

UEA Medical Centre

Patient Newsletter – Vol 3 Issue 2: Summer 2025

WELCOME

Welcome to our quarterly patient newsletter.

We hope that the newsletter is helpful in keeping our patients and the local community aware of the goings on here at UEA Medical Centre. We hope to provide information that will be interesting and beneficial to you.

Assorted topics will be covered within our newsletter, not all medical.

Please get in touch if you have any suggestions and ideas that you would like to be covered in future newsletters.

International students

If you have come from a high-risk TB country it is a university regulation that you have TB screening as soon as you arrive at the UEA. Failure to have this screening could result in suspension from campus and from your course. For further information visit our [website](#).

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Appointments – keep it or cancel it!

Of the 16,556 appointments at the practice in the last 3 months, 971 (6%) did not attend (DNA) their booked GP/nurse appointment. This is equal to **162 hours of wasted appointments / 4.5 weeks of a full time GP!**

With increased demand for GP and nursing services and very little extra funding to facilitate this rise, reducing the DNA rate could make a significant difference to appointment availability.

Please...if you cannot make your appointment, cancel it so someone else can use it! It's really easy to do by clicking the link in the 24-hour reminder you will receive by text ahead of your appointment.

Exams - Special conditions & what to do if you are ill during exam period

If you feel that a significant illness has affected your exam revision, please complete the **online medical certificate request form**.

If you need to miss an exam due to illness, you must attend the medical centre in person, ON THE DAY of the exam before it is due to start so the doctor can assess your fitness to sit. Please ensure you tell reception that you have an exam.

IMPORTANT: All students (irrespective of whether you are registered with us or not) phone us on 01603 251600 and ask to be put onto the urgent doctor list (same day). Event assessments include;

◆ Examinations ◆ Course tests ◆ OSCEs (medical students) ◆ OSPEs (pharmacy students)

Visit our website www.umsuea.co.uk and click on 'exam/event assessment' for further information.

Student sickness certificates

We produce medical certificates to provide evidence in support of extenuating circumstances and extensions for course tests and exams. Students are now able to self-certify for 7-day extensions as many times as required throughout the academic year. For extensions longer than 7 days, a certificate is still required. If evidence of extenuating circumstances due to a health condition is required then a medical certificate can be requested via the online form on the Medical Centre [website](http://www.umsuea.co.uk). (These can only be completed if we have sufficient evidence).

For further information about when to attend the Medical Centre for certificates, see our [website](http://www.umsuea.co.uk).

Are you going home for summer? Do you know what to do if you need to see a doctor whilst away from UEA/Norwich?

If you need to seek medical assistance from your 'home' GP whilst you are away from Norwich for summer vacation (but due to return to UEA in Autumn) then **we advise that you do not register with them - instead, ask to be seen as a temporary resident.**

This means you can still be seen whilst at home, but your main GP is at the UEA Medical Centre with all your medical records. If you do register with your 'home' GP, then you will need to re-register with us when you come back, and your medical records may be delayed in transit. Visit our [website](#) for further information.

Is your course soon to finish? Are you leaving the UEA?

If you are soon to finish or no longer studying at the UEA, it does not mean you have to register with a GP elsewhere. As long as you are still living in Norwich (and within our practice boundary) then you can continue to remain registered here if you wish. Just make sure you update your email address with us (if we have your UEA one on record as this will be deactivated) and your other contact details are correct. You can email umsuea@nhs.net with details, but remember to state your full name and date of birth on the email for verification.



Medication over summer vacation and review dates

If you are leaving Norwich for summer vacation (but returning in autumn) make sure you order medication in advance before you run out. We can send prescriptions electronically to anywhere in England.

If you are outside of England, you will need to see a local GP close to where you are residing if you need a prescription or if your medication review date is overdue. You can see them as a temporary resident.

If you take regular medication, you will need to have a review on a regular basis - even if the prescription is on as a 'repeat' medication. How often you have a review depends on each individual and the type of drug. You will notice when you get your prescription, a 'review date' and you must book an appointment before this date to ensure continuity of your medication is not interrupted. **This is your responsibility.**

A lot of medication reviews can be done over the phone so please ensure you book a telephone appointment if needed.

NB/Contraceptive pill repeats – can be done over the phone as long as you can provide a recent blood pressure, height and weight. Ask a receptionist for details as this also depends on the type of pill you are taking.

Travel services...planning to go on holiday soon?

Whether you're off on a package holiday to relax, trekking through the Amazon, on safari in Africa or exploring the world, our fully qualified and experienced travel health nurses can give you expert advice on staying healthy and safe abroad. The travel clinic offers:

- Full travel risk assessments and advice
- Travel vaccinations
- Registered Yellow Fever Centre
- Free parking

Appointments are available throughout the week, and you should aim to book your first appointment at least 8 weeks before you are due to travel. We do not give travel advice over the phone. Your initial appointment will be for 30 minutes, and the specialist nurse will run through a personal assessment of risks/needs, taking into account your length of stay, activities and any existing health problems. This assessment will determine which vaccinations/medication you require. Subsequent appointments are usually 15 minutes.

Enjoy the summer sunshine safely. Protect yourself from sun damage

Summer is nearly here! Enjoy the sunshine safely! Most skin cancers are caused by over exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun or sun beds. For a happy, enjoyable summer in the sun remember the following: **You should check your skin regularly for changes. If you have any concerns, do not delay making an appointment to see a doctor as soon as possible.**

- Spend time in the shade between 11-3pm when the sun is at its strongest
- Make sure you never burn
- Try to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses
- Always use a sun protection factor (SPF) 15+ screen/cream
- Remember to take extra care with children
- For further information visit www.sunsmart.org.uk



Hay fever

Hay fever season starts in February with tree pollens. Usual symptoms are frequent sneezing, blocked nose, red/itchy/watery eyes, itchy roof of mouth, loss of smell and taste, headaches, dry and sore throat, and dry tongue to name a few. Some people also experience asthmatic symptoms such as: wheezing, cough and chest tightness.

Mild hay fever that cannot be avoided is best treated with anti-allergy tablets called antihistamines. More severe hay fever can be helped by nose sprays, inhalations, or eye drops that are used regularly throughout the season to prevent the allergic response.

Most hay fever medications do not require a prescription and are available to purchase over the counter at any chemist.

Health campaigns

There are a number of national campaigns running over the Summer aimed to raise awareness of important health issues and stimulate groups and individuals to seek information and services.

June

[Diabetes week](#)

[Men's health week](#)

[Learning disability week](#)

[Cervical screening awareness week](#)

July

[Talk to us month](#)

[Sarcoma awareness month](#)

[Alcohol awareness week](#)



Ever wondered why we ask for your reason for an appointment? (and no... its not to be nosy!)

We ask because you don't always need to see a doctor. Our staff have access to book directly into various clinics with different clinicians and this is why we ask when you call, a brief reason for your appointment. Our staff are trained to ask and signpost - we have many other experienced clinicians who may be more suitable to your particular need and brief description helps you get the most suitable appointment as soon as possible.

- Nurses (direct booking - various specialist clinics; respiratory, sexual health, travel, immunisations, general)
- Health Care Assistants (direct booking)
- Pharmacist - medication reviews/issues (direct booking)
- Physiotherapists (direct booking)
- Mental Health Support from the Wellbeing service and/or Youth Connect Team (direct booking)
- General Practitioners (doctors) (direct booking)
- Phlebotomists - blood taking (Dr/hospital referral only)
- Mental Health Practitioners (Dr referral only)
- Dieticians (Dr referral only)

Struggling with your Mental Health?

Being away from home or at university for the first time can be exciting but it can also feel daunting or overwhelming. There is a lot going on in the world right now which can feel overwhelming for us all at times. If you feel you are struggling with your mental health and need to talk to someone, we have access to a variety of services and healthcare professionals who can help. You don't always need to see a GP either – our reception staff can refer you directly into some services. Call or visit us so we can make the most appropriate appointment for you.

And remember - you can also go to the Student Information Zone (SIZ) on the street (opposite The Union Bar) or visit [UEA Wellbeing](#).

Alcohol

University can be some of the best years of your life, but for many, alcohol ends up being a huge part of the experience too. Although there is no completely safe level of drinking, the NHS advises that the risk of harm to your health is low if you don't regularly drink more than the recommended allowance.

Health experts recommend drinking no more than 14 units a week spread across 3 days or more. That's around 6 medium (175ml) glasses of wine or 6 pints of 4% beer.

If you overdo it, give your body a day or two to recover. If you regularly drink too much, you could do yourself long term damage. For further information on drink awareness visit:

www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/



Are you a carer?

A carer is anyone, including children and adults who look after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support.

If this sounds like you, then we are here to help. Make an appointment to speak to a doctor who will be able to provide you with information, advice and support.

For more information on the various support agencies out there to help, visit our [website](#).

Emergency contraception

If you have had sex without using any form of contraception or you think your method may have failed, you should attend the Medical Centre as soon as possible. If we are closed, this service is still available from the Out of Hours service by phoning 111 (free from landlines and mobiles). Alternatively, you can visit your local family planning service or pharmacy.

Treatment must start as soon as possible – usually up to 72 hours for the emergency pill and up to 5 days for the IUD. Remember, **the sooner the better**, do not leave it until the last minute to seek advice.

Further information about emergency contraception can be found on the **NHS website**.



Sexual Health Services

Our in-house sexual health service is available during the week to all registered patients. Our sexual health nurses are specially trained to provide expert advice, support and screening for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). *Please note: men with symptoms of an STI will need to contact **iCaSH**.*

If you do not have any symptoms and would just like routine screening, you can pick up a DIY (do it yourself) kit from reception.

Pre-booked appointments only, no drop ins. Please call reception on 01603 251600 and ask for a **NURSE B** clinic appointment. All our services are confidential, non-judgemental, and open to all.

Chlamydia screening

Chlamydia is the most diagnosed sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the UK, affecting both men and women. Most people who have it will have no symptoms and without a test you will probably not know anything is wrong. Left untreated, it can cause complications such as long-standing abdominal pain and infertility. **If you are sexually active and under 25 you should be tested annually.**

The test is free, painless, and confidential. You don't even have to be examined. You can pick up a self-test kit from the Medical Centre or make an appointment in the **NURSE B clinic** if you wish to discuss Chlamydia or have any other concerns.

Visit the **NHS website** for more information or visit the **iCaSH website** where you can order home STI kits and obtain further information.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We already have a virtual group in place, but we need new members!

The practice is always looking for people from all ages and backgrounds that are enthusiastic about influencing and improving the way that local health care is delivered. Want to take part, but no time for meetings? Don't worry - our PPG is virtual.

We will occasionally send you emails asking for your opinion on a range of topics. We are also looking to introduce online Teams meetings once/twice a year to allow members to discuss issues directly with the team including the partners. If you are interested, please complete the form on our [website](#) and someone will be in touch.

! Consent for sharing your medical information

If you are aged 16+ please be aware that the medical centre **cannot share** any of your personal information without written consent from you.

This includes sharing information with your parents/ guardians, university schools or any other third party that requests information. *(So...if you know it is likely that your parents/guardians are going to ring us - please let them know that we can't tell them anything unless you have signed the form!)*

Download the form [here](#) and send it to umsuea@nhs.net

Social Prescribing - For support with non-medical matters

Social prescribing involves helping patients to improve their health, wellbeing, and social welfare by connecting them to community services which might be run by the council or a local charity. They can help with:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|
| - Housing, benefits | - Mental health | - Care | - Rights and responsibilities |
| - Activities, clubs, groups | - Family, relationships | - Work | - Education, training |
| - Blue badges, transport | - Budgeting, debt | | |

How can I book to see a Social Prescriber? - Just give us a call! 01603 251600. You will need a GP referral into this service. Once referred, you will have an initial telephone consultation with the social prescriber, where they will assess your needs to see how best they can help you.

Student Information Zone (SIZ) - Alternatively, if you're a student and need help with learning, student services or finance? You can also contact the UEA Student Information Zone (SIZ) who can help provide an initial response to questions and work out next steps. They can show you how to find the information you need online and can make a referral to the right service if required.

F2F: Visit them on The Street (opposite The Union Bar.) Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Online: SIZ can be accessed 24/7 at siz.uea.ac.uk. To gain full functionality, you need a UEA username and password which you will receive once you have registered as a student.

Email: You can also email student.information.zone@uea.ac.uk with your question.

Feeling unwell? Not sure what to do or where to go?

These days there are lots of choices within the NHS. Making the right choice, at the right time will help you get the best possible treatment appropriate for your condition at that time. To help you decide, we have devised a list of services available:

<h1>Feeling unwell? Choose the right service</h1>					
Self-care	NHS 111	Pharmacist	GP (Doctor)	NHS Walk-in Services	A&E or 999
Hangover. Grazed knee. Sore throat. Cough.	Unsure? Confused? Need help?	Diarrhoea. Runny Nose. Painful cough. Headache.	Unwell. Vomiting. Ear pain. Back ache.	If you cannot get to the GP and it is not getting any better.	Choking. Severe bleeding. Chest pain. Blacking out.

Self-care: Best choice of treatment for very minor illness and injuries, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, cuts, bruises etc. Keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet with paracetamol or aspirin, indigestion remedies, plasters, thermometer, anti-diarrhoeal medicine, rehydration mixtures.

NHS 111: This is a free NHS telephone number (from both landlines and mobile phones) which you can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Confidential health advice and information. You can also get help for your symptoms online <https://111.nhs.uk>.

Pharmacy: There are many local pharmacies available in Norwich, various opening hours. You can find your local pharmacy [here](#). They can provide advice on common illnesses such as colds and coughs including the best medicines to treat them.

GP (Doctor) Surgery: This is us! We are open Monday-Friday 08:00-18:30, and most Saturday mornings (for pre-booked appointments only).

Routine and pre-bookable appointments with Doctors, Nurses, and other health professionals. Urgent service for urgent same day issues (non-life threatening). For illness and injury that will not go away.

NHS Walk-In Centre: Rouen Road (city centre), Norwich, www.norwichwalkincentre.co.uk
Open 7 days per week (including bank holidays) 07:00-19:00

Accident & Emergency or 999: For critical or life-threatening conditions only.

Find an NHS service near you

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/services-near-you/