



SMC Patient Group
Patients in Partnership

Shawbirch Medical Centre Patient Group NEWSLETTER

October 2025

Changes to Your Repeat Prescriptions Ordering

The practice would like to let you know about an upcoming change to the way prescriptions are ordered across **Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin**.

This only applies to those patients who order their medication through the **Prescription Ordering Direct (POD)** service.

The **POD** service is closing, which means that from **Friday 14 November 2025**, you'll no longer be able to use POD to order your repeat prescriptions.

From that date, please use one of the following options instead:

- **NHS App** – quick, secure and available anytime
- **Online request form** on the practice website: www.shawbirchmedicalcentre.nhs.uk
- **Our new prescription request email** (details coming soon)
- **Dropping off your repeat slip** at the practice (use the prescription box in the entrance lobby)



Where possible, the practice recommends using the **NHS App** or our **online service**, as these are the fastest and most convenient options.

Details of how to obtain the NHS App can be found on the back page.

Please note that the practice cannot accept prescription requests by phone.

We'll be sharing more updates and reminders about this change in the coming weeks to help make the transition as smooth as possible.

We understand this is quite a big change, and we really appreciate your patience and support while we all adjust to the new system.

If you'd like to know more about why the POD service is closing, you can visit:

<https://www.shropshiretelfordandwrekin.nhs.uk/get-involved/current-and-recent-work/changes-to-prescription-ordering-in-shropshire-telford-and-wrekin/>

Breaking News!

Dr Coventry is retiring

It has recently been announced that our Senior Partner, Dr Peter Coventry, is retiring, and he had this to say:

“I will be retiring as a GP on 1 December 2025. This will mark the end of nearly 30 years as a GP at Shawbirch, dating back to early 1996.

The NHS, general practice and the world in general were very different then, and I have seen many changes during my career, but one aspect that has remained constant is that it has been an honour and a privilege to work with such wonderful patients and with such inspirational colleagues.



Dr Peter Coventry

I have been very part time for the last nine years or so, particularly the last 18 months, because of my role as Dean of the School of Medicine at Keele University, and I will continue in that role for a little longer.

I will miss my contact with patients, including those of you I have known since I was a young and keen GP (I'm still keen, but definitely not young) and also my colleagues because I have been very fortunate to work in a wonderful team.

The patient-centred ethos demonstrated by Nick King, Liz Herd, Caroline Freeman, Chris Brown, Alison Johnson and Bet Wilkes and her team that attracted me to Shawbirch in 1996 lives on in the team here today.

Thank you to everyone.”

The practice will be sorry to say farewell to Dr. Coventry, and he will be missed by colleagues and patients alike.

We wish him and his family our very best wishes for the future.



Our Paramedic Team

You might be wondering why we have paramedics in our surgery team — we're more used to seeing them in ambulances! So here's a chance to find out more from our chat with Steve, one of our community paramedics who works here with Kate.

Tell us a bit about yourself, Steve:

Before joining the team, I worked as a paramedic on ambulances for 25 years. When GP surgeries started to include more types of healthcare professionals, I wanted a new challenge — to use my experience in a different way and learn new skills.

What do you need to become a paramedic?

You need to complete a paramedic science degree or apprenticeship, and be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). We also have a professional group called the College of Paramedics, which supports members and sets high standards for our work.

How does your role fit into the practice?

I'm part of our Newport and Central Primary Care Network (PCN), which includes Shawbirch, Donnington, and the two Newport

practices. Kate and I are two of five community paramedics in our PCN.



Paramedics Kate & Steve

Our job is to help the doctors and nurses give patients the right care at the right time. We see patients with minor illnesses, injuries, or long-term conditions, and can prescribe some medicines. We also do home visits when needed.

When are you at our surgery?

I work here full time: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8am to 6pm. Kate is here on Wednesdays and Fridays. Mornings are for clinic appointments, and afternoons are usually for home visits.

How do you work with the rest of the team?

Because I'm based here most of the time, it's easy to chat with the doctors, nurses, and physios to share ideas and plan care together. This teamwork helps patients get the best possible support.

What do you like most about your job?

Being part of the surgery team! Everyone is valued and supported. I also get more time with patients, which helps me understand how they feel and offer reassurance.

Any tips for patients coming to see you?

Yes — think ahead about what you'd like to ask, and maybe write down your questions. It really helps you get the most out of your appointment.

And last but not least....

Surprise! Our Steve is in an Oasis tribute band (guitar) - when he has the time between work, family and home DIY 😊

SMC Patient Group (PG) Meetings

The group's last meeting was held on 4 September 2025 at the medical centre and via Zoom. Due to the new equipment, the virtual meeting worked much better than last time but there are still some improvements to be made.

The meeting included:

- A very informative talk on Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening
- A practice update from Dr Peter Coventry who provided information on the medical centre staffing, together with a very positive report on the success of the new appointment system, Total Triage
- Updates from the PG Communications Group and SASA

Minutes of the meeting together with the presentation slides can be found on the website:

smcpg@org.uk

The next PG meeting (to include the AGM) is scheduled for 4 December at 18.30, and the main talk will be about the new and important, Out of Hours Service, and delivered by Health Hero Integrated Care.

Additionally for attendees it will provide an opportunity to say a final farewell to Dr. Coventry.

Finally, befitting the time of the year, we will be providing seasonal refreshments between 18.00 and 18.30. prior to the meeting."

Missed Appointments (DNAs) at Shawburch.... Monthly Update

In our last newsletter, we talked about the impact of missed appointments. The latest figures show little change over the past three months — around **4.3% of patients still don't**

Missed Appointments continued

attend. That's over **10 hours of lost appointment time each week.**

Missed appointments mean longer waiting times and possible delays in diagnosis and treatment.

Your small action of cancelling if you can't make an appointment can make a big difference to someone else's health and helps support the NHS.

DNA Table April - Sept 2025

Month	Total Appointments	DNA's Appointments Not Attended	%	HOURS LOST
April 25	4126	171	4.1	43
May 25	4295	195	4.5	49
June 25	4228	175	4.1	44
July 25	4516	201	4.5	50
Aug 25	3616	149	4.1	37
Sept 25	4624	197	4.3	49

To cancel or change your appointment:

- use your NHS account (through the NHS website or NHS App)
- phone us on 01952 641555, Monday to Friday from 08.30 to 18.00 . (Phone lines are closed between 13:00 and 13:30.)
- reply CANCEL to your appointment reminder text message.

Please be considerate – IF YOU CAN'T MAKE IT, CANCEL IT.

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Ordering Repeat Prescriptions Through the NHS App

Order repeat prescriptions, use NHS 111online, Find NHS services, view your GP health record, book appointments, get reminders and messages and much more....

All you have to do is just sign and you're ready to go.

To register for this service just download the app

To download the NHS App, scan here



Help and Support

If you have any problems using the NHS App you can:

Go to 'Help' in the corner of the app. You will get help related to the feature you are using.

Visit nhs.uk/helpmeapp or scan this QR code:



REQUESTS FROM RECEPTION - "Help us to help you":

Using the Blood Pressure Machine

After using the Blood Pressure machine in reception, please show your printout to a receptionist so they can check your blood pressure and pulse before you leave. It's also a good idea to sit and rest for 5–10 minutes before using the machine, especially if you've been rushing around.

Samples

To help us provide the best service, please bring any follow-up samples to reception before 11.