



Fernville Focus

Newsletter written by patients for patients. December 2025.

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

Tel: 01442 213919 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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Closures over the Christmas Period

Wednesday 24/12 8am – 6:30 pm

Thursday 25/12 CLOSED

Friday 26/12 CLOSED

Saturday 27/12 CLOSED

Sunday 28/12 CLOSED

Monday 29/12 8am – 6:30 pm

Tuesday 30/12 8am – 6:30 pm

Wednesday 31/12 8am – 6:30pm

Thursday 1/1/26 CLOSED

Friday 2/1/26 8am – 6:30pm

Saturday 3/1/26 8am - 12 noon

Sunday 4/1/26 CLOSED

Monday 5/1/26 onwards - Normal hours

Half day closures

December - none

Jan - none

Feb - none

Evening & Weekend Services

Ask us about evening or weekend 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.

On behalf of your PPG Liaison Group and all the staff at Fernville Surgery, I wish you all a happy and contented Christmas and a peaceful and healthy year to come.

Carolyne Downer-Smith

Hello and welcome to this last month of 2025



Where does the time go – Christmas just around the corner!

Carolyne Downer-Smith, PPG Chairman, has produced this article – and with some personal knowledge – to highlight one of the significant health events taking place over the next 3 months – 1st-7th December - Crohn's & Colitis Awareness Week. Link <https://crohnsandcolitis.org.uk/>

The main reason for raising such awareness is because the symptoms are quite common and are easily confused with similar tummy problems, possibly resulting in people not receiving the right medical attention which could lead to a reduction in their physical activity and often their overall quality of life.

Crohn's disease involves the inflammation of the gastrointestinal (stomach) tract. Ulcerative colitis is a similar inflammatory condition that affects the colon and large intestine. Crohn's disease and colitis are commonly known as IBD and are usually diagnosed through ultrasound and may be CT scanning. The majority of people who suffer from Crohn's disease or colitis do not consider it to be a disability, however, since these are chronic diseases, proper care and medication are needed to alleviate the symptoms and help people live normal lives with these debilitating diseases.

Various live sessions and seminars are likely organised by hospitals, researchers, and doctors throughout this Awareness Week to educate patients and carers about Crohn's disease and colitis, highlighting various treatment methods. Do check-out relevant websites. Facts that may surprise you!

- More than 70% of our immune system is in our G.I. tract (intestines)
- Each year, over 500,000 people in the UK suffer from gastrointestinal disorders.
- Yoga apparently aids digestion naturally by reducing constipation, inflammation and bloating.
- More than 100 trillion bacteria live inside our G.I. tract.
- On average, a person passes wind 15 times a day - not me, you say!

You know your body so be proactive and be the first to look after yourself!

HELP: Handrail needed!

Our splendid surgery would be much easier to access for some of our patients with disabilities if there was a handrail on the left-hand side, going up towards the entrance.



Do any of our readers know a company or individual willing to provide the funding for the provision of a handrail? It will ideally be made of stainless steel, so if you know an individual or company willing to help our patients, please advise the Fernville Focus newsletter team via the surgery.

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: Link <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.

Ever wondered how much NHS services cost?

PARTICULARLY THOSE APPOINTMENTS WHERE GP PATIENTS FAILED TO TURN-UP FOR THEIR REQUESTED APPOINTMENT (KNOWN AS DNA'S – DID NOT ATTEND)

The King's Fund revealed in August 2025 that they see a significant rise in demand for NHS services. GP appointments have increased by 20% since 2018/19, with 370 million booked in the latest year. Outpatient appointments have doubled since 2003/04 and A&E departments have seen 2.8 million more attendances and 1.3 million more admissions compared to 2010/11.

Understanding the cost of specific services helps illustrate where NHS spending goes:

- **10-minute face-to-face GP consultation £37**
- **District nurse consultation £57**
- **Basic A&E investigation and treatment £114**
- **More complex A&E treatment £173-563**
- **A&E attendance via ambulance £459**
- **Ambulance call-out (no A&E attendance) £327**
- **Overnight stay in rehabilitation centre £399**
- **Diagnostic tests: Simple test such as a GP urine dipstick £5 rising to more complicated test such as an Adult colonoscopy £1,093**

Every time a patient makes an appointment to see their GP and then fails to attend, without making contact with reception to cancel, it still costs £37 for the 10-minute consultation. The GP does not press-on with the next appointment, he/she waits, in case the patient is running late.

Your PPG Liaison Group has looked at the figures for Fernville's DNA's (Did Not Attend). From April 2025 to date the monthly numbers have consistently been a staggering 150+. Fernville surgery's costs for those who do not take time to cancel their now unwanted appointments at £37 each amount to around £5,500 per month – an overwhelming £66,600 per annum!

So the message is - please consider your GP Practice and take just a few minutes to cancel that appointment you worked hard to secure, for the illness you felt required GP referral.

www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/data-and-charts/key-facts-figures-nhs

A Fond Farewell to Dr Gilly Ennals



We wish to inform you that **Dr Gilly Ennals** will be leaving the practice at the end of December 2025.

Over the years, Dr Ennals has provided exceptional care and support to her patients, and we are truly grateful for her dedication.

We wish her every success in the next chapter of her career.

We are pleased to announce that **Dr Elle Hartland**, whom many of you may have already met, will take over Dr Ennals' list of patients, ensuring a seamless transition of care.

Patients registered with Dr Ennals will be informed individually and do not need to take any further action.

Winter Flu season a month early

A warning from abroad: Whatever happens in Australia, we tend to see it follow here. They are currently experiencing their worst flu season on record, with hospital admissions surging in part due to low vaccination rates. Here in the UK, hospitals are bracing themselves for a once-in-a-decade surge in flu cases.

The surgery is particularly concerned about the low uptake of the flu vaccination among pregnant women, 2 to 3 year-olds, and children in higher-risk groups. Babies under 6 months cannot receive the flu vaccine themselves, but they are protected by antibodies passed on when their mother is vaccinated.

Young children, especially under 5 or high-risk, have some of the highest hospitalisation rates because their immune systems are still developing or their health condition puts them at greater risk.

Most children can receive the nasal spray, a simple squirt up the nose that can reduce severity and help keep the family safe this winter.

Over 65s make up the largest share of flu-related hospital admissions and deaths, with risk increasing for those with underlying health conditions. Women are consistently more likely than men to get vaccinated, and men are more likely to be admitted to hospital with flu, particularly in older age groups.

Fernville still has some flu vaccine stock available so please book soon.

You can also go to your local pharmacy.