



St. George's Patient Forum Newsletter

Connecting Patients, Empowering Lives

May 2025

Health awareness days/weeks/month: Key dates for May		Inside this issue
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19-25 May Dementia Action Week	1-31 May National Walking Month	

Rushcliffe Social Prescribing Service –

Social Prescribing Community Hub: A sustainable Future for Wellbeing

The Rushcliffe Social Prescribing Community Hub has become a vital space for connection, creativity and wellbeing. It offers support, access to local services and activities that enhance physical and mental health.

Here is the website link to all our activities. <https://www.rushcliffehealth.org/sp-hub>

Please come along to the Drop in, the social prescribers are available and keen to help.

Social Prescribing Drop-In – 10:00am-12:00pm - Drop in for signposting information, advice, and a chance to learn about local groups and activities over tea or coffee.

There is an event entitled 'Living Well with Dementia in Rushcliffe' organised by the Social Prescribers in West Bridgford. This takes place on Monday 19th May – see details in the poster later in this Newsletter.

Thanks to Meg Kozian (Social Prescribing Link Worker) and Morgan Sharpe (The Gamston Medical Centre)

Featured Podcast

From a series entitled: The Body and Beyond, episode 3 – 'A Shot in the Arm'

We are indebted to NTU Student Podcast Project for St George's Patients' Forum

Sarah, Lauren, Maddie & Phoebe worked on a project set by the Forum to produce a podcast looking at general health matters - they say:

"We know how daunting it can be to visit a doctor every time you want some advice on your health, so we've created this podcast just to give you a better insight into overall general health!"

***Please note that all medical advice should be corroborated by a medical professional; although the information given in these podcasts has been backed up by research, a medical professional is a more reputable source".*

The third in the series is, "A shot in the arm" – *by Lauren*

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/1hUFVNM687fRTvbeARIVD4>

Welcome to A Shot in the Arm! Lauren will be breaking down vaccinations in this Episode. Tune in to discover why vaccines are essential for protection of yourself, and your community, the benefits they can provide and how they give us a fighting chance against preventable illnesses

Medical Insights

Deaf Awareness Month

Wherever you go in the UK or in the world, you'll often find a group of deaf people who like to meet up and enjoy time together because of their shared experiences of deafness. This community is called the deaf community.

The deaf community is a small, unique community with a strong identity. Many members are people who have been deaf all their lives and have deaf friends or family. Many members will know each other from deaf schools, clubs or events for deaf people that they have gone to together.

About 5-10% of deaf children have deaf parents. Children who are born into big deaf families, where there are many generations of deaf people using British Sign Language (BSL), might find it easier to fit into the deaf community. Other members of the community may be people who are children of deaf adults (known as CODAs), BSL interpreters or hearing friends of deaf families who enjoy deaf culture and sign language.

There are some deaf people who feel they belong to both deaf and hearing worlds, and some deaf people who don't feel like they belong to either. Remember, just because you don't come from a deaf family doesn't mean you can't be part of the deaf community. Learning more about deaf culture and going to deaf events might help you to feel more involved with the deaf community.

Like any culture, there are lots of things that make the deaf community unique. For example, members of the deaf community usually get each other's attention without using their voice or making a noise. They might tap somebody on the shoulder or bang the table, instead of calling or shouting. The deaf community will also show applause by holding jazz hands above their heads, rather than clapping their hands.

Communication approaches. Deaf people communicate in lots of different ways. Listed below are some of the common ways deaf people communicate. Some people will use a combination of these, and some people might use different approaches depending on where they are and who they're with. If you're a parent of a deaf child and are thinking about how your child will communicate in the future, visit our information pages about [choosing a communication approach](#).

Listening and speaking. Many deaf children and young people communicate with others using [spoken language](#). They may use hearing technology to help with this such as [hearing aids](#) and [cochlear implants](#). Listening and speaking is sometimes called oralism.

Lip-reading. [Lip-reading](#) is the ability to read lip patterns. Deaf children and young people naturally lip-read, but many speech sounds look the same, for example, 'pat' and 'bat', so it's difficult to rely on lip-reading on its own. Lip-reading is usually used alongside other communication approaches.

Sign language. [Sign languages](#) are visual languages which use handshapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language. In the same way as different countries have different spoken languages, different countries around the world have different sign languages, too. The main sign language of the British Deaf community is [British Sign Language \(BSL\)](#).

British Sign Language (BSL). The British Deaf Association (BDA) estimates that 87,000 deaf people in the UK have [BSL](#) as their preferred language. BSL is a different language to English. It has its own vocabulary, grammatical structure, history and culture, and is recognised as a language under UK law.

Irish Sign Language (ISL). Although [ISL](#) is mostly used in Ireland, some young people in Northern Ireland also use ISL. ISL is a different language to BSL, with its own vocabulary and structure.

Fingerspelling. The British fingerspelling alphabet is a way of spelling out words using your hands and fingers. [Learning to fingerspell](#) is a great first step towards learning BSL!

Sign Supported English (SSE). [SSE](#) is a method of signing BSL signs in English word order. It can be useful for deaf young people who use both speech and BSL.

Sign systems. [Sign systems](#) such as Makaton or Signalong are communication programmes, designed for people with speech and language difficulties, speech delays or learning disabilities. Sign systems don't have a grammatical structure and are designed to support speech, with signs and symbols signed or shown at the same time as the user is speaking.

Tactile signing. [Tactile signing](#), also known as hands-on or hand over hand signing, is a way of using sign language for people who are blind or visually impaired. This means the blind or visually impaired person can feel the signs the other person is making. You can find out more about tactile signing, including [Deafblind Manual](#), on the [Sense](#) website.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). Some deaf children with [additional needs](#) might use different ways of communicating as well as, or instead of, spoken, written or signed language. For example, eye gaze technology or alphabet boards can help people with additional needs to express themselves. To learn more about AAC, visit the [Communication Matters](#) website.

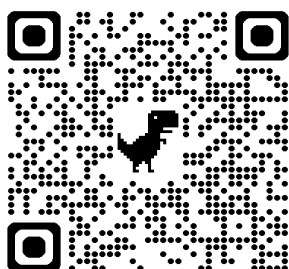
Cued speech. [Cued speech](#) is a visual communication system which is designed to support lip-reading. Users of cued speech put their hands in different positions around the mouth while speaking, to help lip-readers distinguish between speech sounds which look similar.

Thank you to the 'National Deaf Children's Society'. More details as well as the above information and links can be found on their website: www.ndcs.org.uk Their helpline provides independent information and advice on deaf related issues for parents, carers, families and deaf children and young adults on 0808 800 8880.

Dementia Action Week

Dementia Action Week is an awareness raising campaign. Each year, Alzheimer's Society works with individuals and organisations across the UK to encourage people to act on dementia. This year they are focussing on diagnosis and educating audiences on the most common symptoms of dementia. Diagnosis is vital to give people access to the care, treatment and support they desperately need. Yet, incredibly, 1 in 3 people with dementia do not have a diagnosis.

If you're worried about yourself, or someone close to you, get help describing your symptoms to a GP by filling in the Alzheimer's Society symptoms checklist. This checklist contains 20 questions about possible symptoms or behaviours relating to dementia. You will need to think about the symptoms, how long they have been happening and how much they are affecting daily life. This is not a diagnosis but may help you discuss your concerns with a GP. The following QR code will give you access to the Alzheimer's Society checklist.



Dementia Support in Rushcliffe

During Dementia Action Week (19th-26th May 2025), as mentioned above, there will be an emphasis by the Alzheimer's Society, on knowing the signs and symptoms of dementia and then seeking a diagnosis.

Following this the question should then be: "How do you live well with this diagnosis?" This is where it is important to know where to access comprehensive, up to date, local information of the support available in the community.

Much of this can be found in the Rushcliffe Dementia Directory found here: [Health Directories | RushcliffeHealth](#)

There is also an event organised by the Social Prescribers in West Bridgford, on Monday 19th May – see details below on the poster.

Thanks to Gwynneth Owen (South Notts Dementia Link Worker) for this information

Rushcliffe Social Prescribing Service
Partners Health

Working to become Dementia Friendly Rushcliffe

Dementia Action Week 2025

Living Well with Dementia in Rushcliffe

Come and find out about local services, groups, activities, day centres, benefits, care and support

Date: Monday 19th May 2025, 12.30 – 3.30pm

Venue: West Bridgford Young Peoples Centre, Bridgford Rd, West Bridgford, NG2 6AT (Next to WB Library)

Book here:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/living-well-with-dementia-in-rushcliffe-tickets-1303934566389?aff=oddttdcreator>

SCAN HERE

age UK
TRENT BRIDGE COMMUNITY TRUST
The Rainbow Care Group
Radford Care Group
The Joyful Jukebox

Carers Hub Service
CARERS FEDERATION
Right at Home
Rushcliffe Social Prescribing Service

Meet the forum member

Claire Bicknell – Deputy Chair St George’s Patients’ Participation Group

Claire has lived in West Bridgford since 2006 and became a member of the Patients’ Group due to holding Zoom meetings for the Group during Lockdown, so that her mother, who was a member (and didn’t have a laptop), was able to participate. Claire joined the Group about 3 years ago and supports Malcolm Ginever in his role as Chairman.



Claire’s health interests lie with Community Health and self-care, and she has participated in the “Flu Q” vaccination sessions.

She is also largely responsible for researching the Doctor, Doctor jokes at the end of each newsletter....

The Importance of Travel Insurance

Holiday Insurance

This is the season when holidays are either booked, or last minute deals are being sought! Just a reminder to give holiday insurance a lot of thought, especially as regards medical cover.

A few years ago I flew to South Africa, landing at Cape Town at about 11 am. I stepped on to the top of the steps, my feet got caught up somehow and I fell over sideways, becoming entangled in my roll-on bag. The hospital doctor whom I was to meet later that day told me that I had managed to exert a torsion fracture of my tibia, and the fibula was also broken. This began a medical nightmare for three weeks starting with two operations. The hospital care was great, but it was a new experience to have to read and sign complex forms before each procedure, (trying not to think about the cost) whether it be surgery, X rays, anaesthesia, hospital care, surgeon’s fees, physiotherapy including crutches and moon boot, medication – the list went on and on. In order to travel home safely with a low risk of thrombosis, there was then the task of cancelling the return flight (economy) and booking business class so that my leg could be rested horizontally. Then there was a taxi from the airport to my home, also with my leg resting on the seat. The medical care alone came to more than £17,000.

It was only by good luck that we had chosen a great insurer (you soon find out what they are made of) through one of the main banks. They took care of everything very efficiently including the tricky return home. However, we did not really do our homework thoroughly enough beforehand! Huge lesson learned.

So the moral is to shop around, and look at aspects other than mere cost. It is tedious but if anything were to happen to you on holiday, the relief of having a good policy is enormous. However, your responsibility doesn’t end there. There is such a thing as “pre-existing conditions” and unless you have declared these, then if anything arises from them, you may not be covered. Your GP can guide you if you are unsure whether you need to declare a particular condition. You don’t even need to make an appointment – use the messaging service like I did. And don’t forget to check what vaccinations you need by checking with the airline or travel agent so you can give the surgery enough notice to give you the jabs you need.

Happy holidays – and get that insurance sorted!!

Thank you, Chrissie Wells for this article – it does make you think doesn’t it?

Self care walk:
Sharphill Wood - A Woodland Walk for Health and Well-being

Sharphill Wood: A Woodland Walk for Health and Well-being

Nestled on the southern edge of Nottingham, Sharphill Wood in West Bridgford offers a tranquil retreat for those seeking to enhance their physical and mental health through nature. This 10-hectare Local Nature Reserve, designated in 2010, is managed collaboratively by Rushcliffe Borough Council, the Friends of Sharphill Wood, and the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust.

A Scenic and Accessible Escape - Sharphill Wood is easily accessible from West Bridgford, with three official entrances: The Peveril Entrance at the northern end, and two at the south-eastern corner near the Notcutts Garden Centre. Visitors can enjoy 2.6 km of well-maintained footpaths that wind through mixed broadleaf woodland, featuring mature ash, beech, oak and lime trees. The elevated position of the wood provides sweeping views across Rushcliffe, making it an ideal spot for a leisurely walk or a more vigorous hike.

Enhancing Accessibility and Sustainability - Recent improvements have made the woodland even more accessible. With support from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Rushcliffe Borough Council invested £10,000 to stabilise 350 metres of the central footpath using pebble-type stone. This upgrade ensures that the path remains usable year-round, even during wet conditions, and helps protect the surrounding ecology by encouraging visitors to stay on designated routes.



A Community Effort - The continued success of Sharphill Wood is a testament to the dedication of local volunteers and conservationists. The Friends of Sharphill Wood group plays a vital role in maintaining the site, organising monthly work parties, and monitoring wildlife. Their efforts have contributed to the wood receiving its second Green Flag Award, recognising it as one of the UK's best green spaces. We would also like to pay tribute to St George's Patients' Forum's Secretary, Chrissie Wells, who is also Chair and Treasurer of the Friends of Sharphill Wood; she suggests that you visit the [Friends of Sharphill Wood website](#) for more information about the Wood, including how you could get involved, learn more

about activities the Friends undertake such as working parties and bird spotting surveys, and as a means of planning your walk, you can download the nature trail.

Plan Your Visit - Whether you're looking to improve your fitness, reduce stress, or simply enjoy the beauty of the outdoors, Sharphill Wood offers a perfect setting. Remember to wear appropriate footwear, especially after rainfall, and stay on marked paths to protect the environment.

Thanks to Claire Bicknell

Recycling medical items-update	Joining the Patients' Forum
Boots will accept all returns including: <div><div>1. Used Blister strips which should be inserted in a large cabinet to the right of the desk by the pharmacist's section. Boots rely on the honesty of customers to ensure that the blister strips have no remaining unused tablets.</div><div>2. Unused tablets and medicines, puffers, inhalers et cetera.</div></div>	Our Patients' Forum is open to every patient on the GP practice list. People of all genders, ages, ethnicities, and those with health conditions and disabilities are encouraged to join. There are no membership requirements except that patients must be registered with the practice. Group members should ideally be representative of the practice population.

THE ONLY THINGS THAT BOOTS WILL NOT ACCEPT ARE SHARPS. Users of needles to self-inject, for example, insulin, should approach Rushcliffe Borough Council for information as to where sharps can be deposited and disposed of safely.

Lorraine was assured by the staff at the pharmacy that *“the bin was being used and could be used without having to register. Registration was only needed to collect points!*

~There is nothing on the lid explaining this so hence I am sending in this update and circulating it to family and friends”.

Thanks again to David Bray for finding this information and to Lorraine Salt-Pulford for the update.

If you are interested in becoming a member of St George’s Patients’ Forum, please contact Claire Bicknell or Malcolm Ginever for further information. Email – claire@catena-network.co.uk

And of course Claire’s very own Doctor, Doctor joke:

**Doctor, Doctor I keep seeing an insect spinning around.
Don't worry, it's just a bug that's going around!**

Coming up in June:

- Our next episode of our Podcast – ‘Caring for the Carers’
- National Cancer Survivor’s Day 1 June, Men’s Health Week 9-15 June, Diabetes Awareness Week 10-16 June, World Blood Donor Day 14 June and Cervical Screening Awareness Week 17-23 June.
- And the start of a new series – ‘Ask the Doctor’ – your questions answered.

All views expressed in the Newsletter are personal and correct to the best of our knowledge. If you are worried or concerned about any of the issues raised, please see a medical professional. Hyperlinks and QR codes provided are linked to professional websites and societies who offer advice and help. It is of course up to you to decide whether to use them.

Editor: Phil Unsworth