



# Fernville Focus

Newsletter written by patients for patients. September 2025.

**Fernville Surgery, Midland Road, Hemel Hempstead. HP2 5BL**

**Tel: 01442 213919 [www.fernillesurgery.org](http://www.fernillesurgery.org)**

*100 years experience as your family doctor*

## Opening Hours

**Monday 8am-6.30pm**

**Tuesday 8am-6.30pm**

**Wednesday 8am-6.30pm**

**Thursday 8am-6.30pm**

**Friday 8am-6.30pm**

**Saturday 8am-12noon\***

*\*for pre-booked appointments only*

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## Afternoon closures

**Thursday 16th September**

**Wednesday 22nd October**

**Thursday 27th November**

## Evening & Weekend Services

Ask us about evening or week-end pre-bookable appointments with the **Dacorum Extended Hours Service**.

Clinics may be held in various 'hubs' around Dacorum, perfect for those that find it difficult to attend daytime appointments. If you need help or advice when we are closed; NHS111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

## Prescriptions

Fernville do not offer an emergency prescription service unless it is medically necessary. It is your responsibility to ensure you have adequate medication. Please allow 3 working days to process repeat prescriptions requests.

We hope you've enjoyed the summer sunshine and looking forward to the beautiful autumn leaves coming soon.

This month we want to talk about a serious health problem called **SEPSIS**. Our PPG Chair, Carolyne Downer-Smith, has written this to help you understand what it is and why it matters.

Sepsis is a life-threatening illness. It happens when your body over-reacts into an infection and starts to damage its own organs and tissues. This is often called blood poisoning. Sepsis can cause shock, organ failure and even death if it's not treated quickly.

It can affect anyone – even healthy people – but is most common in very young children, older adults and people with health vulnerability. Sepsis always starts with an infection, such as a chest infection or urinary (water) infection. However, you may not see signs of the original infection. No one knows why some people get sepsis and others don't.

### **Signs of Sepsis in Adults**

Call for urgent help if you have any of these:

- Slurred speech or confusion
- Extreme shivering or muscle pain
- Not peeing at all in a day
- Severe shortness of breath
- Feeling like you might die
- Skin that is blotchy, blue, or different from normal colour

### **Signs of Sepsis in Children**

Get urgent help if they:

- Are breathing very fast
- Have a fit or convulsion
- Look blotchy, blue, or pale (on darker skin, check palms or inside of forearms)
- Have a rash that does not fade when pressed
- Are very tired or hard to wake
- Feel unusually cold to the touch

If you or someone you care for has these symptoms, call NHS 111 or contact your GP immediately and say you are worried about sepsis.

Sepsis facts · UK: 245,000 people get it each year, causing 48,000 deaths – 5 every hour  
· Worldwide: 11 million deaths each year

The UK Sepsis Trust helps to train doctors and nurses to spot and treat sepsis quickly.

**<https://sepsistrust.org/>**



## Fernville's Patient Group

**Do think about joining one (or both) of our groups of patients. There are two ways to get involved:**

**Virtual Group** – Ideal for staying informed remotely. Members receive newsletters, updates, and very occasional surveys via email, SMS, text. Over 900 patients have now joined this group. How to join: Link **<https://www.fernillesurgery.org/virtual-ppg-sign-up/>** or complete the form found on our waiting-room noticeboard (left of the seating area) and pass to reception.

**Liaison Group** – A team of 10–15 in-person volunteers meeting monthly to work on focused projects. Currently seeking 4-5 new members, including a Secretary (male/female).

Do think about joining one (or both) of our groups of patients. We're especially keen to hear from voices representing different community groups. How to Join:

**<https://www.fernillesurgery.org/request-to-join-the-ppg-liaison-group/>** or complete the form found on our waiting-room noticeboard and pass to reception.

## Flu and Covid Vaccinations 4th and 11th October 2025/2026

Planning has already begun at Fernville for this autumn's Flu and COVID-19 vaccination programme.

For the first time, we will be offering **both** vaccinations at the surgery. Eligible patients will receive an invitation to book an appointment by telephone or text message. By choosing to have your vaccines at Fernville, you help us invest in more doctors, more nurses, and better care for our patients.

**<https://www.fernillesurgery.org/flu-and-covid-vaccinations-2025-2026/>**

### Hertfordshire Talking Therapies

offer psychological treatments for common mental and emotional problems like stress, anxiety and depression. It is part of the NHS Talking Therapies programme.

There are lots of different types of talking therapy, but they all involve working with a trained therapist. This may be one-to-one, in a group, online or over the phone.

A number of online support options available including webinars, self-help videos and guides: Self-help and webinar library.

Hertfordshire Talking Therapies is part of Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT). They offer support to those aged 16 and over who are registered with a GP in Hertfordshire.

A GP can refer you, or you can contact the service yourself by calling **0800 6444 101**. You can find out more information and make a self-referral via their website:

**[www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk](http://www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk)**

### We're Now Accredited for being a Veteran Friendly GP Practice

This means we are committed to understanding and supporting the unique health needs of veterans.

If you have served in the UK Armed Forces — even for just one day — please let us know so we can update your records and offer the right support.

You can find helpful information on our website, including:

- The **Veteran Patient Charter**
- Support from **Op COURAGE** (mental health and well being)
- Help from **Op RESTORE** (physical health)
- Links to other specialist services

**<https://www.fernillesurgery.org/practice-information/veteran-friendly-gp-accreditation/>**



**Armed Forces veteran  
friendly accredited  
GP practice**

### Pneumonia Vaccination

Have you missed out on getting the Pneumococcal Vaccination, commonly known as the Pneumonia vaccine. It helps protect against serious illnesses like pneumonia and meningitis. Most adults over the age of 65 only need one dose for lifetime protection. Some people between 2 and 64 with certain health conditions, such as having a weakened immune system may need booster doses every 5 years.

### Who, and what, is Fernville's Social Prescribing service?

Public Health England

Healthmatters

#### **Social prescribing – addressing people's needs in a holistic way**

GPs and other health care professionals can refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services, supported by a link worker or connector



Fernville's 2 social prescribers act as a bridge between the medical care you receive from the practice and community-based support, aimed to improve the overall health and wellbeing of patients by addressing the wider social factors impacting their lives.

The Social Prescribers link 'clients' to non-clinical community resources, such as exercise classes, befriending groups, workshops, walking groups, support with finances, housing, heating issues and more.

They can contact you by phone and even visit your home if preferred. Please contact Reception to make an appointment with a GP, who will make a referral to this free service on your behalf, alternatively make a self-referral which we are told can be achieved through the practice website.

### Fernville's New Appointment System

In March, Fernville changed the way patients book appointments by moving to a 'total triage' system. Before this, some people were booking appointments that weren't really needed. This meant others had to wait weeks for routine appointments. To fix this, we started triaging all appointment requests – both urgent and routine. A duty doctor now checks each request and makes sure the patient is seen by the right person at the right time.

This new system means urgent problems are still seen on the same day and routine appointments are now available within a few days.

Some patients were unsure about the change at first, but most feedback has been really positive. Patients say the system works well, and that the reception team is always happy to help anyone who can't fill-in the form themselves. We're really pleased with how things are going and the team will keep working to make further improvements.

### A FINAL WORD ...

**111 ONLINE Emergency prescriptions** - Use this service to request a limited emergency supply of any regularly prescribed meds if you've completely run out. If you normally pay, you will pay, if you do not pay, you won't through this emergency route.