<input type="checkbox"/> Asthma / Breathing Difficulties etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes Matters		<input type="checkbox"/> Lung Diseases - Bronchitis / Emphysema
<input type="checkbox"/> Weighty Matters		<input type="checkbox"/> Cancers (PTO to Nominate Specific Cancers)
<input type="checkbox"/> Kidney Matters		<input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis Matters
<input type="checkbox"/> Menstrual Matters e.g. Periods, Charts etc.		<input type="checkbox"/> Vascular Matters e.g. Varicose Veins etc.
<input type="checkbox"/> Dementia Matters		<input type="checkbox"/> Health Maintenance Matters
<input type="checkbox"/> 100 Day Cough		<input type="checkbox"/> Long-Covid Matters
<input type="checkbox"/> Covid Matters		<input type="checkbox"/> Prosa Matters
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Activities For the Over 65s		<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Living
<input type="checkbox"/> South London Cares - Winter Wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/> Age UK - Better Together	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercise Opportunities

Please Turn Over

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Our Patient Group Survey : 2024 Health & Wellbeing Education Interest Form

Define Your Specific Areas Of Interest or If Not Clearly Listed On The Other Side - Thank You!

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN CAPITAL LETTERS

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please Turn Over

© SymeBros

Speaking of which, there will be a comfort break at approx. 2pm – Please try to wait until then in order to keep disruptions to the minimum.

Question time for patients will be towards the end of today's session.

That said, one of the patient group attendees (fairly new to the SHGP) inquired why there were patient groups and whether or not all practices had them? Fraser replied that he would return to that question if there was time available towards the end of today's meeting. Fraser thanked the patient for the question stating that it was a really good fundamental question that is perhaps assumed that all patients know the answer to. Fraser said that if there wasn't time available to return to the question during our action-packed programme that he would include some information in the report for the benefit of recent new patients who had joined SHGP and as a reminder to long-term patients (many of whom fortunately only need to visit the practice once in a blue moon).

Fraser said that the timings for the various Guest Speakers would be a little approximate as ALL had very important positions within SHGP, were extremely busy and would come up to our meeting as time and as patient appointments permitted.

Fraser announced that our famous 'SymeBros Patient Group Free Raffle Prize Draw & Prize Giving' will come at the end of today's session.

Please Note: You have to be here at the time of the draw to be eligible to take part in the raffle and Prizes must be taken away by the winners at the end of today's meeting. Fraser also stated that the vast majority of the Raffle Prizes were donated thanks to the generosity of some nearby local businesses which Graham & he had recently canvassed for that purpose. Thank you.

Today's session will close with refreshments & snacks and the opportunity to network with fellow patients, with SHGP staff/management and/or with Graham and/or myself.

Elements Sushi



Possible Nasties To Watch Out For - Winter 2023/2024

Fraser commenced by stating the names of some of the protentional nasties...

Covid - Pirola - Norovirus - Long-Covid - 100-Day Cough - Flu - Measles - Shingles

Please just let those names sink in for a minute...

Okay, so 'our collective aim' this winter should be to avoid as many of the nasties that are out there and by that we mean Covid, Pirola, Norovirus, Long-Covid, the 100-Day Cough, Flu, Measles & Shingles.

Covid LIVE: Professor shares early signs of an infection to look out for this Christmas

By **KATRINA TURRILL**

08:30, Tue, Dec 19, 2023 | UPDATED: 08:31, Tue, Dec 19, 2023



Article from
The Express

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GMB: Professor Susan Hopkins asked about symptoms of Covid



The UK has seen a rise in Covid cases in the past few months, and experts believe new strain Pirola BA.2.86 is to blame. The strain - a variant from Omicron BA.2 - was first detected in Denmark in July this year and fast became the dominant strain in the UK.

In the US, a new Omicron sub-variant - HV.1 - has become the most dominant strain, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

And another new variant, JN.1, has also been reported worldwide. The strain is a descendant of the Pirola variant and has been described as much more immune evasive than its parents.

... And by 'our collective aim' I mean you; your family; your carer (if you have one); our Patient Group; and our GP Practice that has many medical professionals many of whom you'll get a chance to see and/or briefly meet later in today's session.

By a show of hands please, how many of you know what all of these potential nasties are?

Note: Only a few hands were raised out of the 40 or so patients present.

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Norovirus

Article from
The
Guardian

Andrew Gregory Health
editor

@andrewgregory
Thu 30 Nov 2023 14:56 GMT



Please
Be Cautious
and Diligent

Number in hospital with norovirus in England 179% higher than last year

Admissions caused by vomiting and diarrhoea-causing virus almost three times up on same time in 2022



On average, 351 adult hospital beds in England were occupied every day last week by patients with norovirus-like symptoms. Photograph: Jeff Moore/PA

The number of people with norovirus in hospital in England is 179% higher than the average at this time of year, official data shows, as the NHS comes under mounting winter pressure.

Admissions caused by the vomiting and diarrhoea-causing norovirus have surged and cases of other seasonal viruses are also rising, according to NHS England figures. Health chiefs said the impact on hospitals from seasonal viruses was likely to be worsened by the current cold weather.

"We all know somebody who has had some kind of nasty winter virus in the last few weeks," said Sir Stephen Powis, NHS England's medical director.

"Today's data shows this is starting to trickle through to hospital admissions, with a much higher volume of norovirus cases compared to last year, and the continued impact of infections like flu and RSV in children on hospital capacity - all likely to be exacerbated by this week's cold weather."

Eligible people urged to get vaccinated as flu cases rise

This week's UKHSA surveillance data shows the sharpest weekly increase in flu activity so far this winter, signalling flu season is officially underway.

From: [UK Health Security Agency](#)
Published 15 December 2023

Article from
UKHSA



All those eligible for the flu vaccine are being urged to come forward as the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) published [data showing a significant increase in the number of recorded flu cases](#).

The latest UKHSA data also shows there has been an increase in emergency department flu attendances and hospital admissions in the last week.

So far this year, flu vaccine uptake in eligible groups is similar to the last couple of years, although there is a particular need for pre-schoolers, pregnant women and those in the health and social care workforces to take up the offer.



By Dominic Hughes
Health correspondent, BBC News

Article From
The BBC

People living with long Covid after being admitted to hospital are more likely to show some damage to major organs, according to a new study.

MRI scans revealed patients were three times more likely to have some abnormalities in multiple organs such as the lungs, brain and kidneys.

Researchers believe there is a link with the severity of the illness.

It is hoped the UK study will help in the development of more effective treatments for long Covid.

The study, published in *Lancet Respiratory Medicine*, looked at 259 patients who fell so ill with the virus that they were admitted to hospital.

Five months after they were discharged, MRI scans of their major organs showed some significant differences when compared to a group of 52 people who had never had Covid.

The biggest impact was seen on the lungs, where the scans were 14 times more likely to show abnormalities.

Station Cafe Bistro



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So, it's not overly surprising that this is the case since the government, in their wisdom, stopped publishing statistics and therefore the channel where you would normally obtain the **NEWS** and **regular updates** that are important to you are also deprived of these important statistics.

Major study shows new insights into lasting impacts of COVID-19 on UK population

by Ryan O'Hare
24 October 2023

Article from
Imperial College London



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Tens of thousands of people in England may have lasting symptoms from COVID-19 more than a year after infection, new analysis reveals.

The findings come from a representative sample of more than a quarter of a million people in England surveyed as part of the REACT study, who self-reported their symptoms and the impact of COVID-19 on their health and quality of life.

The work, led by researchers at Imperial College London, finds that while the vast majority of people recovered from infection within two weeks, a significant proportion of the group (7.5%) reported persistent symptoms lasting 12 weeks or more (Long COVID), and 5% reported symptoms lasting more than a year.

Long COVID

The most common lasting symptoms were mild fatigue, difficulty thinking or concentrating and joint pains. But other persistent symptoms reported included loss or change of sense of smell or taste, shortness of breath, severe fatigue, chest tightness or pain, and poor memory.

RELATED STORIES



COVID-19 – how long am I infectious and when can I safely leave isolation?

COVID-19 antibody tests provide insights into risk of hospitalisation and death

How have COVID-19 symptoms changed with different variants?

FEATURED

Professor Paul Elliott FMedSci
School of Public Health

EXCLUSIVE

Health > News Health

BUG BEAR Brits urged to 'wear masks' and 'avoid hugging' this Christmas as cases of '100-day cough' rise 250%

Plus, all the signs and symptoms parents need to know

Isabel Shaw

Published: 10:03, 8 Dec 2023 | Updated: 15:42, 8 Dec 2023



Article from The Sun

BRITS are being urged to "wear masks" and "avoid hugging" this Christmas as a cough that can last up to 100 days sweeps the UK.

Leading virologist Prof Richard Tedder gave the advice after new figures revealed [whooping cough](#) has seen a [250 per cent increase in cases](#) compared to last year.

Why Covid is still flooring some people

2 days ago

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-67726685>

Coronavirus



GETTY IMAGES

Scientists say people's antibody levels against Covid are probably as low now as they have been

By James Gallagher

Inside Health presenter, BBC Radio 4

What is it like to catch Covid now? It is a question I have been pondering since a friend was surprised by how roughed up they were by it. Their third bout of Covid was significantly worse than the previous time they caught it.

So how do you know what's really happening in respect of these potential nasties? Perhaps more importantly how do you know & when to protect your family & loved ones if you don't know what you should be looking out for?

Now then, let's briefly look at each of the potential nasties... Fraser then went through a number of slides on the TV monitor briefly discussing associated media articles.

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In respect of these serious nasties your Co-Chairs have been monitoring what's going on with Independent SAGE via their Friday Briefings since early 2020, which had been occurring every two weeks, with the last one for the year and indeed their FINAL BRIEFING held on December 1st 2023. Latterly even Indie SAGE have problems knowing specifically where the immediate problems lie because of the distinct lack of verifiable statistics available. You can follow ALL of their findings and lessons learned via:

1. the Indie SAGE website

<https://www.independentsage.org>

2. the Indie SAGE YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqqwC56XTP8F9zeEUc0ttPQ>



Note: Indie SAGE's short 'Myth Buster' series of videos all under 4 mins 11 secs long are easy to digest and provide fact over fiction.

1. 4. on X (formerly twitter)

<https://twitter.com/independentsage>

By the way, whilst Indie SAGE have stepped down from their regular Briefings, they have not disbanded and/or gone away. You can catch what's happening now at the beginning of their Final Briefing.

Please Note: The key folk at Indie SAGE are all **volunteers** and give up their valuable time in order to ensure as far as possible that the public can be made aware of potential health issues which might be affect them most.

Independent SAGE will still be sharing numbers further updates on social media from time to time and key Indie SAGE Members including Dr Kit Yates, Dr Duncan Robertson, Prof Christina Pagel and Bob Hawkins all have 'substacks' (which you need **subscribe to** if you believe it is important to have relevant up-to-date information!). Bob Hawkins will be doing weekly detailed updates this winter season on Covid and other important Healthcare matters via:

<https://bhawkins3.substack.com/>

Indie_SAGE YouTube Channel

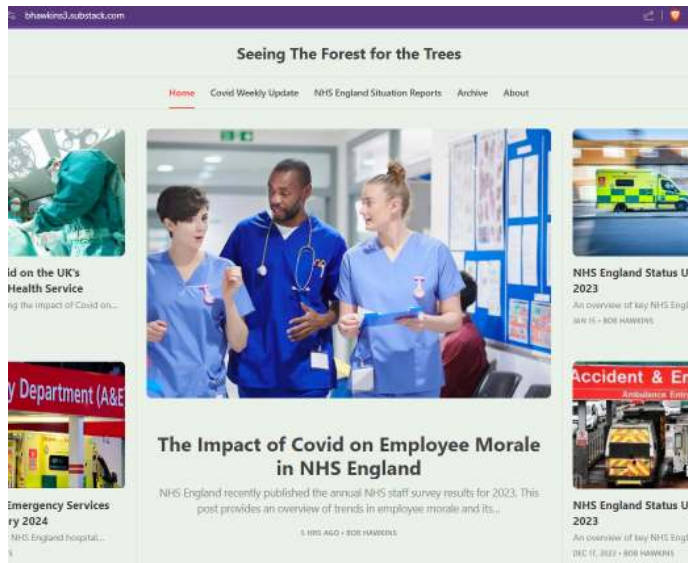


1. 3. the Indie SAGE - FINAL BRIEFING

<https://www.independentsage.org/fortnightly-briefing-1st-dec-2023-finale/>

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<https://bhawkins3.substack.com/p/covid-situation-report-mar-7-2024>



Seasonally, the practice has been active and successful in rolling out flu vaccines for those patients in higher risk categories.

Graham further stated that given the recent spike in measles in schoolchildren that parents should definitely consider immunizing their children with the measles jab.

Indeed, the older patient community should also be immunizing themselves, but in their case, against shingles especially if they historically had chicken pox. (Note: This is in addition to any Covid-related boosters).

If any of these strike you as relevant to you or your family, please call the practice receptionist and ask for more information.

Face Masks

Fraser returned with a quick Recap on the 2 main types of face mask options being worn to combat Covid & its many Variants:

1. Blue Medical facemasks
2. FFP2 / KN95 facemasks

In barest simplistic terms, the blue medical facemasks protect other people *from the wearer* whilst virtually all other masks protect the wearer *from other people* that they come into contact with.

In short, for those who recognise the benefits of wearing face masks in these uncertain times (especially if they have any immediate family members or other relatives who are immunosuppressed or were identified by the government as being Clinically Extremely Vulnerable at the start of Covid) the best option would be face mask Option (2)

That said, please find below a link to a quick summary of the differences between the various types of face masks available:

<https://www.hospitaltimes.co.uk/how-to-know-what-facemask-to-use/>



What Protective Measures Might I Consider?

Inoculation and/or Vaccination

Graham emphasized to patients the importance of getting their appropriate injections (inoculations or vaccinations) when available to help ensure that everyone was in the best position to keep themselves healthy.

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If anyone is in any doubt whether or not they should be wearing a facemask you would be best to refer the question to a medical professional either at our Practice or by telephoning: **111** The NHS non-emergency hotline if you are not able to get an answer locally.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-use-111/>

A question was raised as to why face masks are no longer required by patients or visitors attending hospitals. Fraser replied that he believed that the requirements were down to the individual hospital trusts.

Once again, there is more confusion for patients & their families to deal with, which they could well do without. It is further confusing given that many hospitals when you ring in to them **still** have voice recordings that say face masks are to be worn.

That said, there is some help immediately to hand, thanks to **The Housewife How-Tos** blog see the link below or our summary of their content also below:

<https://housewifehowtos.com/save-money/30-frugal-ways-to-stay-warm-in-winter/>

A) Go Some Place Warm

e.g. Streatham Library, at 63 High Road, Streatham (and why not arrange to go along with a friend to make it a fun outing?)

B) Ways To Stay Warm In Your Bed

1. Heat from a bag. A hot water bottle can keep you warm and cozy. Before you turn in for the night, slip a full hot water bottle between your sheets. By the time you're done brushing teeth and setting your alarm, you'll have frugally warmed up your bed.

Don Luigi



SHGP News!



Keeping Warm This Winter

We know it's not exactly easy to stay warm in winter especially when it is extremely cold and the matter becomes more problematic if you are living alone, feel somewhat socially isolated and/or are getting older e.g. pensioners etc.

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C) Dressing To Stay Warm When It's Cold

1. Choose comfort over couture. Looser-fitting clothing traps more body heat, which helps you stay warmer. Sure, those leggings are comfortable, but unless they're the fleece-lined variety, they'll just leave you cold. Go for multiple layers of natural fibre clothing and save the spandex/Lycra for later.

2. Pick the proper footwear. Remember those Peter Pan boots from the 90s that made our feet sweaty and cold? Wearing cozy, warm slippers is a simple and affordable way to stay warm in a cold room, so make sure everyone in the family has a pair.

3. Add a hat. It may seem silly to wear a hat indoors, but if you're faced with the choice of putting food on the table or heating the house, wearing a hat suddenly makes a lot of cents... er, sense.

D) Stay Warm with Passive Heat

1. Free solar heating. During the day, draw back the curtains on the sunlit side of your home to let in the natural warmth. As evening approaches, close them to retain that cozy heat and keep out the cool of the night.

2. Bathtime heat. After enjoying a warm bath, allow the water to cool naturally in the tub. This warms up your bathroom and also boosts your home's humidity, in the tub. This warms up your bathroom and also boosts your home's humidity, which helps you feel warmer. If you have little ones around, it's best to skip this tip.

3. Improve your radiator. If you have radiator heating, cover a large piece of cardboard with aluminium foil and fasten it to the wall behind your unit. This DIY heat reflector will help your room stay warmer by directing heat away from the cold exterior wall and back into your room.

E) Foods And Drinks To Keep You Warm

1. Simmer soup. There's a reason we associate soups and stews with chilly weather. Long-simmering meals heat up the kitchen as well as our bellies, so gather up those kitchen scraps and keep a pot of broth simmering on the back burner.

2. Add throws. If you're always cold but your bed partner is not, consider adding an extra throw blanket or two to your side. You'll stay warmer without making your partner sweat.

3. Choose the right bedding. Switch to flannel sheets during the winter to help stay warm in a cold bedroom. The brushed surface of flannel traps body heat, so stay warm in a cold bedroom. The brushed surface of flannel traps body heat, so you'll feel warmer all night.

4. Use a heated blanket. It costs only pennies to use an electric blanket which can keep you affordably warm no matter how cold your room gets. Look for one that has a preheating mode to take the chill off your bed and an auto-off feature so it doesn't cost you money when not in use.

2. Drink warm beverages. Hot tea or coffee, cider, and broth are all delicious ways to feel warm. But skip the alcohol which will make you feel warm at first but soon causes you to lose body heat. Keep a crockpot of cranberry citrus tea going, or sip a Golden Turmeric Milk Latte - both will boost your immune system while keeping you warm.

3. Enjoy your carbs! Our bodies convert carbs to energy faster than protein, so a regular dose of carbs can help you keep warm. Opt for complex carbs like legumes, beans, and whole grains, or you'll get a blood sugar crash that can leave you feeling cold and shaky.

N.B. Graham wished to remind everyone that if they were planning on changing their diet in a big way then depending on what medicines they are on they should first check with a medical professional that the diet they plan to follow is both suitable & safe for them. Furthermore, with people on different medicines, a safe diet for one person might not be safe for another even if you live in the same household. So please check with the professionals first.

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F) Heat your Primary Living Areas rather than your whole house/apartment

Try to heat your home to a steady and comfortable temperature throughout the day in the rooms you use most, such as the living room and bedroom – usually around 18°C (64°F) is ideal. If there are rooms you don't use, turn off the radiators in that room and close the doors. This will help you save on energy costs while keeping warm in winter.

At dusk, close all the curtains and keep the windows closed to help keep heat in when the weather's at its coldest.

If you have wood or laminate floors, you may want to consider putting rugs down to insulate your home.

N.B. Graham wished to remind everyone that the ideal living temperatures increase for older individuals. For anyone with health issues regardless of age and for all pensioners the ideal temperature for heat in rooms for daytime living is 21°C (70°F) and bedrooms should be kept at a minimum temperature of 18°C (64°F) at night, according to Age UK. Whilst this is not always possible due to financial constraints these are the ideal temperature to help ensure that people remain healthy and do not contract any cold-related illnesses.



4. Use leftover heat. After cooking dinner, prop your oven open to release its heat into the kitchen. Do the same with the clothes dryer and dishwasher, even your toaster oven. You've already paid for that heat, so why not use it?

Hard Times All Around in the NHS

Fraser informed the patient attendees that you've perhaps read and/or seen in just about any media outlet that there's not enough money for the NHS but is that really true?

Does the Government give NHS England sufficient money to cope?

Does NHS England use the funds that they receive effectively?

Is it money that is well spent by NHS England or is there a lot of money squandered on inefficiencies?

Does NHS England & their various regional Integrated Care Systems (e.g. our South East London Integrated Care System or SELICS) effectively split funds between **Primary Care** (i.e. GP Practices such as SHGP) and **Secondary Care** (i.e. hospitals & other care services) in an appropriate manner for the best outcomes?

All very good questions but to those of us who are not healthcare professionals these questions just seem all the more puzzling given that Primary Care appears to be being starved of much needed cash funding whilst being ordered to add many additional patient services for the same or less funding in real terms.

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Even those at the top admit the NHS can't do what is being asked of it today. But it is far from unsalvageable - we just need serious politicians who will commit to funding it

On an ordinary Tuesday morning I arrived at my GP practice for a day's work. It was 8.30am, and the receptionist on duty was a colleague named Nicola. "Any dramas?" I asked her as I approached the desk. "Not yet, but it's early," she said with a wry laugh.

From the moment the phones begin to ring in the morning until they hand over to the evening service at 6pm, practice receptionists are at the frontline of the health service, bearing the brunt of patients' anger, disappointment and frustrations with the NHS. A couple of years ago, I stopped saying "Good morning" and began to experiment with alternative, more optimistic greetings. "It's going to be a Tuesday of happiness," I said to Nicola as I stopped at the desk. "Let's hope so!" she replied.

I left a cup of tea cooling as I switched on the computer, which runs on an old operating system and usually takes a few minutes to get going. The GP computer systems don't talk to the hospital systems, and clinicians often feel as if they're drowning in passwords and glitches. Some parts of the NHS still use pagers and, until very recently, fax machines. Most of us are trying to provide medical care fit for the 2020s with computer systems better suited to the 1990s.

Fraser said this is perhaps why more of the patient population (not only at SHGP but at all GP Practices around England) should take a more active interest in what's going on in relation to **our NHS** and healthcare services in general.

Whilst the NHS & GP Practices may simply be 'after thoughts' for many patients simply because they and their families enjoy 'good health', that might not always be the case and the likelihood is that everyone would want for there to be NHS access to healthcare based on need, free at the point of use and efficient & professional GP Practices available when they are needed most.

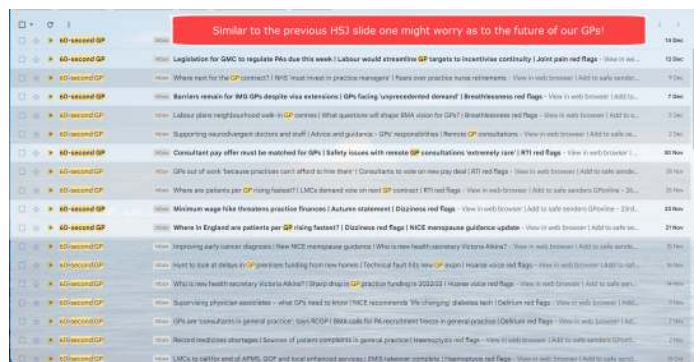
Hard Times GP Practises & Primary Care are Having

The Co-Chairs informed the meeting that they review many articles related to the NHS each month even though the Patient Group hadn't visibly been active for a while. These include normal everyday newspapers, websites & specialist journals/newsletters/blogs.

Fraser provided a couple of screen shots just to give a feel as to what's going on. The first is email headlines from the **Health Services Journal**..



And the second is email headlines from 60-Second GP...



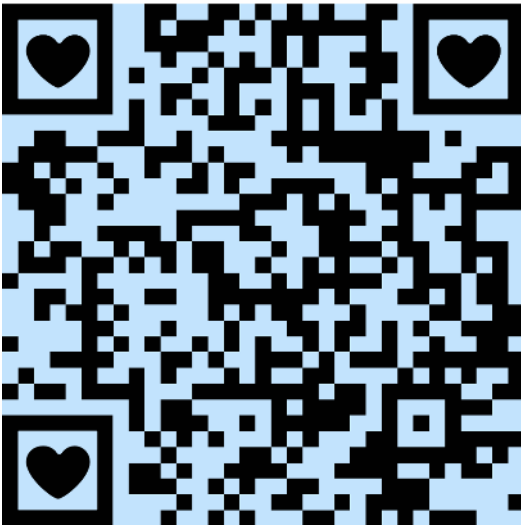
Snapshot of How SHGP is Coping

The Co-Chairs reiterated their observations on the fantastic job the SHGP partners, the Manager & Assistant Manager, GPs, Pharmacists, Nurses, and all the administration staff & reception team are doing under difficult working conditions.

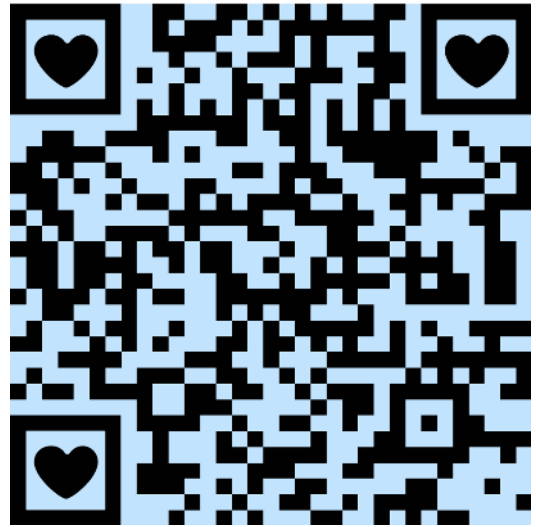
Of course, there will be very occasional blips in 'service standards' along the way but the fact that SHGP is so well managed & operated is a testament to Streatham Hill Group Practice's perseverance in such trying times.

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How to Register as New Patient



Fastest Repeat Prescriptions



SW16 Bar and Kitchen



Download NHS App Now!



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Practice Matters & Viliam Holicka's Summary

Viliam Holicka – the SHGP Practice Manager (and lead Manager for the Streatham PCN) introduced himself for the benefit of Patient Group members who had not yet met him.

Viliam confirmed that most patients probably don't need to meet him as he is extremely busy behind the scenes trying his very best in conjunction with his very strong administration & front of house teams to ensure, as far as humanly possible, that the practice runs like clockwork.



Viliam wished to formally thank the Patient Group's Co-Chairs for all the hard work that they put in over the course of the year trying to ensure the best possible experiences for their fellow patients when they are in need of Primary Care services (i.e. assistance from SHGP).

In terms of what the status of both the Practice and its Primary Care offering, Viliam had this to say...

Our team at The Streatham Hill Group Practice (SHGP) wishes to express our care and appreciation of you.

We have been treating the local community for many years and we are proud of the trust and relationship we have built with you. We also want to acknowledge the challenges we face in light of the constant changes in the Health Sector and the guidance and financial restrictions that affect our work, which one of your Co-Chairs alluded to earlier.

Please rest assured, our Team is both currently doing our very best to adapt and provide the best possible care and options for you, your family and your loved ones and we will continue to do so in the future.

As part of our efforts to improve our services, we are excited to announce that we will be upgrading our website and online consulting tool in February/March 2024.

We believe this will make a significant improvement in the access and convenience of primary care services. You will be able to book appointments, order prescriptions, view your medical records, and communicate with your GP online.



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Viliam also wanted to inform/remind you that SHGP had already changed its telephone provider to **X-On**, which is the leader in the industry. What does this mean to you? Great question... This means that you will experience less waiting time, better sound quality, and more options when you telephone our surgery. You may be interested to note that we have received a substantial number of positive feedback from patients, especially about Call Queuing and Call Back system.

In response to a new patient's question raised, Fraser confirmed that after you opt for the Call Queuing and Call Back service and hang-up your phone you **Do Not Lose** your position in the queue. Graham further confirmed that that was one of many key points that Viliam demanded when investigating & negotiating with our new telephony company.

Fraser then interjected in relation to the new phone system and the relatively new manner in which the practice answers & deals with incoming calls. The jargon used is **'triage'**. In days gone by, patients would simply ring up GP Surgeries hoping to see their regular GP on every occasion. Fast-forward to 2024, the old method is no longer efficient for either the patient or the GP (especially as resources can be stretched to cover for illnesses & holidays etc). So **triaging** is essential when your GP's Practice is likely to be dealing with hundreds of patients a day, all with different needs, requests and health backgrounds.

Fraser stated that it is essential to triage and create an efficient pathway for each patient to receive the right type of care as soon as and as efficiently as possible. **Note:** This is why SHGP receptionists & call-handlers ask so many questions when they first answer your incoming call – they are carrying out the 'triage' to ensure as far as possible that you get the most appropriate solution to deal with your immediate problem. Whilst it might seem more convenient to patients to simply book an appointment with a GP for when you have time, if that appointment is not the right care for your circumstances, then it is not a good use of your or the doctor's time and will likely cause further delay to you receiving the appropriate treatment. Fraser apologised for labouring this point but it is extremely important.

Graham hoped that that helped to clarify matters for the SHGP patient body.



Fraser also urged patients to seek clarification for any medical/NHS 'jargon' that might be used that patients may be unfamiliar with. The Patient Group (as does the Practice) recognises that English is NOT the 'first language' of a high proportion of our patient body, so it is extremely important that patients seek clarification from their clinical adviser (or member of staff) on any words or terms that they are not familiar with.

Viliam emphasised that our team at SHGP and your Patient Group Co-Chairs strongly encourage you to download the NHS app if you have a smart-phone and use it regularly as it will make your life considerably easier. The app is free, secure, and easy to use. You can find more information and download links on our Practice website or directly from the NHS website:

Option 1: <https://www.streathamhillgrouppractice.nhs.uk/contact/>

Option 2: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>.

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Viliam also wished to inform Patient Group attendees that SHGP now has many new specialist roles working here at the practice. These include practice prescribing pharmacists, practice nurses, health care assistant, first contact physiotherapist, health and wellbeing coach, and care coordinators. You will be meeting many of them in a few minutes as this was a key issue that your Patient Group Co-Chairs believed needed to be addressed at this meeting given the Covid lockdowns etc since 2020, the lack of Patient Group meetings in the interim and all the NHS directed changes that have taken place since 2020.

All these new Specialist roles are filled by highly qualified and experienced professionals who can help you with a range of health issues and needs should you or your family need them.

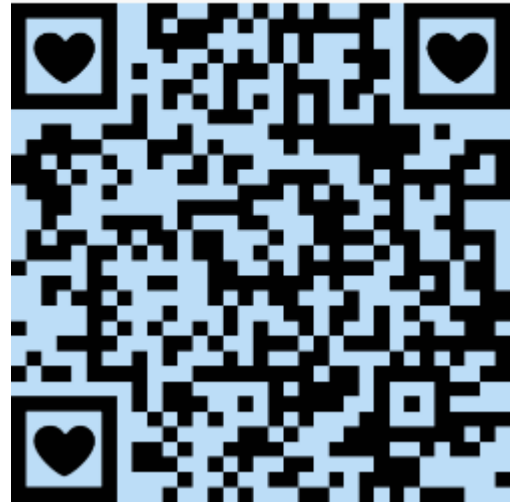
Viliam also informed everyone that over a period of time he had introduced a private gym for use by his staff wishing to stay fit. He hastened to add that for staff going to the in-house gym doing so was purely voluntary but it was none-the-less a facility for SHGP staff members not available anywhere else in the Streatham PCN.

Viliam alluded to the potential of a 'PCN outing' early in the New Year which would likely be under the banner of 'Health, Wellbeing & Mindfulness'. He stated that he couldn't go into too much detail at this stage as negotiations were still in progress.

The Co-Chairs reminded the group that whilst these last points mentioned by Viliam Holicka were not directly relevant to the patient population, indirectly they were as the indirect benefit to everyone is that staff are likely to be better able to deal with patient's problems if they themselves were as fit & healthy as they can be.

By the way, the Co-Chairs just wished to remind you that provided you are happy with the services offered by Streatham Hill Group Practice then you'll likely wish to ensure your family & friends join the Practice for their healthcare needs too provided they also live within the SHGP catchment area. In an effort to make that easier for you to explain to them and for them to join here's another handy QR code covering 'How To Register As A New Patient':

How to Register as New Patient



Co-Chair's Summary Relating to New Incoming Patients & Outgoing Patients

IMPORTANT The Co-Chairs wished to further emphasise a key point in relation to the Patients, the NHS app and SHGP in general. This point is in relation to members of the public moving in to or out of SHGP's catchment area for patients.

(1) Meeting attendees were urged to remind friends, family & loved ones that should any of these individuals move into the area then these individuals should register with our surgery ASAP, bearing in mind that GPs are unable to see members of the public if they are not registered with our practice.

(2) Similarly, with those moving out of the area they should inform SHGP that this is the case and should register with a new GP Practice within their new location ASAP.

(3) Members of the public should schedule to register with their new GP Practice **within Two Weeks** of moving into a new location (outside the catchment area of their existing GP Practice). It should simply be a task added to their moving process and/or to their 'To Do' list. No biggie!

Alert: Streatham Hill Group Practice *still* has some vacancies available for NEW patients!

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Patient Group Co-Chairs Keeping Up Research

Fraser continued with earlier slideshow indicating some of what has been going on that patients may not have seen in either the national or local media.

Fraser wished to emphasise to Patient Group attendees that the Co-Chairs believed that SHGP was providing an excellent service overall, given ALL the Government & NHS cutbacks in real terms to GP Surgeries plus all the changes & additional services demanded of GP Surgeries by the Government & NHS England.

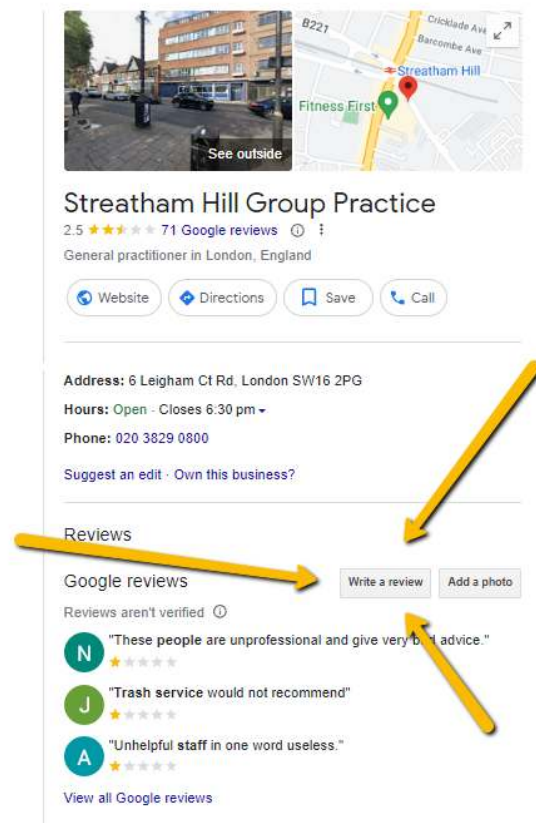


Fraser also stated that like any business in the UK there are sometimes issues that arise, but that in the main any which concern SHGP are normally dealt with quite efficiently. Fraser wished to stress that our GP Practice is effectively a 'people business' and as such very occasionally human error creeps in which thankfully is dealt with almost immediately at SHGP.

Fraser reminded Patient Group attendees that given the Practice is a 'people business' patients really should remember this when contacting the Practice whether by phone or in person. After all, if patients are in any way disrespectful to staff it will not assist with whatever they are hoping to achieve. Similarly, staff are not motivated if they are being shouted at or if a patient is extremely rude to them.

Please Note: Thankfully our patients on the whole are a very pleasant, kind, understanding and respectful lot so Fraser's only referring to the occasional blip that crops up once in a while.

Speaking of patient/practise relationships Fraser mentioned that the Friends & Family Surveys (carried out by the practice by text) provide accurate feedback to the Practice and the GP Partners. That said, this feedback is **not** available on Google as it is private NHS data.



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Favour to ask.. Fraser requested that patients take *just a few* extra minutes post-appointment and complete the similar brief survey on Google. To do this, simply type into the Google search engine "Streatham Hill Group Practice" and click search. This should take you to a page where the Google reviews are on the right-hand side of the page. The area your Co-Chairs request you concentrate on is shown in the image below – simply 'click' on the button in your online Google search as indicated by the yellow coloured arrows in the image above/below. Then please leave your 'honest' review.

Please Note: Your assistance with this will be most appreciated by your Co-Chairs, the Practice Team, Viliam Holicka and the Practice Directors. As you can see from the reviews in the graphic above they are not truly representative of SHGP.

Just as Fraser was about to pivot into another aspect of the Patient Group's close relationship with SHGP a certain Dr Laura Pariente arrived at the meeting...

Guest Speakers, Clinicians & Other Specialists at SHGP

Dr Laura Pariente

Viliam introduced Dr Pariente to the Patient Group for the benefit of those patients who had yet to meet her.

Dr Pariente advised patients of what she and Dr Jay, as senior partners, were diligently attempting to achieve at SHGP for the benefit of everyone whilst working within the framework of rules laid down by NHS England.



Dr Pariente thanked all the patients for attending the Christmas meeting, which she recognised as being a focal point in the Patient Group's calendar. She further thanked the Patient Group and its Co-Chairs for all the hard work and effort they put in. Dr Pariente also thanked all staff present for their efforts & hard work making SHGP the success that it is today.

As you can see from your up-to-date Google search, the majority of the most recent comments are positive with the exception of one 'blip'. By adding your comments, which hopefully will be extremely positive SHGP may get a much better and more accurate rating on Google which will truly reflect the more recent & current status of the fantastic service being provided.

Dr Pariente stated that she & Dr Jay were being very careful these days with their recruitment of specialists in order to ensure that they are the 'right fit' for both their clinical team and for the Practice & patient population alike.

Fraser interjected to ask how many Physician Associates were being used by SHGP as he and Graham had seen evidence in the media & the BMA (British Medical Council) suggesting that whilst this was a recruitment solution for some GP Practices, having a large number of this type of Specialist could be detrimental to participating Practices in the medium to long term.

BMA 'Physician Associates' Article



<https://www.bma.org.uk/bma-media-centre/gpc-england-expresses-concern-over-increasing-use-of-physician-associates>

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Dr Pariente was pleased to reply that the SHGP recruitment model did **not** include Physician Associates and would unlikely include them in the future. She further confirmed that SHGP now has 4 doctors in total which include:

Dr Laura Pariente - Senior Partner

Dr Jay Manoharan - Partner, Trainer and Lead Educator

Dr Shabana Fonseca - Salaried GP

Dr Ila Ganeswaran - Salaried GP joined us in January 2024

Please Note: For the benefit of patients who had never heard the NHS term 'Physician Associate' (PA) before, it refers to a class of Medical Professional that may work at a GP Practice or in a Hospital who will have direct contact with patients. An important difference between doctors and PAs is that PAs are currently **not allowed** to prescribe medication or image scans involving radiation (e.g. X-Ray or CT Scans). This is because PAs do **not** have statutory regulation in the same way that nurses and doctors do. Another significant fact to note is that PAs simply do not have the same experience as GPs.



Dr Pariente was pleased to admit her satisfaction on how SHGP had further developed & expanded over the past 3-4 years with additional services & specialists available for access by SHGP patients. Dr Pariente also stated the importance of recruiting and retaining new GPs as being a manner to best engage with the patient population as a whole. Furthermore, by cutting down on the use of locum doctors & not using Physician Associates (PAs), it tends to offer our patients better outcomes because patients may get to see the same doctor regularly rather than a new face virtually every visit, which in itself builds up patient confidence and rapport with *'their doctor'*.

<https://www.prostate-cancer-research.org.uk/>

<https://prostatecanceruk.org/>

Fraser stated that thanks to Dr Pariente when (she was a new doctor at SHGP's previous premises in Streatham High Road, back when Fraser was 50 years old), she decided a 'prostate check' was required. After conducting the check during that same appointment, Dr Pariente said that she was sending Fraser for further investigation to Guys Hospital for an MRI scan and possibly subsequently for a biopsy. Long story short, Prostate Cancer was diagnosed and then treated and your Co-Chair of the Patient Group is still here today as a result.

Dr Pariente then said she had to dash as she had a meeting to attend but wished everyone a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year.



Important - Co-Chairs re Male & Female Health & Wellbeing

Fraser reminded the patients present, that for the men in their lives, it was sensible to get their first prostate check between the ages of 45-50 dependent on their ethnic background and/or whether there has been a family history of prostate problems. If in any doubt, simply ask your doctor. Better safe than sorry.

For other information related to Prostate Cancer please review these two exceptional resources:

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As Fraser provided additional resources on the Prostate Cancer topic, Graham felt it best that we balance matters by providing a brilliant resource founded by our friend Sally King and that is **Menstrual Matters**.

This is an info hub about the role of the menstrual cycle (and hormonal medication) in the symptoms of female-prevalent chronic ill health conditions. In simplistic terms it helps women to understand their periods better and ways to overcome related difficulties. Indeed, many women are truly grateful for this resource.



Dr Sally King is the founder of Menstrual Matters which is the world's **first** evidence-based information hub on menstrual health and rights. Before specialising in this research topic, Sally spent a decade designing and evaluating human rights-based policies and interventions. More recently Sally has been elected to the board of the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research (SMCR) with the term of office being six years, so plenty of time for Sally to bust some more menstrual myths.

<https://www.menstrual-matters.com>

<https://www.menstrual-matters.com/about/>

Fraser then suggested that this is NOT a resource that ***should be kept secret*** and urged patients to share these links with relevant loved ones i.e. those who mattered most in their lives (i.e. friends & family).

Note: Whilst this is an excellent resource, if you are uncertain or are experiencing problems you should contact your doctor in the first instance.

Viliam then introduced...

Magda and Vip (Prescribing Pharmacists)

Our clinical prescribing pharmacists are available for all queries concerning medications, using their experience and knowledge to allay any fears or problems which may be faced by our patients, to put their mind at ease.



Clinical pharmacists collaborate with general practitioners, they conduct medication reviews, ensuring safe and effective drug regimens.

They provide valuable expertise on medication management, advise on treatment options, and address patient queries.

As independent prescribing pharmacists, both Magda and Vip are able to issue prescriptions, within their scope of practice, so they should be considered as a first option when seeking prescription renewals or any questions about your medications.

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By enhancing medication adherence and minimizing adverse effects, clinical pharmacists contribute to overall patient well-being, supporting the GP team in delivering comprehensive and personalized healthcare services, such as: hypertension diagnosis and review, contraception/HRT review, minor ailments, structured medication reviews, medication reconciliation post hospital discharge.

Next Viliam introduced...

Catia (Practice Nurse)

Catia said 'hi' to everyone before providing a run-down of all the services she might be called upon to provide. Catia then gave us all a brief list of her core competencies as SHGP's Practice Nurse, which include:



Immunisations and immunisation advice any age

Travel advice

Long Term Conditions management excluding COPD reviews

Ear assessment and irrigation

NHS health checks and New Patient screenings

Contraception advice and depo injection administration (need final assessment with Dr. Laura Pariente). Need her to watch a telephone advice and assessment

Cervical screening

Phlebotomy

Any other type of injection (depo for mental health, B12 injections, Zoladex and Prostag)

Graham then stepped in to introduce...

Helen (Health Care Assistant)

As a Health-care assistant I work under and support the Practice Nurse and alongside GPs and other Healthcare support workers within the practice.

I am able see patients for Blood testing, Blood pressure, minor wound care, annual routine health checks such as diabetes, pre-diabetes, hypertension, NHS Health check and new patient screening. I am also able to give the following vaccines and injections; Flu, shingles, Vitamin B12 and Pneumococcal.

Next Viliam introduced...

Sabrina (Social Prescriber Link Worker)

As a Social Prescribing Link Worker, Sabrina, supports people with their health and wellbeing as well as signposting people to services within the community.



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Social Prescribing Link Workers (SPLWs) listen to people and try to understand their situation by identifying their unmet need(s), using a 'what matters to them' approach. They then "link" that person to community services, statutory services and information that can help.

The aim of social prescribing is to support people to address these needs holistically, using a person-centred approach, thus giving individuals a greater sense of control over their own health and wellbeing.

Sabrina (SPLW) is currently available in SHGP two days per week.

Next Graham introduced...

Saphina (Care Coordinator)

I am a trained health professional that helps to manage patient care, for example, the elderly, disabled or those patients with complex mental health issues.



Some of my duties include:

Help monitor treatment plans given by the GP or hospital

Arrange follow up appointments with GP's

Chase referrals to hospitals

Arrange transport

Reminders for booked hospital/GP appointments

Private letter requests

Private medical and insurance forms

SAR requests



Chiara (Health and Wellbeing Coach)

As a Health and Wellbeing Coach I have the privilege to work with a wide range of individuals and accompany them on their unique journeys towards empowerment and self-awareness. Coaching enables people to be held in a safe space and set priorities and goals at their own pace.

Chiara provides Health and Wellbeing Coaching Service for SHGP's patients, with support from Know Your Own Health. If you are struggling to manage your health condition, or going through a difficult time that is impacting on your health, then this service could help support you to make changes.

You will be offered 6 individual 1:1 sessions with a trained Health Coach. Sessions are 45 minutes long and usually arranged weekly, at a time to suit you. They can be face to face, virtual or on the phone, whichever you prefer.

Self referral: If you are unable to go online, please feel free to contact your practice to make a referral. [Health and Wellbeing Coaching in Lambeth | Health and Wellbeing Coaching \(kyoh.org\)](#)

Chiara (HWC) is currently available in SHGP one day per week.

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Sara (First Contact Physiotherapists)

First Contact Physiotherapists (FCPs) are qualified autonomous clinical practitioners who can assess, diagnose, treat and manage musculoskeletal (MSK) problems and undifferentiated conditions and – where appropriate – discharge a person without a medical referral.

Issues to be addressed may include one or more of the following: Low back or neck pain, chronic joint pain or osteoarthritis, arthritis etc.

Sara, our first contact practitioner physiotherapists, can be accessed directly by patients, or via referral from other members of staff. Sara can establish a rapid and accurate diagnosis and a management plan to streamline pathways of care, which is great news for patients requiring her services.

Sara (FCP) is currently available at SHGP one day per week.

Co-Chairs Recap on Services & Appointment Making

Before wrapping up this segment of the meeting Fraser stated it might be beneficial to recaps on services and the route patients should take when believing that they needed to make an appointment with SHGP.

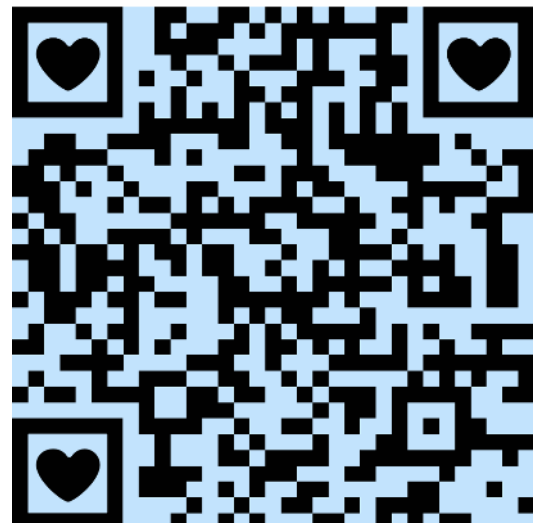
For patients with plenty of recent health-related experience those patients could consult one of the following QR Codes:



Or...

Graham said, that for the majority of patients though the best and most efficient routes are either making your appointment via the NHS app or telephoning Streatham Hill Group Practice and permitting staff to 'triage' your requirements in order to ensure, as far as humanly possible, that you get to see the most appropriate health professional at the earliest opportunity.

Fastest Repeat Prescriptions

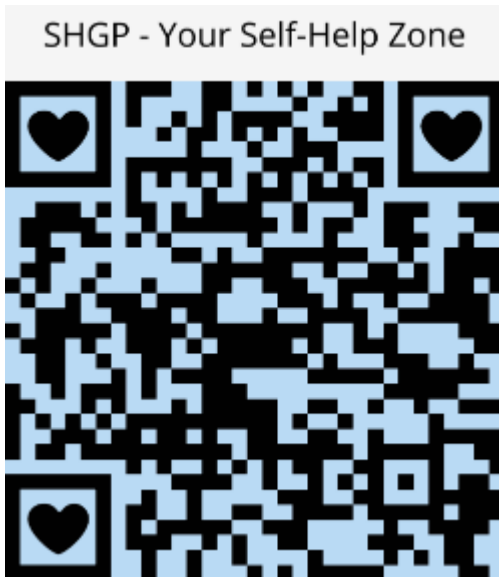


2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report

The Cathartic Effect Of Music Stimulating Wellbeing

It has long been felt that the effect of music can have a cathartic effect on the human body, help those stressed out, with high blood pressure and/or with hypertension to de-stress, improve and stimulate their wellbeing. Indeed, 'music' has absolutely been recognized for its ability to evoke powerful emotional responses in listeners, and this can often lead to a cathartic experience.

Catharsis, derived from the Greek word 'katharsis', means purification or cleansing. In the context of psychology, it refers to the process of releasing, and thereby providing relief from, strong or repressed emotions.



Music, with its myriad of melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and lyrics, can touch on a wide range of human emotions. It can make us feel happy, sad, excited, calm, and everything in between. This emotional journey that music takes us on can lead to a cathartic experience.

For instance, listening to a sad song when we are feeling down can provide a sense of solace and understanding, making us feel less alone in our sorrow. This can lead to a release of pent-up emotions, providing relief and a sense of calm. Similarly, an upbeat, energetic song can amplify feelings of joy and happiness, leading to a positive cathartic experience.

Moreover, music can also serve as a form of self-expression, allowing us to understand and articulate our emotions better. Composing or playing music provides a creative outlet for people to express their feelings, which can be incredibly cathartic.

In therapeutic settings, music is often used as a tool for catharsis. Music therapy involves using music to help individuals express and process their emotions. This can be particularly beneficial for individuals who struggle with emotional expression or are dealing with traumatic experiences.

In conclusion, the cathartic effect of music on humans is a profound and complex phenomenon. It's an intertwining of cognitive processing, emotional release, and personal introspection that can lead to a sense of relief, understanding, and ultimately, healing. Music, in its many forms, truly has the power to touch our souls and help us navigate the tumultuous seas of our emotions.

Singer/Songwriter Becky Leigh

As this is a fairly long report your Co-Chairs felt it appropriate to hopefully enhance your wellbeing by providing you with some beautiful music from a singer/songwriter known to us.

With our friend Becky's permission, we've got three of her videos which follow below and if you like what you hear, we've also provided a link at the end where you can download her **debut EP** in high quality MP3 onto your smartphone, tablet, laptop or PC (personal computer).

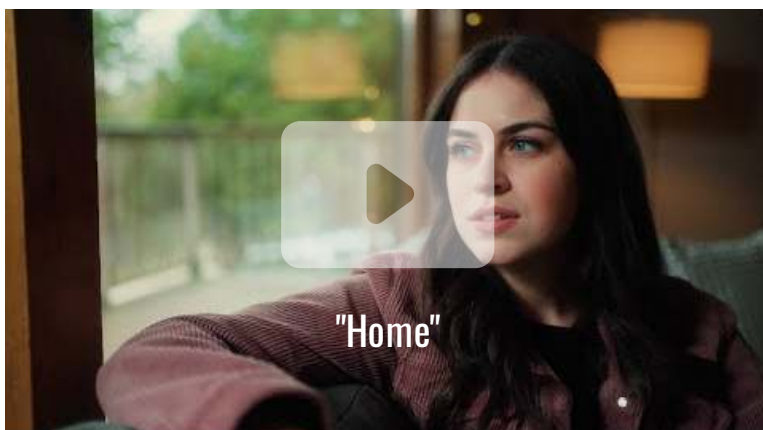
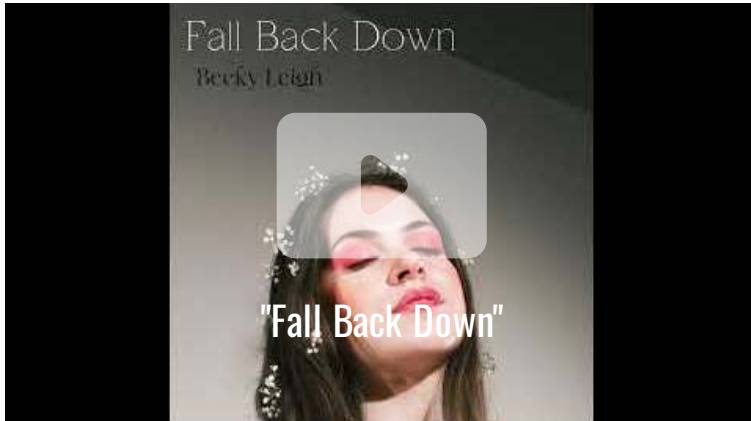
Becky Leigh originally from Montreal, Quebec is now based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. So, she's like your Co-Chairs... She's an ex-Montrealer! Becky describes her music genre as pop/folk. Have a listen. Would you agree?

You may find it difficult to believe but Becky Leigh has already been captivating audiences with her rich and mature vocals for over 10 years!

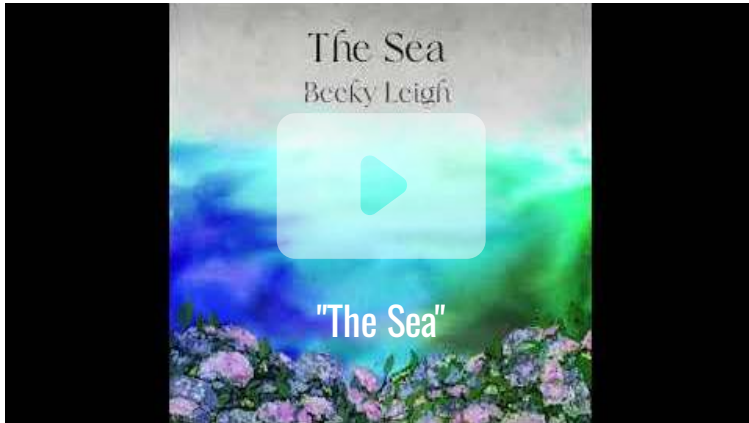
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Given the quality of Becky's voice it's not too surprising that way back in 2016 Becky had a good run, on Quebec's televised show "La Voix" (The Voice Canada) i.e. the French language version of The Voice in Quebec.

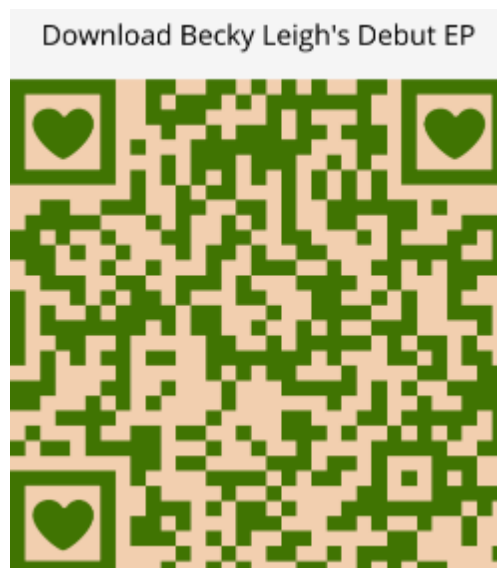
Please now enjoy Becky Leigh and her performances...



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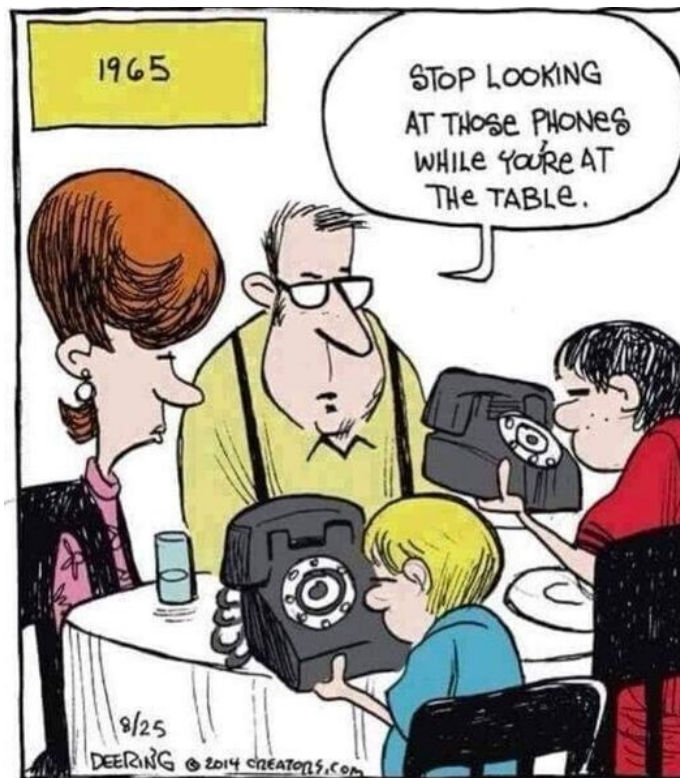
Download link for Becky's debut EP...



Entertainment Humour...

Just To lighten the mood a tad...

When your kid is 30 years old, but still lives at home..



2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report

Questionnaire Outcomes – Health & WellBeing

Patient's Interests

Of the 40+ patients present **26 completed our survey** which highlighted the following:

Your Co-Chairs wished to clarify that whilst the survey sample was relatively small and not necessarily representative of the patient population as a whole, it is still extremely useful in terms of gaining information that we would not have had otherwise.

Indeed, the survey will be a good reference for areas that need to be both investigated further and addressed in the not-too-distant future.

The Top 10 Areas of Interest were as follows:

- Hypertension / High Blood Pressure
- Diabetes Matters
- Mental Health / Stress / Anxiety etc
- Exercise Opportunities
- Social Activities for the Over 65s
- Kidney Matters
- Weighty Matters
- South London Cares - Winter Wellbeing
- Age UK - Better Together
- Health Maintenance Matters

Then...

Comments made by patients regarding areas of interest etc were as follows:

- * Social Activities for over 65
- * Winter Wellbeing
- * Mental Health Services – keen to know how the services link up which depts for referral as now in area
- * Panic Attacks

* Local Socials/Networking/Support Groups + Meetings for young people (under 35) – struggling with mental health /loss/Covid/isolation

* Guest Speakers to discuss different issues; e.g. Mental Health/Covid/Motivation/Drugs + alcohol

* Other useful doctor who advice to stay fit + healthy & not depressed! e.g. social media + emails

* Social activities

* Leg ulcers and treatment

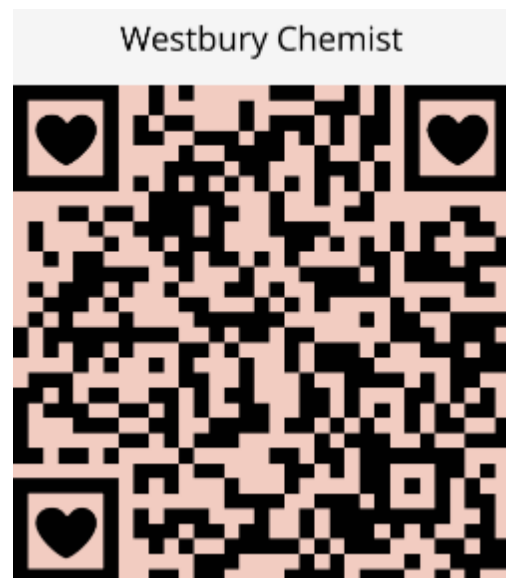
* Blood Pressure

* Regarding Mental Illness, where it is not classed as much as an illness

* Independent Living where you yourself is being treated by it, bringing on depression or anxiety

* Not having diabetes yourself but family members have and you yourself is not aware of their symptoms, as to how to take these.

* Children lack of nutrition and parents are aware of it, when you find out that there is poverty and malnutrition and (lack of iron – for example) that could cause epileptic symptoms. (Obesity and deprived children).



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Background To Patient Groups

Unfortunately, we did not have time to return to this question at our Christmas meeting but we have included some brief background details here firstly for all the new patient joiners to Streatham Hill Group Practice (SHGP) and secondly as a reminder to those who have been with the Practice for a while.

First off, Fraser & Graham wished to confirm that they have been Co-Chairs of the **Patient Group** at SHGP since 2018 (and had been members of the group for many years prior to this) and that the Patient Group and Co-Chair positions are as volunteers.

The previous iteration of our Patient Group had been known as the '*Patient Participation Group*' and the rationale behind why the Co-Chairs changed the name is another story altogether. Ask us at our next meeting, mentioning code phrase: "Gold Standard".

Here is a short video from 2016 (funded by the *then* Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group) providing details about the support patients and patient participation groups *should* give to the NHS in Lambeth.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVuttgRk25I>

Origin of Patient Groups in Lambeth



Fast-forward to today, in the post-Covid lockdown era, your Co-Chairs would be interested to hear from patients from our surgery keen to take part in some way in assisting us with what we do.

During and immediately after our Christmas meeting there were a few patients who suggested they'd be extremely interested in getting directly involved with us and the Patient Group in the future. Well, now would be a great time to contact us!

In the first instance, perhaps the best way to alert us to your interest is by contacting us in one of the following methods:

- * via the form on the Practice website
- * by informing SHGP reception either by phone or in person
- * by dropping the Co-Chairs a brief email to: Chair.PGatSHGP@gmail.com

or simply [Click Here](#)

Thank you & we look forward to getting back to you shortly.

Lambeth KONP (Keep Our NHS Public) Group

We did not have the opportunity to discuss another of our favoured groups (which your Co-Chairs have been associated with for a number of years) as we were rapidly running out of time towards the end of our Christmas meeting.

Currently we are not actively taking part with Lambeth KONP (due to personal reasons) but we continue to support them in the background as they are such an important, worthy and deserving group of volunteers attempting to support our NHS in many aspects but mainly in campaigning against the privatisation of our NHS, which would likely be doom & gloom for the majority of families, likely including yours too!

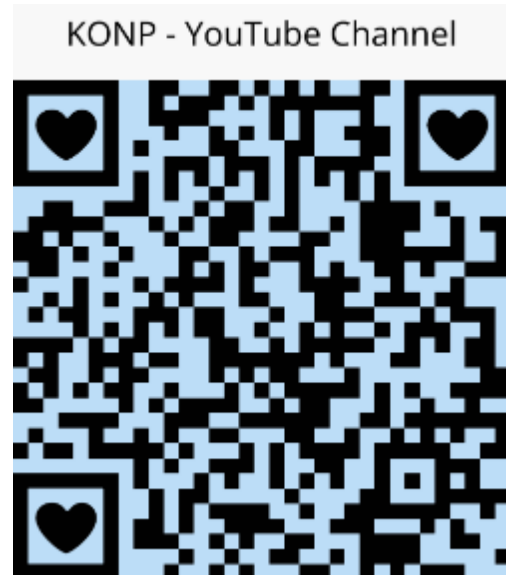
You may recall from right at the end of the earlier Patient Group video this snapshot...

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Or if you absorb information easier by watching then check out the KONP YouTube channel over at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@keepournhspublic892>



You can see where we highlighted and noted the Co-Founder of the Lambeth Chapter of Keep Our NHS Public. This fantastic woman is Gay Lee an ex-NHS Nurse with over 40 years NHS nursing experience. Over the years she's witnessed the good, the bad & the ugly when it comes to both the manner in which the NHS operates and the way the NHS is funded by central government. Of course, how the NHS has been managed over the past 40+ years is another story altogether.

To provide insight into KONP probably the best way to do so is to provide you with a link to the National Keep Our NHS Public website so that you can explore this at your own pace:

<https://keepournhspublic.com/>

- We know how important the NHS is for all of us
- We dedicate ourselves to protecting in the NHS
- We believe in the founding principles of a publicly owned and run NHS
- We know the NHS could provide excellent care for all if we invest in it
- We've fought for the NHS since 2005 and won many important battles
- *The NHS only works for us if it belongs to us*

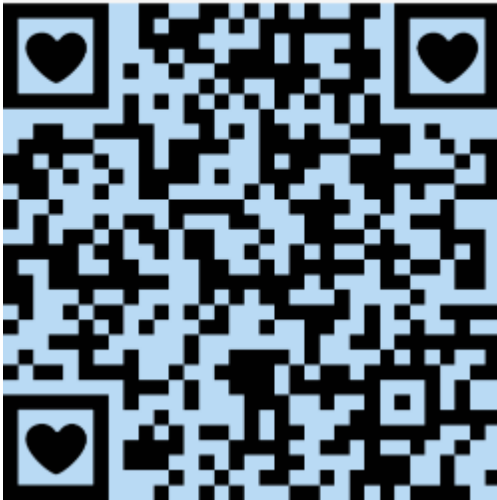


Keep Our NHS Public has been actively campaigning **since 2005**. To discover many of the fantastic areas of work that KONP gets involved in simply follow the link below and then click on the various orange-coloured boxes for topics that may be of direct interest to you.

<https://keepournhspublic.com/campaigns/>

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Keep Our NHS Public - Campaigns



N.B. For anyone concerned that you've never done anything like this before... Please **Do Not Worry** as nobody becomes an expert volunteer overnight. Volunteering is NOT a destination, it's a journey. Furthermore, you'll likely meet many like-minded individuals on your journey some of which will develop into life-long friends. ...And all whilst supporting exceptionally good causes!

Lambeth KONP news...

<https://www.facebook.com/LambethKONP>

As part of our 'Patient Group Christmas Survey - 2024 Health & Wellbeing Education Interest Form' several patients indicated their desire for social activities. What better way to be actively social than perhaps joining such a worthy group as the Lambeth KONP? Of course, this may not suit everyone but professional practitioners in Health & Wellbeing etc often highly recommend 'getting out and volunteering' as a key step for many to improve their mental health and wellbeing. So why not you too, even if you don't have mental health or wellbeing challenges? After all, we're potentially simply asking you to '*do your bit*' to help save our NHS for future generations in the UK.

Of course, this type of volunteering may not suit everyone but it is an extremely 'good cause'. Do you wish our UK health system to mirror that in the USA where a high percentage of the population can't afford their relevant necessary medical treatments? Would you want this for your children or grandchildren?

It's certainly worth taking a minute or two to consider what you want the future of healthcare in the UK to be...

...“An expensive private healthcare system” vs “A People's NHS”

Which would you prefer?

Shoutout to anyone wishing to assist local group LambethKONP who constantly strive to hold those in authority to account in order to keep our NHS in the Public Domain and fighting to discourage the privatisation of the whole or small parts of our NHS service. If you have time to help out and/or volunteer please send an email to:

Email: LambethKONP@gmail.com

Subject Line: “Please tell me more”

For More Info about LKONP



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Hopefully your Co-Chairs of the Patient Group will overcome their personal issues and will be back in with the Lambeth KONP family sooner rather than later. We will certainly be delighted to discover a raft of new local Lambeth KONP members from our Practice when we do. Thank you.

Project Smith Community Connectors in Lambeth

For people wishing to become more aware of health & wellbeing services generally, social services, groups etc that are available within Lambeth either for their own personal knowledge and/or so that they can assist others within their circle of friends & acquaintances, then consideration should be given to joining Project Smith Community Connectors.

Free training provided. You even gain a 'qualification' and a Certificate for successfully completing the course.

It provides you with an opportunity to 'help with health' in your community.

It aims to and does achieve 'what it says on the tin' i.e. helps you to 'Connect the Community' to services & groups that you previously may not have known about.

Note: Your Co-Chairs are Community Connectors.

It is also worth remembering that 'you don't know, what you don't know'.

So why not take advantage to discover a little more about what's going on in the health & wellbeing sectors right here within your own community?



Project Smith @ProjectSmithLam · Sep 28, 2023

Photos from the Train the Trainers and Facilitation Skills programme captures enthusiastic participants actively engaging in hands-on exercises, showcasing the dynamic methods employed to equip them with effective group leadership techniques and collaborative strategies.



To find out more see:

<https://www.rbeassociates.com/work/project-smith-community-connectors-programme-lambeth/>

<https://thrivinglambeth.co.uk/groups/become-a-project-smith-community-connector/>

Emma Corker & Graham Rushbrook who carry out the training are professional, lively, interesting, personable & fun trainers. Most folk highly enjoy the training and many make several new friends just as a result of carrying completing the course.

You can discover some of what has happened historically over at:

<https://twitter.com/ProjectSmithLam>

For more information please contact Emma or Graham and mention that you discovered *breadcrumbs* about Project Smith Community Connectors via Fraser and Graham at your Patient Group at SHGP or simply via this Patient Group Xmas End of Year Report:

Emma Corker: emma@rbeassociates.com or telephone 07734 670 300

or

2023 Xmas Meeting / End of Year Report

Graham Rushbrook: graham@rbeassociates.com or Tel: 07595 070 243

or simply [Click Here](#)

SW16 Bar and Kitchen



The Patient Association

This is a national association for patients just like you.



PATIENTS-ASSOCIATION.ORG.UK

Supporting patients with mealtimes and snack time while in hospital – your views are needed - 14/02/2024 10:30:00

The Patients Association is a charity dedicated to supporting the rights and interests of all patients and their families, offering advice and support to patients and campaigning to improve health and social care for all.

5 COMMUNICATION

4 out of 5 (82%) respondents want more discussion of testing options when being referred

A circular icon containing two overlapping speech bubbles, representing communication.

© the patients association
Patient experience (PHE) 2023. Survey performed by Ipsos. Data based on the responses of 122 patients who had had a 5 star test result in the previous 12 months.
Supported by Roche Diagnostics UK & Ireland

Your Co-Chairs believe that **everyone** should become a member of the Patients Association.

Key Point: **Membership is FREE**

Indeed, Membership of the Patients Association is open to anyone interested in health, wellbeing and social care.

Here's what's involved:

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/membership>

Listen, how involved you wish to get is entirely up to you. After all, for you it may just be a couple of times a year or when some medical issue affects a friend and/or family member.

Patients Association @PatientsAssoc · Feb 22

📞 Did you know we can raise your concerns about a health or care service with CQC anonymously? Just get in touch with our helpline.
🌐 Visit our website for more information and why sharing your experiences helps improve care for everyone.



From patients-association.org.uk

The key thing is, is that it is another distinct opportunity to give you a 'Patient Voice'.

Find out more about the Patients Association here:

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<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/thepatientsassociation>

<https://twitter.com/PatientsAssoc>

After having looked through the above links you'll likely want to join so that you can get a first-hand feel of what's going on and how you can help or to simply do some research into a given topic. Please remember that if you subsequently feel that this Membership is not for you then you can easily resign.

Patients Association - Join Today



SymeBros' Patient Group Christmas Raffle 2023

As in previous years the Co-Chairs felt it was important that we once again have a Christmas Raffle as both a bit of fun and to generally lift the spirits of the patients who took the time out of their busy schedules to attend the meeting so close to Christmas.

N.B. You may have already noticed, if viewing on a smartphone, PC or tablet that there were certain QR Codes throughout our Christmas Report which if you clicked on them, would take you to the raffle prize donors' online presence. **Note:** These QR Codes were simply inserted in the same order as the raffle prizes were won (with one graphic per prize donation).

How the raffle was organised...

This year there was again some concern that we might not be in a position to run a raffle as part of our Christmas meeting for a variety of reasons not least that we had not got any donation(s) of prizes and we were rapidly running out of time.

As in previous years, your Co-Chairs subsequently canvassed local businesses and managed, after tough negotiations, to secure a variety of wonderful prizes.

Fraser & Graham had decided 'on the day' to add some extra bonus Raffle Prizes (**Xtras**) as they recalled in previous years Patient Group Raffles how it had uplifted the atmosphere in the room as and when patients won their free Raffle prizes. This year was to be no exception.

Congratulations, once again, to all those who were fortunate to win a prize.

Now, in no particular order, the list of our wonderful donors (and a huge THANK YOU for their support), their raffle prizes and their approximate values...

Fraser & Graham

<https://o2o.to/i/sdKLq9>

Co-Chairs

CD (Pop Music) Hall & Oates – "Do It For Love"

Approx Value: £9.00

SW16 Bar & Kitchen

<https://o2o.to/i/iJ8wXK>

T: 020 3875 3057

Josef/Tom

1 x Lunch for two (including 2 mains + 2 coffees/teas/soft drinks)

Approx Value: £25.00

Streatham Pharmacy

<https://o2o.to/i/ZYFBXx>

T: 020 8674 9201

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Ginte/Wole

£20.00 Loyalty Card

Value: £20.00

Don Luigi

<https://o2o.to/i/SZAbuQ>

T: 07394 862000

Maria

1 x Meal for two (2 Main courses plus 2 drinks)

Approx Value: £39.00

Fraser & Graham

<https://o2o.to/i/rm9v7l>

Co-Chairs

2 Pairs of Unisex Seaboot Long Thermal Socks

Approx Value: £18.00

Station Café Bistro

<https://o2o.to/i/Pmkfh9>

T: 020 3352 9008

Elissa

1 x 2 Coffees + 2 Pastries

Approx Value: £13.00

SW16 Bar & Kitchen

<https://o2o.to/i/iJ8wXK>

T: 020 3875 3057

Josef/Tom

1 x Co-Working Deal

Value: £15.00

Westbury Chemist

<https://o2o.to/i/rD12ZM>

T: 020 8769 1919

Wole/Ginte

£20.00 Loyalty Card

Value: £20.00

Fraser & Graham

<https://o2o.to/i/sdKLq9>

Co-Chairs

Unisex Full-Zip Fleece Jacket

Approx Value: £16.00

SW16 Bar & Kitchen

<https://o2o.to/i/iJ8wXK>

T: 020 3875 3057

Josef/Tom

1 x Lunch for two (including 2 mains + 2 coffees/teas/soft drinks)

Approx Value: £25.00

Station Café Bistro

<https://o2o.to/i/Pmkfh9>

T: 020 3352 9008

Elissa

1 x 2 Coffees + 2 Pastries

Approx Value: £13.00

Streatham Pharmacy

<https://o2o.to/i/ZYFBXx>

T: 020 8674 9201

Ginte/Wole

£20.00 Loyalty Card

Value: £20.00

Fraser & Graham

<https://o2o.to/i/rm9v7l>

Co-Chairs

2 Essential draught excluders

Approx Value: £18.00

SW16 Bar & Kitchen

<https://o2o.to/i/iJ8wXK>

T: 020 3875 3057

Josef/Tom

1 x Co-Working Deal

Value: £15.00

Elements Sushi

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<https://o2o.to/i/v63XZp>

T: 020 3659 9869

Bipin

1 x 2 Lunchtime Specials plus 2 non-alcoholic drinks

Approx Value: £25.00

Westbury Chemist

<https://o2o.to/i/rD12ZM>

T: 020 8769 1919

Wole/Ginte

£20.00 Loyalty Card

Value: £20.00

Fraser & Graham

<https://o2o.to/i/sdKLq9>

Co-Chairs

Xtra

Unisex Full-Zip Fleece Jacket

Approx Value: £16.00

Xtra

Bound 3-ringed Journal

Approx Value: £15.00

Xtra

Unisex Full-Zip Fleece Jacket

Approx Value: £16.00

Xtra

Bound 3-ringed Journal

Approx Value: £15.00

Xtra

A packet of Twinings – 'Peace' Caffeine Free Tea Bags (20 bags)

Approx Value: £3.00

Xtra

5 Pack of KN95 Face Masks (non-medical) Filtration Efficiency BFE95%

Approx Value: £5.00

Xtra

Bound 3-ringed Journal

Approx Value: £15.00

Xtra

5 Pack of KN95 Face Masks (non-medical) Filtration Efficiency BFE95%

Approx Value: £5.00

Xtra

Bound 3-ringed Journal

Approx Value: £15.00

Xtra

5 Pack of KN95 Face Masks (non-medical) Filtration Efficiency BFE95%

Approx Value: £5.00

Note: Patient Group @ SHGP Total Value of 2023 Xmas Raffle Prizes: **Circa £421.00**

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Your Co-Chairs Go Above and Beyond...

So over and above the Raffle, what your Co-Chairs have been up to in the run up to Christmas and in the New Year, is we are organising discounts and/or special deals with local businesses for both the:

[1] staff at Streatham Hill Group Practice

and

[2] patients of Streatham Hill Group Practice

Patients should check out the new SHGP website under our Patient Group section for further details (to be updated soon). We will advise staff at SHGP separately.

Your Co-Chairs simply wanted to do something special for our patients and it just seemed to be the right thing to do.

Negotiations in this respect are still ongoing. So please stay tuned...

Acknowledgements

The Partners of SHGP

Streatham Hill Group Practice

The Manager of SHGP

The Staff at SHGP

The Express Newspaper

The Guardian Newspaper

UK HSA

The Sun Newspaper

Imperial College London

Independent SAGE

Hospital Times

NHS UK

Housewife How Tos Blog

Health Services Journal

60-Second GP

Google

Becky Leigh

YouTube

Lambeth KONP

Keep Our NHS Public

Project Smith Community Connectors

RBE Associates

The Patient Association

Age UK

Menstrual Matters

The Local Business Raffle Prize Sponsors

SW16 Bar and Kitchen

Don Luigi

Streatham Pharmacy

Station Cafe Bistro

Westbury Chemist

Elements Sushi

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Outro

We wish to thank you kindly for reviewing and/or for looking through our Year End Report.

We hope that you found some of the details & information of use to you, your relatives and/or to your wider group of contacts where you have influence.

Whilst this report was aimed at benefiting the patient population at Streatham Hill Group Practice much of the content will be similar to what is currently happening at NHS GP Surgeries throughout England and possibly also across the rest of the UK.



The above is a photo of Fraser & Graham from way, way, back! For more up to date photos simply check out the noticeboard to the right of the doorway just before you leave reception to get the lift up to the 2nd or 3rd floors.

Now then, if you would like to produce a report in a similar style to this one (or as a Kindle, iBook/ePub and/or as a Flipbook document), we've provided a QR Code on the next page where you can download the relevant software to do so.

N.B. This type of document can be extremely powerful in assisting you to get your message across to your target audience.

You can access this Document Publisher on the next page...

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[Alternatively, please use this weblink](https://o2o.to/i/LBjRg4)

<https://o2o.to/i/LBjRg4>

Please Note: The SymeBros may gain an affiliate commission, which assists us with continuing our unpaid volunteering work with several NHS, Health, Social & Wellbeing groups with which we are associated. Thank you.