



Elizabeth Courtauld  
Partnership

## Surgery News!

### Covid-19

We have received a wonderful thank you letter from Vicky Ford MP thanking us for all that we have done to support our patients during the enormously challenging time. Vicky Ford also thanked our Practice Manager, Carrie McSpadden, for all her hard work to ensure the safety of staff and patients at North Chelmsford Healthcare Centre at this difficult time.

This was hugely appreciated by us all as we have all been working many additional hours and weekends to ensure the vaccination programme is successfully delivered to our patients.

### North Chelmsford NHS Healthcare Centre

Sainsbury's  
2 White Hart Lane  
Chelmsford  
CM2 5EF

**Tel: 0300 123 3366**

**Fax: 0300 123 4466**

#### Surgery Hours

8am - 8pm  
(Monday to Friday)

8am - 10am  
(Saturday & Sunday)

# North Chelmsford NHS Healthcare Centre NEWSLETTER



June 2021

#### Covid Vaccinations

All of our staff have been working incredibly hard since January 2021 to vaccinate our patient population. We have done this in addition to our normal work. We are proud to say that we have given 3065 first vaccines and 2105 second vaccines. Due to the complexities of booking appointments, some patients may receive a text with a link to book their appointment. Other patients may receive a text asking them to email into the practice Covid vaccination email address indicating they want a Covid vaccine. Our staff monitor this email address and will book patients in when vaccine is available. We have experienced a very high level of patients not attending clinics when they have had a booked appointment. Please do try to make your appointment to avoid any vaccine wastage. We will continue to invite those patients for their second vaccinations as soon as these are due. We have agreed to carry on with the Covid Vaccination Programme which will mean delivering this service to Cohorts 10-12 (18 to 49 years old with no underlying health conditions).

If you require more information about the Covid Vaccination, please see information below: It has been developed to give residents and patients across Essex, Southend and Thurrock key information about the programme, including vaccine eligibility, getting the vaccine and a frequently asked questions (FAQs) section. There are also videos, details of testing and transport support, plus signposting for volunteers. The web address is [www.essexcovidvaccine.nhs.uk](http://www.essexcovidvaccine.nhs.uk)

#### Telephoning the Surgery

Please note that the demand for appointments has increased significantly during April and May. As well as patients phoning to book appointments, we have been inundated with calls about Covid vaccinations and data sharing. This is an unprecedented demand and is being experienced by all practices country-wide. We have decided to increase our receptionist hours to cope with this demand, albeit that calls may well return to 'normal' in the near future. We have increased our reception team by 30% and now have 5 receptionists answering the phones every morning between 8-9am. We hope this will mean you get through to the surgery quicker. However, if you do experience a long wait, we urge you to contact the practice via the generic practice email address and let us have your comments rather than taking to Facebook. This will enable us to address your concerns directly.

Please always be polite and courteous to our staff - they are picking up calls constantly and working their very hardest to get to your call as quickly as they can.

Welcome to our new receptionists Pam, Lorraine, Ana, Hayley and Samantha.

#### Telephone System

We are updating our telephony system in mid June 2021. This will mean there will be a call waiting facility so patients will be able to hear what number they are in the queue. We hope this will iron out problems patients have experienced with the telephone system recently. We will also be having a 'call centre' wallboard in the reception back office so we can monitor the number of calls waiting and adjust our staffing accordingly. We hope patients will see an improvement with the new system.

#### Telephone Triage

We continue to triage all requests for appointments with a GP or Nurse Practitioner. The clinician will call you and if they feel you need to be seen face to face, will ask you to come into the surgery.

All of our nurse appointments are pre-bookable. The nurses follow our infection control procedures by cleaning down the rooms after seeing patients face to face. This is for the safety of all of our staff and patients.

We have recently increased our clinician capacity to ensure more appointments are available each day. We regularly review our appointment system and hope to be able to offer the facility to book online appointments again in the future.

## Chelmer Primary Care Network

North Chelmsford Healthcare Centre is part of the Chelmer Primary Care Network (PCN) with Rivermead Medical Centre, Chelmer Village Surgery and Sutherland Lodge Surgery. Being part of a PCN enables us to recruit funded clinical staff. We currently have two Pharmacists, a Social Prescriber, a Physician's Associate and a first contact Physiotherapist, and share these between the four practices. In the future, we will be recruiting a Paramedic to carry out home visits, care home visits and provide minor ailment clinics. This is an exciting time for Primary Care and we hope that you will agree that there are benefits in having these additional clinical roles with more options for appointments.

## Diabetic Reviews

Please note that we will be switching annual reviews to the month of patients' birthdays in the future. We will advise you when this will happen. When booking diabetic reviews, please book in with Amanda (Healthcare Assistant) initially, followed by an appointment a few weeks later with Jenny, our Diabetic Nurse. You will be contacted by telephone or letter when your review is due.

## ACR Tests for Diabetic Patients

We will be trialling a new system of patients carrying out their own ACR urine test at home as part of their annual diabetes review. When your diabetes review is due, you will receive a text message with details of how to obtain an ACR kit. The company, Healthy.io, will send you a kit in the post which fits through your letterbox. Simple instructions are included, along with a helpline for patients to phone with enquiries. The results are then passed directly to the practice and will be assessed by the Diabetic Nurse.

## Find My NHS Number

A new service is now live to help find your NHS number. This service is for anyone living in England who has forgotten or does not know their NHS number. You can also use this service on behalf of someone else where the name, date of birth and registered home postcode is known. You can opt for the number to be sent to you by text, email or letter. Copy the link below into your web browser to use this service:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number/>

## Social Prescriber

Shanice, our Social Prescriber, can help you with the following:

- Support for carers
- Bereavement
- Access to local clubs
- Befriending services
- Low level mental health support
- People who are lonely or isolated
- Lifestyle
- Looking after yourself
- Work, volunteering and other activities
- Money issues
- Feeling positive

If you want to be referred to the Social Prescriber, please contact reception.

## Cancer Screening

One in two people born in the UK after 1960 will be diagnosed with some form of cancer during their lifetime. Anyone can develop cancer, but it becomes more common as we get older. Your risk of developing cancer depends on many factors, including age, genetics and lifestyle, but in some cases the exact cause is difficult to determine. However, it is well known that two in five cancer cases in the UK each year are preventable and are linked to lifestyle factors. Spotting cancer early will improve your survival rate, so it's important that you recognise the signs and act. One of the best things that you can do is remember to go along for screening when you are recalled by your GP practice – it is one of the most effective ways to identify any early signs of cancer. We have appointments for smear tests during the day, evening and at weekends.

Please visit the website below for more information and resources: <https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/livewell/cancer>

## Data Opt Out

Your health records contain a type of data called confidential patient information. This data can be used to help with research and planning. You can choose to stop your confidential patient information being used for research and planning. You can also make a choice for someone else like your children under the age of 13. NHS Digital will never sell your data. There are strict rules about how the NHS can use your data. It's only shared securely and safely. Shared data helps the NHS. It has been used to find the first treatment for coronavirus and for vaccine research. If you're happy with your confidential patient information being used for research and planning you do not need to do anything.

Any choice you make will not impact your individual care. Copy the link below into your web browser to find out more and opt out if you wish to do so. We respectfully ask you not to contact the surgery about this to avoid tying up the phone lines.

## Accredited Armed Forces Practice

We have recently become an accredited armed forces practice. Our Nurse Practitioner has undertaken specific training in this area and all clinicians have access to resources to help armed forces or ex-armed forces personnel. Please email [meccg.nhc@nhs.net](mailto:meccg.nhc@nhs.net) if you were in the armed forces to let us know so we can ensure your record is coded correctly.

## NHS App - Proof of Covid Vaccination

Did you know you can access proof of your Covid vaccination by downloading the NHS App? There is a very simple onboarding process to follow to set the NHS App up. Please do not contact the surgery for proof of your vaccination status - we will not be able to provide this for you and it ties our phone lines up.

## Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We are looking for patients of all ages (over 18) to join our PPG. We plan to hold quarterly meetings, virtually initially, and will seek your views on how to improve the practice. If you would like to be involved, please email [meccg.nhc@nhs.net](mailto:meccg.nhc@nhs.net) and head the email 'PPG membership' and we will get back to you.

## Facebook Page

North Chelmsford Healthcare Centre now has a Facebook page. We will update this page with health information and information about the surgery. Please follow our Facebook page for news and updates about the surgery.

## Flu Vaccinations

We will start to contact patients in August to book flu vaccinations. We will be offering vaccinations to all patients over 50 years of age this year. Invitations will come in the form of a text with a link to book a time and date at your convenience.