



**PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP  
SUMMER 2024  
Quarterly Newsletter**

**PRACTICE NEWS - DID YOU KNOW?**

The triage system is being updated the first week in June. All requests for urgent, same day appointments will, wherever possible, be submitted via the web site. The accessibility of this facility will be increased, and the requests will then be triaged by the on-call doctor, who will deal with them accordingly, and contact the patient directly. Anyone who cannot access this system will be able to call and the receptionists will complete the online request for them. Patients will be informed of this update accordingly, also by text, web site and next newsletter.

The practice has a new doctor, Dr Dhruva Bhavsar, who will work Wednesdays, and Thursdays. He has been doing locum work at the Practice for the last few weeks and is now a permanent member of the Practice. There is also Tracy, in the new post of Assistant Practice Manager, and a new Receptionist.

**Missed Appointments update**

In April there have been 78 for doctors and 82 for nurses. Please remember to cancel any appointment at least 24 hours to allow the appointment to be reallocated to another patient.

**Update from Resuscitation Event**

26 patients attended a very successful evening which was organised by the PPG, on 16th April at St Peter's church. Paul Groves and colleague, Tina, from Dudley Community First Responders, gave a talk and demonstrated the latest techniques of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency treatment for blood loss. Everyone got involved and feedback was very positive. A donation was given to the charity.

## IT'S YOUR PATIENT CHOICE

The NHS is offering more and more options to enable you to make choices that best suit your circumstances, giving you greater control of your care, and hopefully better results.

If a GP needs to refer you for a physical or mental health condition, in most cases you have the legal right to choose the hospital or service you'd like to go to. This means you can choose where to go based on what matters most to you; getting seen sooner, shorter travel times or being close to friends and family.

You can make your choice during your appointment or at home via the [NHS e-Referral service](#). You can book on the NHS App, online or over the phone. Use the [services near you link](#) to make an informed decision before booking.

You have the legal right to ask for your appointment to be moved to a different provider if you're likely to wait longer than the maximum waiting time specified for your treatment.

## TRAVEL JABS FOR YOUR HOLIDAY ABROAD

Most vaccines are given at least 2 weeks before travel, and some more complicated regimes take longer. Please try to give us prior notice (preferably 6 weeks).

Using the link below please fill in the online questionnaire for the surgery to review and book your appointment.

<https://www.lapalmedicalpractice.co.uk/clinics-and-services/holiday-vaccinations/>

## GET HEALTHCARE COVER ABROAD WITH A UK GHIC OR UK EHIC

The UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) lets you get necessary state healthcare in EU countries, and some other countries, on the same basis as a resident of that country. This may be free or it may require a payment equivalent to that which a local resident would pay. The UK GHIC has replaced the existing European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). If you have an existing EHIC you can continue to use it until the expiry date of the card. Once it expires, you will need to apply for a UK GHIC to replace it.

You can apply for a new card up to 9 months before your current card expires. A UK GHIC is free and lasts for up to 5 years. Apply for your new card through the NHS website. Avoid unofficial websites - they may charge you a fee to apply. The UK GHIC is not a replacement for travel insurance. We advise you to have private travel and medical insurance. You can apply for a UK GHIC if you're a resident in the UK.

### What your card covers

You can use your card to get state healthcare that cannot reasonably wait until you come back to the UK (sometimes called "medically necessary healthcare"). We advise that you have a UK GHIC (or UK EHIC) and private travel and medical insurance for the duration of your trip.

Below is the link to apply online.

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>

New version on the left, if you have the old version shown on the right please check your expiry date.



## SUNSCREEN PROTECTION



Sunscreens that claim to offer coverage when applied just 'once-a-day' may wear off much sooner than they suggest, a consumer watchdog has warned. [Which?](#) tested the claims of four leading high street brands of 'once-a-day' sunscreens and found that after six to eight hours, the average sun protection factor (SPF) decreased by 74%. This means that over the course of a day a SPF30 'once-a-day' sunscreen could drop to offer as little protection as SPF8. "Our testing shows that these sunscreens just don't live up to their 'once-a-day' claims so people should reapply sunscreens regularly to ensure they have protection from the sun," Alex Neill, Which? Director of policy and campaigns, said. The watchdog shared its results with a number of leading skincare specialists who have since advised the public to top up sunscreens regularly to reduce their skin cancer risk. Which? also tested 11 widely available regular sunscreens to see if they offered the SPF30 they claimed. Nearly all of the sunscreens tested passed the SPF tests.

The Which? research also suggests you don't have to spend a fortune to get good sun protection. Even the cheapest sunscreens, such as own-brand products from Asda and Lidl offered the SPF claimed when tested. The cheapest sunscreen tested that passed the SPF test was Aldi's Lacura Suncare Moisturising Sun Spray SPF30 200ml. Neill added: "With more than 100,000 people diagnosed with skin cancer in the UK each year, some manufacturers need to do more to ensure their sunscreens live up to the claims on the packaging." Commenting on the findings, [The British Association of Dermatologists](#) said that "over the course of a day sunscreen can be washed or wiped away, leaving our skin exposed". "This is not to say that these 'extended-wear' sunscreens shouldn't be used at all, rather that they should be used similarly to other sunscreens," a spokesperson added. [A Cancer Research UK](#) spokesperson said: "The amount of protection you get depends on how well you put it on. "It's easy to miss bits when you're applying sunscreen. Cancer Research UK recommends you reapply regularly to help get even coverage of your skin."

