

NORTHGATE MEDICAL CENTRE

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

www.northgatemedicalcentre.nhs.uk

Enhanced Access – What is It?

Enhanced Access is an Extended Clinical Service offered to all our patients within our Primary Care Network (PCN), outside normal GP Hours. You can see a GP, ANP and Nurses with a range of skills.

If you can't make an appointment between 8:00AM – 6:30PM, you can book an appointment via our Reception Team, the service is located at Garden Lane Medical Centre, just a 5-minute walk from the Fountains Health Premises:

Garden Lane Medical Centre, 19 Garden Lane, Chester CH1 4EN

Appointments Available:

Monday to Friday Evenings 6.30pm-8.30pm

Saturdays 9:00AM – 5:00PM



Pharmacy First was set up to enable patients to get certain prescription medications directly from a pharmacy without a GP appointment. Minor ailments can also be dealt with by your local pharmacy, making it easier for patients to be seen for their health concerns on the day.

This service is expected to free up GP appointments for patients who need them most and will give people quicker and more convenient access to safe and high-quality healthcare. It includes the supply of appropriate medicines for 7 common conditions including earache, sore throat, urinary tract infections, aiming to address health issues before they get worse. After a consultation with the pharmacist, the pharmacy will send a notification to the patient's GP on the same day or the following working day.

The table below shows the 7 conditions pharmacists can manage across various age ranges:

Clinical pathway	Age range
Acute otitis media*	1 to 17 years
Impetigo	1 year and over
Infected insect bites	1 year and over
Shingles	18 years and over
Sinusitis	12 years and over
Sore throat	5 years and over
Uncomplicated urinary tract infections	Women 16-64 years

JOIN OUR PATIENT CHAMPIONS GROUP AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE! **“YOUR VOICE MATTERS!”**

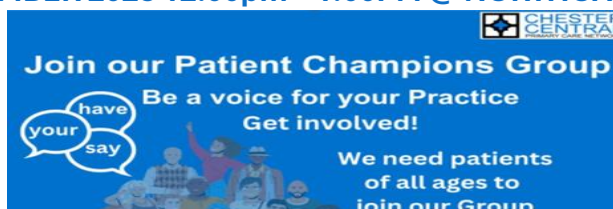
Our Patient Champions Group is a committed team of individuals passionate about creating positive change. Your experiences are valuable, and you could help to make a difference. By sharing your ideas, you can help us improve existing services, explore alternatives or enhance our current practices. Patient Champions can help optimise resources, reduce costs and enhance service delivery. Additionally, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the NHS and have the opportunity to gather feedback from other patients.

We meet quarterly and discuss different ideas for enhancing care and services. We understand everyone's busy schedules, so our meetings are not too frequent, ensuring your time commitment is manageable.

If you can't make it in-person? No problem! Let us know and we can send you a Microsoft Teams Invite to join the meeting. Whether you're juggling work, caregiving responsibilities or other commitments, you can still stay informed, share your thoughts and actively contribute to our Patient Champion Group. We highly value your input! While we may not be able to implement every suggestion, we believe that every idea is crucial to our collective success. Join us in creating a positive impact on healthcare!

Are you passionate about improving healthcare experiences for everyone—patients, doctors and staff? Patient Champions are volunteers who work with the GP practices within Chester Central PCN, to support patients. Everyone over the age of 16 is welcome! If you would like further information or to join, please contact us at the surgery and ask to speak with the 2 members of our team who support our Patient Champions Lynne or Ju. The upcoming meeting dates and venue are below:

- **THURSDAY 5TH JUNE 2025 4:00PM – 5:00PM @ NORTHGATE VILLAGE SURGERY**
- **THURSDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER 2025 9:30AM – 10:30AM @ NORTHGATE VILLAGE SURGERY**
- **THURSDAY 4TH DECEMBER 2025 12:00pm – 1:00PM @ NORTHGATE VILLAGE SURGERY**



patches
health

Patches is a next-generation online consultation system, it helps you contact your GP practice by completing a form on the internet. It is quicker and easier than using a telephone.

To access you simply need to go to our website and on the homepage, click on the Patches online Icon and this will take you to the form to complete. You can contact your GP in relation to clinical queries such as feeling unwell, new or long-term conditions or for administration queries; sick notes, requests for information e.g. test results/immunisation history or general enquiries.

These queries are for **NON-URGENT** routine requests only, and the practice will respond within 48 working hours.

PLEASE REMEMBER IF YOU HAVE AN URGENT REQUEST OR QUERY TO CONTACT THE PRACTICE BY TELEPHONE.

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month 2025

April 1st - April 30th



9 in 10

people survive bowel cancer if diagnosed at the earliest stage



The symptoms of bowel cancer include:



Together to stop bowel cancer



Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo



A persistent and unexplained change in bowel habit



Unexplained weight loss



Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason



A pain or lump in your tummy

If you have any concerns or if things just don't feel right, go and see your doctor

WHY RAISING AWARENESS IS SO IMPORTANT

Bowel cancer is currently the fourth most common cancer in the UK and around 44,000 people in the UK are diagnosed with bowel cancer each year and more than 16,800 people die annually from the disease.

However, it doesn't have to be this way, as bowel cancer is treatable and curable, especially when caught early.

If you have any symptoms, or if you're worried about any changes that you notice, visit your GP and ask about an at-home test. It's important to know that not everyone will have all the symptoms of bowel cancer, or they may get different symptoms at different times. Remember these symptoms can be caused by other conditions. Many of these are much less serious than cancer, such as piles (haemorrhoids), infections or inflammatory bowel disease. Even if you have just one symptom, your GP will want to see you.

MARTIN GALLIER PROJECT

The Martin Gallier Project, which already has a base on the Wirral, is now offering support on St Werburgh Street in Chester, opposite the city's cathedral.

The charity will provide support for anyone over the age of 16 who is in a suicidal crisis or who has suffered in the past.

There is no criteria or waiting list for help. Instead, the centre offers a drop-in service within a non-clinical, safe environment that provides immediate aid to anyone who needs it.

NO GP REFERRAL NEEDED

Services Provided: Suicide intervention, Martin's Man Cave, Self-Care Movement, Belong Forget Me Not, Parent Support Group Services and Information for Professionals.

<https://www.themartingallierproject.org>

Let's Talk

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR GP APPOINTMENT

- Write down your symptoms including when they started, when they happen and how often you have them.
- Write down anything that makes them worse or better.
- If you would prefer to only see a male doctor or female doctor, ask when you book the appointment - the receptionist will tell you if it is possible.
- Tell your GP if you are **worried about cancer**.
- Tell them if you have any family history of cancer.
- Have a friend or relative with you for support - they could also ask questions and take notes to help you remember what the GP says.
- Ask the GP to explain anything you don't understand.
- Ask the GP to write things down for you if you think it might help - if you have a telephone or video appointment ask for the information to be left at reception for you to pick up.

RECEPTION, APPOINTMENTS & ADDITIONAL ROLES

Our friendly reception team are here to welcome patients to the Practice. They are the first point of contact, either via the telephone or face to face. The reception team will answer any enquiries, book appointments and to ensure we book you with the most appropriate clinician, they may ask you questions regarding the nature of your symptoms. Please remember that the reception team are not clinically trained, and therefore unable to give you clinical advice. They can give you results if these have been viewed and commented on by the Clinician, these could be blood results, x-ray results, or other samples. Only when the GP has reported back on these investigations can the reception team give you the result. The reception team handle a high volume of calls on a daily basis, during the month of February we had 7344 incoming calls, and 1272 patient call back requests!

We currently have some new members of our reception team, and I am sure you can appreciate this is a busy and demanding role, with many aspects to learn, and we would like to thank-you in advance for your patience and understanding during their training.

A gentle reminder that an appointment with the GP is for 10 minutes, which allows for one problem per appointment. If you have more than one health issue, please make our reception team aware who can book a double appointment to discuss the second issue. We also have 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) in our Team, who have undertaken extensive medical training to examine, diagnose, prescribe medication and refer for further tests/examination and further specialist requests if required.

If you are phoning about a hospital appointment, referral query, or waiting times - please ask to be put through to our secretaries who are better informed to answer these enquiries. The secretaries also have a direct line and upon calling the Practice you will be given an option to take you directly through, if their line is busy or they are unavailable you will be redirected back to the reception team.

We have a Medication Manager who can deal with queries regarding your medications, aligning medications, sourcing different brands when stocks are not available and support with pharmacy queries. We also have a Clinical Pharmacist, who can carry out most medication reviews for patients. If you have received a text message from us asking you to book a medication review, this is for safe prescribing for the medication you take. We will book a phone call with the Clinical Pharmacist to call you, or a GP depending on the medication.

At the Practice, in addition to our GPs and Nursing team, we also have Additional Roles provided by our Primary Care Network, Chester Central.

The roles are as below:

Physiotherapy, low level mental health counselling, dietitian, wellbeing co-ordinator, care co-ordinator mental health occupational therapist. The reception team are able to book you directly into some of these services, or you may need to speak to a GP in the first instance.

PRACTICE NEWS

FAREWELL TO AN AMAZING COLLEAGUE!

Dr Leitch will be leaving Northgate Medical Centre in early April 2025. He has worked at Northgate Medical Centre as a Partner for over 20 years, providing excellent patient care whilst supporting many colleagues during the years. He is moving on to other medical interests, including teaching and will continue to work locum sessions for the Practice.

We wish him all the best for the future and his new adventures.

He will be dearly missed by colleagues and patients!



JANUARY 2025 IN FIGURES

- **144** Patients did not attend their appointment
- Reception handled **3375** prescription requests
- **3724** blood tests requested for patients
- **1287** Chronic Disease invites were sent by the admin team
- The surgery received **105 PATCHS Requests**
- Incoming Telephone Calls **6864**

*We understand there may be reasons patients cannot attend their appointments, for reasons such as last-minute emergencies or forgetting they had been booked in advance, but, when possible, please let the surgery know if you cannot make your appointment. **This could be extremely valuable to another patient.** Thank you!*

NEW MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

Dr Sophie Quinn our new GP Registrar, will be working with us for 18 months. We also have a new receptionist, **Adanna**. I am sure patients will give them a warm welcome to the practice.

Sadly, our lovely GP Registrar

Dr Mohammed Elhag will be leaving us after 7 months, he has been a wonderful addition to the practice.

ACCESS TO YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS

In accordance with GDPR regulations and guidance, patients have the right to access their data and any supplementary information held by Northgate Medical Centre; this is commonly known as a data subject access request (DSAR).

The practice aims to process your request within 30 days; however, this isn't always possible. If you need to request your records, please collect a form from reception.