

Practice Newsletter

SUMMERFIELD
GROUP PRACTICE

October 2025



Summerfield Group Practice

Summerfield Primary
Care Centre,
134 Heath Street,
Birmingham,
B18 7AL

0121 255 0419

Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Welcome to Our Practice Newsletter

We're delighted to bring you the first edition of our practice newsletter since 2016. A lot has changed in the world and in healthcare since then. We feel this is the perfect time to reconnect with you in a more regular, helpful way.

This newsletter is designed with you in mind. We'll be sharing:

- Updates on our team and services
- Practical tips to help you look after your health and wellbeing
- Seasonal advice and reminders
- Information about how to make the most of what the practice and wider NHS can offer

We know that navigating healthcare can sometimes feel overwhelming. Our hope is that

this newsletter becomes a clear and friendly source of guidance, helping you stay informed and confident about your care.

Most importantly, this is about you. If there are topics you'd like us to cover, questions you'd like answered, or ideas to make the practice better, we'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for being part of our patient community, together, we can make sure your practice works for you.

Warm regards,

Practice team

In this newsletter you can expect:

Practice updates

Community
events

GP Patient
Survey 2025

Insight into the
people behind
your care

Seasonal health
advice

Tools to help you
manage your
care



Flu season - tips & tricks

As the days shorten and temperatures drop, viruses tend to spread more easily, and colder weather can put extra strain on our bodies. Now is the time to be a little more mindful of how we look after our health.

Here are some medically grounded tips to help you stay well during flu season and beyond:



Get your flu (and COVID, if eligible) vaccination
Vaccines remain one of the best defences against serious illness in winter.



Stay active, eat well, rest, and stay hydrated

- Gentle exercise helps immune function and circulation.
- A diet rich in fruit, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes helps support your immune system
- Even in colder weather, keep drinking fluids (water, warm drinks)



Manage stress

Ongoing stress can weaken immune response. Even short daily stress-reducing habits, like breathing exercises, mindfulness, or walking outside, can help your body resist infections.



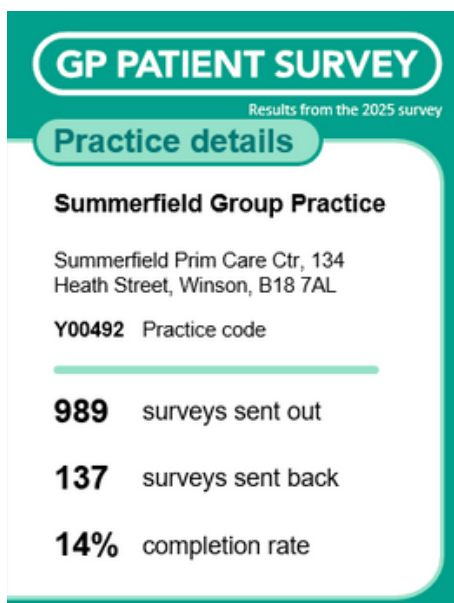
Try a saline nasal spray

Keeping nasal passages moist may help your body's natural defences against viruses. Saline sprays are safe, drug-free, and available over the counter.



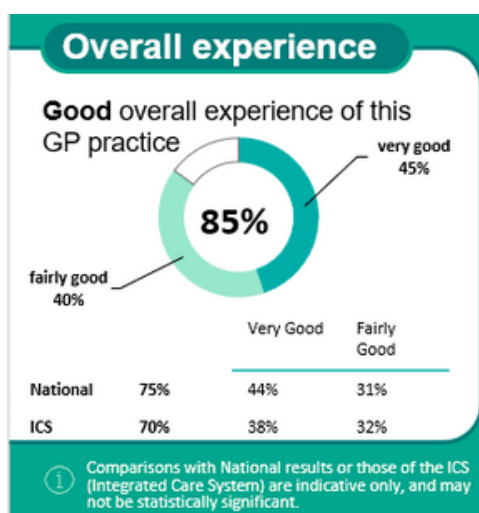
Boost vitamin D in darker months

With shorter days and less sunlight, vitamin D levels can drop, affecting immunity and bone health. The NHS recommends everyone consider a daily 10 microgram (400 IU) vitamin D supplement during autumn and winter.



GP Patient Survey 2025

We're pleased to share that this year's survey shows our practice performing above both ICS and national averages in several areas, including phone access, NHS App access, reception helpfulness, waiting times, overall experience, and trust in our healthcare professionals.



[Click here to view the full results](#)



There are a few areas where patients felt we could do better, such as support for long-term conditions, seeing a preferred healthcare professional, and clarity on next steps after contact.

We've listened to your feedback and now have an action plan in place to improve these areas, so we can continue providing the best possible care for all our patients.

The People Behind Your Care

At our practice, we're proud to have a skilled and diverse multidisciplinary team (MDT) working together to look after your health. This means that when you get in touch, you may be offered an appointment with the professional best suited to help, and it won't always need to be a GP.

By consulting the right professional, you can:

- Get **advice quicker**, whether it's about medications, musculoskeletal pain, or mental health.
- Access advice and support from the practitioners **most experienced** in your specific needs.
- Learn ways to **manage your health at home**, such as exercises, lifestyle tips, or coping strategies.
- Reduce unnecessary stress by knowing you're speaking to someone trained in that area.

This team-based approach also **frees up GP appointments** for patients who truly need to see a doctor, helping the whole practice run more efficiently.



Here's a little more about who's who in our team:

- **GPs** – diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions, prescribe medications, and oversee your overall care.
- **Clinical Pharmacists** – experts in medicines who carry out reviews, support the management of long-term conditions, and ensure treatments are safe and effective. They can also help with a wide range of **queries or problems with medication**, such as side effects, dosage questions, and prescription changes.
- **First Contact Physiotherapists (MSK Specialists)** – assess and treat muscle, joint, and back problems directly, often without the need for a GP appointment.
- **Physician Associates** – work alongside our GPs to assess, diagnose, and manage many common health conditions.
- **Practice Nurses & Healthcare Assistants** – provide vaccinations, health checks, dressings, and long-term condition reviews.
- **Mental Health Practitioners (MHPs)** – support patients experiencing anxiety, depression, stress, or other mental health challenges. They can provide assessments, short-term interventions, and referrals to more specialised services if needed.
- **Care Coordinators & Administrative Team** – ensure your appointments, referrals, and test results are handled efficiently so your care runs smoothly.



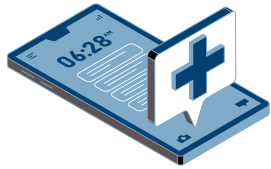
Looking for a way to get the whole family feeling healthier? **Beezee Families** is a **free, award-winning lifestyle programme** helping families with children aged **5–12** make small, lasting changes together.

In-person group sessions run for two hours each week over 12 weeks, offering tailored support for children. Families can enjoy fun activities, games, and healthy cooking sessions - plus every child gets a **free goodie bag** and take-home handouts. It's also a great chance to **meet other families** and stay connected through a supportive WhatsApp group.

If you prefer to take part from home, Beezee Families also offers **online sessions**, featuring live, interactive activities and regular check-ins with the team.

Find out more or sign up at bxh.maximusuk.co.uk/beezeefamilies. or by calling 03308 186308

THE NHS APP IS AVAILABLE ON IOS
AND ANDROID:



Visit www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/ for
information, support, and step-by-step
instructions

Stay in control with the NHS App

Did you know anyone with a smartphone can set up an NHS App account? The app is a simple and secure way to access your health information and services, all in one place.

Through the NHS App, you can:

- Book and manage appointments
- Order repeat prescriptions
- View consultation history, test results and immunisations
- Get trusted NHS advice and guidance



Need an update on your referral?

If you're waiting to hear about a hospital or specialist appointment, you **don't need to book a GP appointment** just to check. While we don't have access to hospital appointment books, our Care Coordinators and administrative team can help you find out **where your referral has been sent and who to contact**.

Here are some common numbers to chase referrals directly:

- **SWBH (Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals)** – 0121 506 4151
- **UHB (University Hospitals Birmingham)** – 0121 371 7070
- **Community services (BCHC)** – 0121 466 6000
- **BWC (Birmingham Women's & Children's)** – Children: 0121 333 9700 | Women: 0121 335 8100



Happy Diwali

We'd like to wish all our patients celebrating a very happy and peaceful Diwali this October.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

As we approach the festive season, we'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful start to the New Year.

The practice will be closed on 25th and 26th December and 1st January for the bank holidays, and will be open as normal otherwise



The app contains plenty of information about your care, but if something seems **missing** - like previous medical records - you can ask at **reception** for access to your **full medical record** (our practice policy applies).

If you want to manage someone else's records, such as a child or relative, you can **apply for proxy access** at the practice. This links their record to your account. Certain rules apply, for example **patients over a specific age may need to give consent** before proxy access is granted.

Need help? If you're having any issues with the NHS App, contact NHS App support at www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/help/. They usually reply quickly, often within an hour during the day. You can also come to the practice reception for guidance - **our team is happy to help**.

Did You Know? Your Shared Care Record

Your **Shared Care Record (SCR)** is a secure digital summary of your health, including:

- **Medications**
- **Allergies**
- **Recent test results**
- **Current conditions**

It allows NHS professionals across different services, like hospitals, GP surgeries, and community care, to access a **brief overview** of your health when needed. This helps them **provide safer, faster care** and reduces the need for you to repeat your medical history.

Your choice: You can opt out of having an SCR at any time. To do so, contact your GP practice. This won't affect your care, and you can change your decision later.

Pharmacy First - Quick, Convenient Care



What is it?

Pharmacy First is an NHS service that allows you to get help for **common conditions** directly from your local pharmacy, without needing a GP appointment.

This includes things like **sore throats, earaches, shingles, impetigo, and some urinary tract infections.**

If you contact us about a condition that can be treated by a pharmacy, our **reception team can make a direct referral for you.** You can also go directly to the pharmacy if you prefer - either way, you'll get timely care.

Why we use it

This service is part of an NHS initiative to make care **quicker and more convenient.**

By seeing a pharmacist first, GP appointments are kept available for patients who **truly need them**, helping everyone get the right care at the right time.



Why we ask questions

You may be asked **a few triage questions** by our team about your symptoms.

This isn't to slow you down or pry - it helps us decide if your condition can be safely treated by the pharmacy or if you do need to see a GP.



Remember:

Pharmacists are highly trained and can give advice, treatment, or medication where appropriate. Using Pharmacy First is safe, NHS-backed, and designed to help you get better faster.

Find your nearest pharmacy



Think 'Pharmacy First'

Walk In, No Appointment Needed!

NHS

If you or your child have a minor illness, visit your local pharmacy first. It's quicker, easier, and helps keep GP and urgent care services available for those who really need them.

What can be treated?

- ✓ **Sinusitis**
Aged 12+
Blocked nose, headaches, facial pain
- ✓ **Sore Throat**
Aged 5+
Pain, swelling, difficulty swallowing
- ✓ **Ear Infections**
Aged 1-17
Ear pain, fever, discharge
- ✓ **Infected Insect Bites**
Aged 1+
Swelling, redness, pus
- ✓ **Impetigo**
Aged 1+
Red sores, blisters, crusting skin
- ✓ **Shingles**
Aged 18+
Painful rash, blisters, burning sensation
- ✓ **Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)**
Women aged 16-64
Pain when urinating, frequent need to pee

Why Choose Pharmacy First?

- Quick & Easy**
Walk in, get help, and carry on with your day.
- Flexible for Busy Lives**
No need to book time off work or wait for a GP.
- Perfect for Parents**
Get fast treatment for common childhood illnesses.
- Trusted NHS Service**
Pharmacists are trained healthcare professionals.
- Prescriptions are free**
For those who don't pay for NHS prescriptions.



Ordering Your Prescriptions

Ordering your prescriptions is easy and safe.

For **repeat items**, the best way to request them is through the **NHS App**, though you can also hand in a **paper slip** at reception or request via your **pharmacy**. Please make sure to **name each item**, avoid writing "all medications" or "all repeats," as this helps reduce unnecessary prescriptions and saves the NHS millions each year. Our **clinical pharmacists** will check your request and send it straight to your **nominated pharmacy**.

Acute items usually need a **review first**. You can check with reception or your GP when it is first issued whether a review is required if you are unsure.

We **do not take prescription requests over the phone**. This long-standing rule keeps phone lines free for other queries and helps reduce errors.

Tip: The **NHS App** is available **24/7** and sends your request directly to our team, quick, easy, and safe!

We hope you've enjoyed reading this first edition of our newsletter and that it's helped give you a clearer picture of the people behind your care, how our team and wider health professionals can support you. Just like when we introduced this newsletter, our aim is to keep you informed, supported, and confident about your health and the services available to you and make navigating care simpler.

We'd love to hear your thoughts or suggestions for future editions - after all, this newsletter is for you.

— The Practice Team

Thank you for reading!

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

Online: visit summerfieldgrouppractice.nhs.uk

Telephone: call **0121 255 0419**. Lines are open 8am until 8pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays.

In person: visit our practice from 8am until 8pm, Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays.

If you need medical advice when we are closed, call **111** or visit www.111.nhs.uk

For advice about an unwell child, visit healthiertogether.nhs.uk

Contact us Online

Did you know you can contact us online with non-urgent medical queries and admin requests, like fit notes? **Just go to our website and click 'Submit a New Request' on the green banner.**



Have Your Say – Join Our Next PPG Meeting!

We really value your ideas and feedback, and our PPG is a great way to help shape the services at your practice.

It's open to all patients and provides a friendly, informal space to share suggestions, offer input on improvements, or simply listen and learn about what's happening in your local healthcare.

- Open to all patients
- Friendly, informal setting
- No commitment - just come and listen or share

Ask at reception to sign up or for more details!

Your voice matters. Let's improve together