

Dr Heatley is retiring!



We are sad to report that Dr Heatley is retiring at the end of the month. He and his wife, Heather, set up the surgery in 1995 in a portacabin in Tylden Way. He has always strongly believed that patients should be seen as quickly as possible and that is why, unlike other surgeries, we can always get an appointment and receive such a brilliant service. Can we on behalf of patients thank him most sincerely for all that he has done for us over the years and wish him a very happy retirement. We understand that he is going to spend more time at home cooking and gardening!

Dementia Action Week 15th to 21st May

It is the Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Action Week. This is about raising awareness and its particular focus this year is on increasing diagnosis rates.

Did you know **209,600 people** will develop dementia this year, that's 1 every 3 minutes! In April 2022, the monthly death statistics for England, released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), reported dementia and Alzheimer's disease as [England's biggest killer](#). This cause of death was not previously written on death certificates. The word "dementia" is an umbrella term used for many brain diseases: there are about 100 types.

The most common is Alzheimer's disease which accounts for 50-75% of cases. It first destroys nerves and brain cells associated with learning, so early symptoms often include changes in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. The second most common is Frontotemporal Dementia, including Pick's disease, which particularly affects changes to personality and behaviour and/or difficulties with language. Other known forms are Vascular Dementia, where small blood clots prevent oxygen reaching the brain tissue which accounts for 17-30% of those with dementia, and Dementia with Lewy Bodies which leads to a decline in thinking, reasoning, and independent function. Its features may include spontaneous changes in attention and alertness, recurrent visual hallucinations, sleep behaviour disorder, and slow movement, tremors, or rigidity.

All these types are progressive. Early diagnosis is really important, and your GP can refer you to a specialist team for assessment. When someone is diagnosed, these trained professionals can help as well as the two charities: Dementia UK and the larger one, the Alzheimer's Society. There are many local services to support sufferers and their careers.

A study by the Alzheimer's Society has shown that many people wait up to a year before getting help for dementia symptoms, because they feel afraid. But an assessment and early diagnosis can have many benefits. Right at the outset it is so important to prepare the patient and their family for the present and future, and to try to slow down the progress of the disease through strategies and support, as well as medication.

**Asking the
same question
over and over again.
over and over again.
over and over again.**

**It's not called
getting old, it's
called getting ill.**



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PPG Committee members – Barbara Blarmires, David Hawkins, Nick Longdon, David Searle, and Ann Valentine

Dementia Support for Relatives and Carers

Many of us will have friends and family members suffering from dementia. This is challenging and stressful, but there is support available from the NHS and the local authority. You will be directed to this by the surgery when a diagnosis is made, and you can also find helpful information on the NHS website.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/social-services-and-the-nhs/>

Charities and voluntary organisations also provide valuable help and advice on their websites and via their helplines:

- [Alzheimer's Society](#) – Dementia Connect support line 0333 150 3456.
- [Age UK](#) – advice line 0800 678 1602 (free)
- [Independent Age](#) – helpline 0800 319 6789 (free)
- [Dementia UK](#) – Admiral Nurse dementia helpline 0800 888 6678 (free)
- For more local services - <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/your-local-dementia-support-services> <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area/dementia-support/>

The Alzheimer's Society has produced a detailed leaflet to help make a home more dementia friendly. This contains many useful tips on such things as lighting, furnishings, eating and drinking and organisation. There are number of things that can help to make life easier, and the leaflet can be found here.

https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/default/files/migrate/downloads/making_your_home_dementia_friendly.pdf

Communication often causes frustration for patients, carers, and family members. Advice on this can be found on the various websites above and we have picked out some of the suggestions here.

- speak clearly and slowly, using short sentences.
- make eye contact with the person when they're talking or asking questions.
- give time to respond,
- let them speak for themselves during discussions about their welfare or health issues.
- acknowledge what they have said, show that you've heard them and encourage them to say more about their answer.

We have only scratched the surface of this complex topic, but we hope that you find the links useful and that you get the help you need.

Just some examples of local activities for people suffering from dementia and their carers.



SINGING FOR THE BRAIN – meets in St Mark's Church

Horsham Bowls Club – Wickhurst Lane, Broadbridge Heath

HORSHAM RUSTY BRAINS GROUP – meets in the Brighton Rd Baptist Church

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Dementia – a glimmer of hope.

You may have heard the news recently that a new treatment for Alzheimer's Disease might be on the way. Two new drugs, currently in clinical trials, have been shown to slow the progress of the disease by attacking the sticky deposits in the brain which are thought to be associated with the deterioration in brain function. The importance of this development is that it shows that scientists are on the right track and that it is possible to treat the disease in its early stages. The drugs Donanemab and Lecanemab, are still a long way from being approved for use and have significant major side effects so please don't approach your GP for a prescription. We now have to wait to see how this new development progresses and hope for more successes in the future.

Primary Care Network new professionals - Health And Wellbeing Coach - A Patient's Experience

I had seen the word "pre-diabetic?" on my blood test form, and knew from calculating my BMI on the computer that I was classed as "obese"!! Me, obese?!!! So I wondered how all the larger people in Horsham were classified if that was what I was classified as!! I knew that it's no good to lose weight drastically very quickly: it has to be a slow, bit by bit process over time to educate your thinking and lifestyle so that the weight stays off. Of course we all know in theory what we should do to reduce weight: more exercise, better and smaller quantities of food, but putting that in practice is very hard, at any age.



I knew that I needed a guiding hand so thought I would ask the newly appointed Health and Wellbeing Coach at Holbrook Surgery if dealing with weight loss was within her remit. It definitely was! So my first meeting was a face-to-face meeting of about 45 minutes at the surgery, talking about what I eat and an assessment of my lifestyle. She coached me on ways in which I could easily start to make small

Rachael Lewis changes and start to achieve my health goals i.e., do a little more exercise that I enjoyed, avoid the honey nut cornflakes and try porridge with fruit/nuts etc, cut out the custard creams, use the calorie app to keep track of exactly what I do eat, use the healthy recipes online, use a smaller dinner plate and try and drink a litre of water! I struggled with the water intake at first, but then found it wasn't difficult if I gave myself timings throughout the day to drink it by. I froze all my Christmas chocolates and only had one occasionally, as binging on chocolates is my weakness. The calorie app was very revealing: was I really eating all those calories? And the exercise had to be something I enjoyed and could stick at. The zoom classes called Moves were my choice with Rosemary Conley videos in between. I couldn't believe it when I saw the Coach in a month's time. I had lost several pounds and was so pleased with myself just from a few little changes but also, I felt so much better, especially drinking the litre of water. I have been happy to accommodate more changes with my follow-up appointments. It is so helpful to have Rachael's guiding hand throughout this process. I would have given up much earlier without her and the weight is still coming off bit by bit!!



Simple steps to beat hay fever

After a mild winter, hay-fever sufferers are likely to experience runny noses and sore, itchy eyes earlier than normal. While over-the-counter antihistamines are often the first line of defence, some people find they simply don't work. But don't despair. Your GP can discuss with you safely doubling - even trebling the dose, or switching to a stronger, prescription variety. Simple pollen-avoidance measures too, such as sunglasses shutting windows and using a pollen filter in the car. Just rubbing Vaseline around the nostrils can also capture tiny pollen particles before they get into your system.

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