

!!MEASLES CIRCULATING!!

Since January 2025, measles has been circulating in England, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that Europe is likely to see an increase of infections and is urging action to increase vaccination rates. We are being asked to ensure our staff are immune to measles, but also importantly, we must encourage all relevant patients to have the MMR jab.

We tend to forget that measles is one of the most highly infectious illnesses known. Just for comparison, the original covid strain in 2020 has an attack rate (R0 value) of between 1.4 and 2.4. This means over 2 people could contract the virus from the one person with the virus.

With measles, the attack rate is currently up to 18.

Even if you ignored how infectious it was, the concern is due to the fact that in some people, serious complications may arise from measles infection.

Although most people make a complete recovery from measles with no problems, some patients may suffer from severe complications: if it spreads to the brain it can lead to meningitis, blindness, inflammation of the brain and fits. If it spreads to the lungs, it can cause pneumonia. Luckily, such complications are rare, but they are significant enough to warrant concern.

If your child gets an invite for an MMR vaccination, please do not ignore it.

Hospital Care...

We get many queries regarding hospital care. Examples include chasing up results, chasing up letters, prescribing medication, issuing sick notes.

Recent studies have estimated that 25-30% of GP workload is related to work that should have been done by the hospitals themselves.

We must remind all patients that we are not responsible for any aspect of hospital care. In particular, actioning results is the responsibility of the clinician who ordered the test. In the case of bloods, scans and other investigations organised by the hospital, responsibility lies with the consultant or doctor covering that team.

A further important note is that if the hospital requires you to have medication urgently, then under terms of their hospital contract, this must be prescribed in full, directly by the hospital and dispensed at the hospital pharmacy. Responsibility for urgent hospital medications does not lie with your GP.

If you have an issue regarding any aspect of hospital care, please ring the hospital directly. Please do not be put off by calls from the hospital to 'ring your GP.' Please note that under terms of the hospital contract, the hospital is obliged to answer your questions.



Churchfields Medical Practice



"Serving all people through exemplary health care, education, research and community outreach"

Autumn 2025

Staff Update...

We bid a fond farewell to Dr Glasgow and Dr Mansoor who have left the practice to pursue new opportunities. They have been valued members of our clinical team here at Churchfields and we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to them for their hard work and wish them every success in their future endeavours.

We are delighted to introduce Dr Bell to the practice. We are confident that he will be a fantastic addition to our team and will continue to provide the highest standard of care to our patients.

Hayley is our new receptionist who has joined the team, we also wish her a warm welcome.

STAFF TRAINING

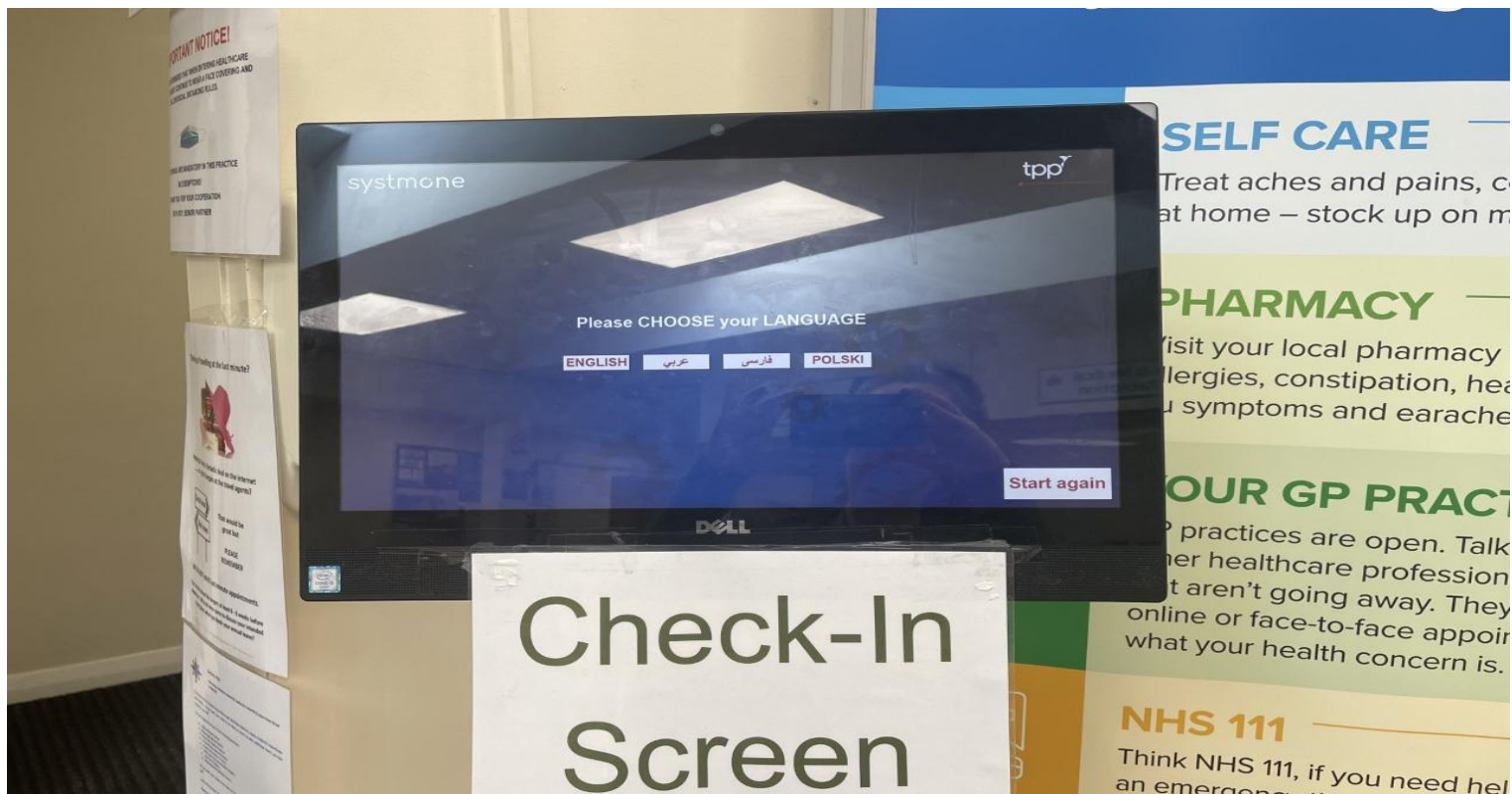
The practice will be closed on the following dates for staff training from 12 noon.

- **Tuesday 7th October 2025**
- **Tuesday 18th November 2025**

**If you have chest pains or a life threatening medical emergency,
please call **999** immediately.**

For all other medical advice that cannot wait until we re-open please call **111.**

Self check-in...



The introduction of self-check-in brings many benefits to the patient but also to the surgery. By automating the checking-in process, queues are reduced and additional confidentiality introduced as patients are no longer required to verbally confirm their details. In addition, the reception team are able to deal with other queries and answering incoming phone calls.

Our automated self-check-in touch screen is located on the wall at the entrance of the surgery. Please use this screen when arriving for an appointment.

Follow the simple instructions on-screen:

- **Choose your language**
 - **Press HERE to begin**
- **Choose the month you were born**
- **Choose the date you were born**
- **Select the first letter of your surname**

The system will find your appointment, confirm and mark you as arrived.

The step by step guide can be found next to the check-in screen. We ask that the screen is used as much as possible but where it is not appropriate, the reception team are there to help.

Polite Notice:

When enquiring about the status of your prescription, please contact your nominated pharmacy before calling the practice.

Follow us on Facebook

Keep up to date with the latest news, campaigns and clinics via our Facebook page.

Scan the link below....



Chronic Disease Management (annual reviews)...



Chronic disease management involves managing the symptoms of a long-term disease/illness (e.g diabetes, pre-diabetes, asthma, COPD, heart disease, stroke, chronic kidney disease), allowing you to enjoy life as best you can. Through managing your long-term condition, we can help slow down the progression of your disease and help control your symptoms, improve quality of life and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions. You will be offered appointments to attend the surgery for reviews of any long-term conditions you may have; by working with our team, we can help reduce your risks of ill health.

Invitations to these clinics are sent out around your birthday month.

If you receive an SMS with a link, please follow to book or contact the surgery to book the next available appointment with our nursing team.

Travel Vaccinations...

If you are planning on travelling abroad and think you may require vaccinations, please complete our travel questionnaire which can be printed off from our website or collected from reception. Once completed, please post this back to the surgery and we will contact you to arrange an appointment (if needed).

Please be aware that some immunisations may be required up to two months prior to travel so please request these 6-8 weeks before.

Churchfields Medical Practice offers country-specific advice regarding vaccination requirements; however more complex travel itineraries may require a consultation at a specialist travel clinic.



Childhood Vaccinations...

Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against ill health. They prevent up to 3 million deaths worldwide every year.

Since vaccines were introduced in the UK, diseases like smallpox, polio and tetanus that used to kill or disable millions of people are either gone or seen very rarely.

Other diseases like measles and diptheria have been reduced by up to 99.9% since their vaccines were introduced. However, if people stop having vaccines, it's possible for infectious diseases to quickly spread again.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has listed vaccine hesitancy (delay or refuse a vaccine) as one of the biggest threats to global health.

Measles and mumps are starting to appear again in England, even though the MMR vaccine is safe and protects against both diseases. Measles and mumps cases have nearly doubled in recent years:

Year	Measles	Mumps
2016	530	573
2018	970	1061

This is serious as measles can lead to life-threatening complications like meningitis, and mumps can cause hearing loss.






If 95% of children receive the MMR vaccine, it's possible to get rid of measles. However, measles, mumps and rubella can quickly spread again if fewer than 90% of people are vaccinated.

If your child is currently overdue their vaccinations, please contact the surgery to book an appointment. If you are unsure about vaccinating your child, please book an appointment with our Practice Nurse to discuss further. If your child has been vaccinated in another country, please bring the relevant documentation to the surgery and we can update the records.





Please note that declining vaccinations will be added to your child's medical record.

Things you need to know about vaccines...

DO

-  protect you and your child from many serious and potentially deadly diseases
-  protect other people in your community – by helping to stop diseases spreading to people who cannot have vaccines
-  undergo rigorous safety testing before being introduced – they're also constantly monitored for side effects after being introduced
-  sometimes cause mild side effects that will not last long – some children may feel a bit unwell and have a sore arm for 2 or 3 days
-  reduce or even get rid of some diseases – if enough people are vaccinated

DON'T

-  do not cause autism – studies have found NO evidence of a link between the MMR vaccine and autism.
-  do not cause allergies or any other conditions – all the current evidence tells us that vaccinating is safer than not vaccinating.
-  do not overload or weaken the immune system – it's safe to give children several vaccines at a time and this reduces the amount of injections they need
-  do not contain any ingredients that cause harm in such small amounts – but speak to your doctor if you have any known allergies such as eggs or gelatine

Private letter requests....

We have had an increasing number of requests for GP letters for address verification from banks, ID purposes and from parents for school absences.

Please note that it is **not** the practice's responsibility to provide this information. The examples listed below are non-NHS work and it is **not** the responsibility or function of GPs to provide such letters for pupils:

- For face mask exemption
- To allow pupils to use toilet facilities during lesson time
- As evidence of dietary requirements / food intolerances
- To confirm COVID-19 diagnosis
- To confirm short-term sickness absence
- To provide sickness certification for students that miss an exam or believe their performance was affected due to illness
- To be excused from lessons

Our GPs will continue to ensure that the healthcare needs of their patients continue to be met in accordance with NHS and Government guidance.

We hope that the above guidance provides some clarification that educational exemption letters are not the responsibility of general practice and will be rejected if requested.

Please note that ALL private requests take up to 6 weeks upon receipt of payment.

Wasted appointments...

In September 2025 we had 62 hours of missed appointments!!

This was a combination of GP, HCA and Nursing appointments.

Most of our patients know it can sometimes be difficult to get a routine appointment with a GP or Nurse within a certain time frame. Where such demand is unpredictable, this cannot easily be remedied. One thing that makes this even more difficult to overcome is the problem of missed appointments – DNA's.

The cost in time and money is a burden to the NHS and the practice cannot sustain this. The DNA status board will be updated monthly behind the reception desk.

Remember that your DNA is another patient's denied appointment!

Mistakes do happen and the practice understands that appointments can be forgotten about or overlooked. However, each patient receives a text message reminder 24 hours before the appointment. If you are not receiving these then please check with reception to make sure we have the correct contact details for you.

CERVICAL SCREENING

Even though it might seem like an inconvenient or uncomfortable test, the benefits of attending a smear test far outweigh the short-term discomfort. It's one of the best ways to ensure long-term health and protect yourself from potential risks like cervical cancer. If you haven't had one recently, it might be a good time to contact the surgery and book an appointment! Here's why it's important:

- **Early Detection of Abnormalities**

A smear test helps detect early signs of **cervical abnormalities** or **precancerous changes** before they develop into cervical cancer. The test can identify changes in the cells of the cervix, allowing for early intervention and treatment, which significantly improves outcomes.

- **Cervical Cancer Prevention**

Smear tests are a primary means of **preventing cervical cancer**. The test checks for **human papillomavirus (HPV)**, the virus responsible for most cases of cervical cancer. If detected early, any abnormal cells can often be monitored, treated, or removed before they become cancerous.

- **Routine Health Monitoring**

Even if you feel healthy and have no symptoms, a smear test is a proactive measure in maintaining your overall health. The test doesn't usually cause symptoms until the issue is more advanced, so attending regular screenings ensures you're not missing potential health risks.

- **Recommendations for Different Age Groups**

Health authorities often recommend that individuals start cervical screenings at around age 25 and continue until around age 64, though this can vary depending on health history and country-specific guidelines. It's important to follow these recommendations to ensure you're covered by the guidelines that are designed to protect you.

- **Peace of Mind**

While it might feel uncomfortable or daunting to go for a smear test, many people find the experience is over quickly and the reassurance of knowing you're taking steps to protect your health can ease anxiety in the long run.

- **The Test is Quick and Simple**

Despite any discomfort or nerves, the test itself is fairly quick (usually less than five minutes) and often carried out by a nurse or GP. The test involves a small sample of cells being taken from the cervix and sent for analysis. It's low-risk and doesn't require any major preparation.

- **Reduces the Need for More Serious Interventions**

Regular screenings mean that abnormalities are detected and dealt with before they become more serious. Catching issues early can reduce the likelihood of needing major treatments like surgeries or chemotherapy down the line.

- **Improved Outcomes**

Regular attendance at smear tests has been shown to **significantly reduce cervical cancer rates**. When caught early, most cases of cervical cancer can be treated effectively, which improves long-term survival rates.