

# Holbrook Surgery Patient Participation Group [PPG] HOLBROOK SURGERY NEWSLETTER

Summer

June 2025

## THIS IS OUR 21<sup>st</sup> NEWSLETTER!!



## PPG Coffee Morning

We held our first PPG Coffee morning on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April. We were delighted to be joined by John Milne MP. We were also really pleased to have so many come from the surgery team including Dr Lui, Dr Singh, Lisa Ellis Practice Manager, Lisa Jelley Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Mel Penticost Office Manager, Eri Fushida Finance Manager, and Kim Trickey Social Prescriber.

We had a number of information stalls – Horsham District Council Wellbeing Team, St Catherine's Hospice, Horsham Community Link, Horsham Rotary, and Horsham Mobility Scooter Safety and Skills Project. The general view was that the morning was very successful

although we would have liked to have had a few more people to have been there. We were not sure whether this was because it was the morning of Pope Francis' funeral, the fact that it was a sunny morning, the location, or whether people were just not interested. If we do another coffee morning we will try and find somewhere in North Horsham. Unfortunately, this time all the local halls we contacted were booked.

**We would welcome your feedback about the morning and whether we should try this again.**



### SURGERY UPDATE

The surgery is always under pressure but when we met with Lisa Ellis, Practice Manager this week she told us that the team were reasonably on top of things at this moment. Patients that need to be seen on the same day are, and patients with routine and non-urgent issues are being offered appointments within two weeks, usually a lot sooner. There have been a lot of patients suffering with hay fever – remedies for this can be obtained for this from the pharmacy without needing to consult a GP.

### National PPG Awareness Week 31 May–06 June 2025

We are not members of the National Association of Patient Participation but share its mission and vision. To promote awareness of PPGs please pass this newsletter onto other patients who might not know about us and encourage them to sign up.

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## **BLOOD PRESSURE – New Surgery Initiative**

**Did you know that the Surgery has a special team that monitors long term conditions particularly blood pressure and other cardiovascular disease, Diabetes, COPD, Ashma and Dementia in order to protect our long-term health?**

The team is led by Lisa Jelley, the Advanced Nurse Practitioner, along with 'specialist' administrative staff, and the two clinical pharmacists at Holbrook surgery.

### **WHAT DO THEY DO?**

For blood pressure, the doctors normally require their patients to have an annual blood pressure check, or a check within the last 5 years, if there is no relevant history. So, the Holbrook team work with an algorithm or step by step guide, based on NHS England guidelines, which shows what the average blood pressure readings should be for people of different age groups.

Blood pressure readings are requested for certain groups of patients and the team review the readings against healthy ranges for the patient's age and medical history etc.

For under 80s with blood pressure issues, the average home reading should be less than 135/85 and for over 80s, it should be less than 145/85. If anyone has a reading, for example, of 180/119 they will usually be booked for an urgent appointment with a GP. The patient will be informed of the next step; whether the reading is calculated to be within the target range or whether further investigations need to be undertaken.

**The aim is to ensure every patient receives the right follow-up care at the right time.**

### **HOW DO I TAKE MY BLOOD PRESSURE?**

You can either use the machine inside the door at the surgery, or get an inexpensive blood pressure monitor from the chemist which you can use at home. The important things are to sit very quietly for several minutes before you start, then to have the correct cuff size on the monitor, have the arm level with your heart, then to take at least two readings with several minutes in between each reading.

### **WHY BOTHER WITH MY BLOOD PRESSURE?**

High blood pressure often shows no symptoms. But if your blood pressure is high then you could be at risk of cardiovascular disease i.e. a stroke or heart attack or organ damage or failure. Cardiovascular disease is one of the main causes of death and disability in the UK, but it can often largely be prevented by leading a healthy lifestyle and monitoring your health.

### **WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY BLOOD PRESSURE AT A GOOD LEVEL?**

Lifestyle changes, reducing salt, caffeine, and alcohol consumption, having regular exercise, are all good ways of reducing blood pressure. Horsham District Wellbeing Hub (01403 215111) can also help you with strategies. You can also find more on the NHS website. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/high-blood-pressure/>

**But keeping an eye on your blood pressure is one of the most effective ways to protect your long-term health.**

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## Pharmacy First

One of the things we can do to reduce pressure on GPs is to get help from pharmacies to treat certain conditions

As well as giving advice and providing over the counter treatments for a range of illnesses, pharmacists can now also prescribe for the following conditions:-

- **Impetigo** - for those aged one year and over
- **Infected insect bites** - for those aged one year and over
- **Earache** - for those aged one to 17 years
- **Sinusitis** - for those aged 12 years and over
- **Urinary tract infections [UTIs]** – women aged 16 to 64 years
- **Shingles** – aged 18 years and over

If you are not within the stated age ranges a pharmacist can still offer advice and support decisions about self-care treatment with over the counter medicines, if appropriate, but you may need to see a GP for treatment.

The normal NHS Charges and exemptions apply for any medication prescribed by a pharmacist.

The National Institute for Health and Care Research is conducting research on the effectiveness of the Pharmacy First initiative and is holding a Public Forum to hear the views of people that have used this. This is being held at Horsham Library on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June at 2pm – 3.30pm**. Participants will receive a £30 Love2 Shop voucher.

To register and for more information email [agata.pachp@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:agata.pachp@lshtm.ac.uk) or call 07540 668373

## ***'Living well in your community' West Sussex Care Guide 2024/25***

This is a really useful guide. It provides information about care and support services for adults in West Sussex, as well as advice on staying safe and well. It is also an easy to understand guide to the way adult social care services work in West Sussex. You can download a pdf copy using the following link

<http://www2.westsussex.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adults/careguide2026/flipbook/index.html?page=1>

Alternatively obtain a hard copy by calling call 01243 642121. It also available in other formats such as on audio CD and in Easy Read

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## Blood Tests

From what we have heard the new appointment system which started on 1<sup>st</sup> April appears to be working well.

If you have not used it and you are referred by your GP for a blood test you now need to book an appointment on line through this website:

<https://swiftqueue.co.uk/surreyandsussex.php>

You will be able to select a date, time, and venue that suits you and register on the website. If you are a new user, you will be sent an activation code and will need to enter this to confirm the appointment. You will then receive an email giving the details of the appointment. More details of the procedure can be found here

<https://swiftqueue.zendesk.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360017225938-How-Do-I-Book-My-Blood-Test-Appointment>.

Most patients say that they have found it easy. If you do not have access to the on-line system telephone **0300 613 4117**, for help.

## The Health Check Kiosk

We will soon be seeing a new feature in Holbrook Surgery. The PPG have been given early information on the use of the Health Check Kiosk to speed and support patient assessment.

When it has been installed, we will be asked to arrive a little early for our appointments to be able to have an initial assessment in the Kiosk. This will involve the measurement of basic data like blood pressure, weight, and height, followed by the completion of a questionnaire depending on the condition we are reporting, such as asthma, diabetes, arthritis etc.

The details we provide will be with the GP as we go in for our consultation and will allow our GP to come to conclusions on our condition and treatment much more quickly.

We will be able to give you more information as this development goes forward and it is an example of how Holbrook is continuing to improve our primary care.



**Over 70?**

Women over 71 aren't invited to breast screening, but you can request it.

**1 in 3 women who get breast cancer are over 70, so don't assume you're past it.**

**Breast screening now taking place:**  
**Until January 2026**  
Horsham Community Hospital, Hurst Road,  
Horsham RH12 2DR  
**01903 239757**

Distributed by Rotary Club of Horsham

## Mammograms for Women aged over 71

Horsham Rotary was concerned to find that women over 71 were not aware that they could still have a mammogram through the NHS. They have taken this on as their project to make sure that everyone is aware of this. If you fall within this age group, get screened.

Horsham Rotary is also promoting getting screened for other cancers such as prostate cancer.

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