



# Stethoscope

Great Harwood Medical Group PPG Newsletter

13th Edition - March 2018



Great Harwood Health Centre

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*We would like to welcome Jo back from maternity leave and Dr Asma Ahmed who will be with us for 2 years as part of her GP training.*

**The appointment system at**  
**Great Harwood Medical Group & High Street Surgery**

Most of our appointments are now available to book on the day, some early morning and early evening appointments can be booked up to 4 weeks in advance if you have to make appointments around work. This change has been implemented to try to reduce the number of missed appointments and to enable patients to be seen when they need to.

Each GP has appointments which can be booked on the day. These are released at 8am. You can phone to make an appointment, call in to the surgery or book online if you have signed up for Patient Access.

Once these have been booked up you can attend the Sit & Wait Clinic if you have an urgent medical problem where you will see our Duty GP who can see up to 18 patients in any one session. Once the session is full Reception will advise you of your options.

The Sit & Wait Clinics are held at Gt Harwood and run each morning from 8.30 – 10.30am and each afternoon from 2 – 4pm (except Wednesday).

Alternatively each GP has appointments which can be booked up to four weeks in advance.

We also offer GP access appointments at Accrington Pals Health Centre on weekday evenings and weekends. These appointments can be booked through Reception.

Our reception team make every effort to give you an appointment with the doctor of your choosing but unfortunately this will not always be possible. You may prefer to book an appointment via our website [www.ghmg.org.uk](http://www.ghmg.org.uk). You will need to sign up for this at Reception.

Over 150 appointments each month are booked by patients who then fail to attend. Please let us know if you are no longer able to come at the time you have booked so that we can offer the appointment to another patient.

Please see overleaf on how to obtain treatment at any time.

Your treatment needs will vary according to:

Severity of illness/ injury

Urgency of need

Time of day/ night

There are several options available to you and these are summarised below.

### 1. Pharmacy

Your local family doctor is the main point of contact for you and your family's health care. However, your local pharmacy can often give you instant advice, so you don't always need to make, and wait for, a doctor's appointment. Pharmacies are operated by fully qualified staff who are able to advise on many minor ailments and injuries. They will also advise if you should seek further help elsewhere.

**Note** - over-the-counter medicines, available from your pharmacy, often cost less than the price of a standard prescription.

### 2. GP surgery

Your local family doctor is still available to you should you prefer an appointment.

However, there will be occasions when the surgery is closed, or an immediate appointment is not available. You should then consider the following alternatives:

### 3. Out of Hours 111 Service

The 111 Service exists for help and advice on how and where to find the most suitable treatment for your needs. You will be asked a series of questions on the telephone, which are aimed at finding out what these needs are, so that you can be advised what to do next. You may be referred to one of the following services, which you can also access yourself if you feel it is necessary:

### 4. Minor Injury Unit

This unit is able to deal with, for example, fractures, cuts, bruises, minor eye problems, burns, scalds and sprains, and is located at **Accrington Victoria Hospital**.

### 5. Urgent Care Centre

For serious conditions, such as broken bones or breathing difficulties that need urgent attention **but are not life threatening**. They are **NOT** for dental problems, cold symptoms, and upset stomachs AND MUST NOT BE USED to OBTAIN prescriptions.

Urgent Care Centres are located at **Burnley General Hospital** and the **Royal Blackburn Hospital**.

### 6. Emergency Dental Unit

For help finding an NHS dentist for both urgent and routine care please call **the local dental helpline on 0300 1234 010**.

Emergency treatment is available at a dental unit in Accrington from 6pm to 10pm midweek, and during daytime hours at weekends. The helpline will be able to refer you to the most appropriate centre.

### 7. Accident & Emergency

Calling 999 or attending Accident & Emergency departments is for people who are seriously ill or



## NEWS RELEASE

29 August 2017

### Care navigators to help support patients get to the right service faster

GP practices in Hyndburn are piloting a new scheme in the borough to help support and guide patients to access the most appropriate service.

This scheme is called Care Navigation. Care navigators are GP receptionists and admin staff who have been given specialist training in order to help them direct patients to the right health professional first time.

Michelle Pilling, Lay Member Patient and Public Involvement, and Deputy Chair at NHSEast Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "Across East Lancashire we are working hard to make sure that when people need to see a GP, they have access to one quickly and in a way that suits them, be that in person or over the phone. We know that sometimes patients find navigating health services difficult and in some cases the GP practice might not even be the right place at all for the query. Sometimes patients could be seen and treated quicker by a nurse, dentist or a pharmacist for example. That's where care navigation comes in.

"It's about giving patients choice, and supporting and guiding them with the right information about other health care professionals who have the expertise to deal with a problem; often quicker and without the need to see the GP each time."

Care navigation is a tried and tested model of care that improves access to primary care services for patients and reduces GP pressures all in one. It allows front line staff to provide patients with more information about local health and wellbeing services, both within and outside of primary care, in a safe, effective way. Care navigation offers the patient 'choice, not triage' to access the most appropriate service first, which is not always the GP. It means that patients will find it easier to get a GP appointment when they need one.

When a patient contacts the practice, the care navigator will ask for a brief outline of the problem so they can identify the patient's need. This will allow the care navigator to refer to information about services in the practice, other NHS providers and the wider care and



## East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group

support sector. Where appropriate, they will direct the patient to these services. Their goal is to ensure that patients get the right care at the right time in the right place with the right outcome. For example, when a patient presents with symptoms that would be better dealt with by another service such as a pharmacist or optician, patients can be confidently offered these choices, allowing them to go straight to the service which best meets their health and wellbeing needs. Care navigation will support practices and patients to make the best use of valuable NHS resources.

Five services will initially be available for care navigators to signpost to but as care navigation develops, more services will be introduced. These are:

- Nurse/advanced nurse practitioner
- Dental
- Optician
- Pharmacist
- Talking Therapies
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Care Navigation in Hyndburn will be launched throughout the autumn and will be gradually rolled out throughout East Lancashire by early next year.

Visit the Real Hyndburn website [www.hyndburn.realtl.co.uk](http://www.hyndburn.realtl.co.uk) to find out more about the full range of services available locally.

### **ENDS**

For more information please contact Shelley Prophet at  
[shelley.prophet@lancashirecsu.nhs.uk](mailto:shelley.prophet@lancashirecsu.nhs.uk)



## Treatment

The best treatment for an allergy depends on which allergen is causing the reaction. In some cases, avoiding the substance is the most effective way of managing an allergy.

### Medication

Most treatments are available over the counter, but always ask your pharmacist for advice before starting any new medication.



### Antihistamines

Antihistamines treat allergies by blocking the action of the chemical histamine, which the body releases when it thinks it is under attack from an allergen. Antihistamines can be taken in tablet, cream or liquid form, or as eye drops or nasal sprays.

Nasal sprays can be used to reduce swelling and irritation in your nose, and eye drops will help to relieve sore, itchy eyes. Some sprays and drops are only suitable for adults, so always ask your pharmacist for advice before buying treatments for yourself or your children.



### Decongestants

Decongestants help to relieve a blocked nose, which is often caused by hay fever, a dust allergy or a pet allergy. Decongestants can be taken as tablets, capsules, nasal sprays or liquids. They should not be used long term.

Source - <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/allergies/pages/treatment.aspx>

## Preventing Hayfever



**Hay fever affects around one in four people in the UK. Maureen Jenkins, Clinical Director of Allergy UK, offers some tips on avoiding the causes and reducing your symptoms.**

"The main triggers of hay fever are tree and grass pollen," says Maureen. "Pollen from weeds and shrubs can also trigger symptoms. The pollen count is always higher on hot, dry days. Fungal spores are around on most mild damp days, but are particularly high after harvesting and in the autumn."

The following tips can help you avoid pollen and lessen the chances of hay fever.



### Don't mow your lawn

Ideally, if grass makes you sneeze, ask someone else to mow your lawn when the pollen count is high. "If you react to grass and you spend time on the lawn, you'll get breathing symptoms and often also hives," says Maureen.

### Create a barrier

Smear a nasal barrier balm inside your nostrils, or use a drug-free nasal spray or dab of petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) to prevent pollen sticking to the lining of your nose. Ask your pharmacist about nasal barrier balms and nasal sprays.

### Time it right

If possible, avoid outside activity when the air is warming up and cooling down as pollen count is highest at these times, around 8-10am and 5-7pm.

## Shut the windows

Don't drive with the windows open, as this will allow pollen to come in. Open bedroom windows at night, but close them when you get up in the morning.



## Damp dust regularly

Dusting with a damp or microfibre cloth will collect dust and stop any pollen from becoming airborne.



## Wash your hair

"Pollen is sticky and may be in your hair," says Maureen. "It can then transfer to your pillow and affect you during the night. If you've been out in the evening, wash your hair and change your clothes before going into the bedroom."

## Vacuum

Pollen can live in carpet, so make sure you vacuum regularly.



## Think about your medication

Talk to your pharmacist about your hay fever, if your symptoms are not controlled by your current treatment.

"Non-sedating **antihistamines** may be adequate for mild or intermittent hay fever symptoms, but many people will need to use a steroid nasal spray (available from a pharmacy or prescribed by a GP) to treat the inflammation in the nose caused by hay fever," says Maureen. "This must be used regularly, and relief will be felt after a few days. It should be continued once or twice daily until the hay fever season is over."

Source - <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/hayfever/pages/weatheranddayfever.aspx>

# 3 before GP

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**GPs and their wider team need time to give patients the best care they possibly can. You can help free up time for those who really need expert advice by considering three alternatives before booking an appointment:**

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## **Self-care**

For minor ailments you could safely treat your symptoms at home, for example through rest or with appropriate over the counter medicines.

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## **Use trusted NHS online services**

Online NHS services offer sensible advice on a range of health issues and are a useful place to turn for initial guidance. Visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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## **Seek advice from a pharmacist**

Pharmacists are highly skilled healthcare professionals who can offer valuable advice.

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**You should always seek urgent medical attention in an emergency.**



Royal College of  
General Practitioners

**#3beforeGP**



### Have Your Say.....

We at the Patient Participation Group believe that it is important the patients of Great Harwood Medical Group have their say.



Do you have anything you wish to pass on! Maybe; an observation or something you think needs looking into or praise for a job well done.

### Let us know what you think – your opinion

**Cut**



**Tear**



Fill out this form, cut/tear out and post in the box on reception

Date.....

Your Comment .....

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Your Name – Optional .....



JOIN YOUR  
PATIENT  
PARTICIPATION  
GROUP

- We are all volunteers who are passionate about Great Harwood Medical Group.
- We meet once every three months.
- We discuss issues that patients may have.
- It's our chance to ask questions of the GPs and Practice Manager.
- We find out about new developments within the practice and the NHS.

Contact Sarah (Practice Manager) in the first instance for details on 01254 617570 or [sarah.lord@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.lord@nhs.net)

## ***Minutes In Brief from March's Meeting***

**Appointments:** The number of same day appointments have been increased as the GPs feel that most patients prefer to be seen on the day rather than booking an appointment in advance. There are still appointments which can be booked in advance from 8.30 – 9am and 5 – 6pm for people who need to arrange appointments around work.

**Care Navigation:** When a patient telephones to make an appointment they will be asked what the problem is so that their call can be prioritised and navigated to the most appropriate Health Care Professional. If appropriate the patient will be referred to one of the 4 services: Dental, Talking Therapies, Self Care / Pharmacy or Optician. It is intended that Care Navigation will reduce the number of avoidable appointments with a GP therefore increasing availability for patients who need to see a GP.

**Walk In Centre - Accrington Victoria Hospital:** This service is due to close on 16<sup>th</sup> June. To replace this service extended GP access is being offered at Accrington Pals Health Centre which means that patients will have improved access to local GP services both on weekday evenings and over the weekend. We are already offering this service to patients which is available to book through Reception and the uptake has been steady .

**New Staff:** Dr Asma Ahmed joined the practice in February as a GP Trainee, she will be with us for 2 years. We also have medical students from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN).

**Toy Cleaning:** Carol passed the toy cleaning rota around, if we cannot keep up with the fortnightly cleaning the toys may have to be removed which would be a shame as the children do enjoy playing with them

**Dr Grayson's Plaque:** Carol is to find a suitable plaque.

**Patient Partner Workshop & Hyndburn PPG:** Carol, Pauline & Beryl had recently attended meetings and fed back to the group and passed round leaflets on cancer awareness, self care, sepsis awareness and the red bag relay scheme.

**Feedback from Patients:** 2 patients had left suggestions in the suggestion box regarding the high number of missed appointments. They suggest scrapping the appointment system, instead patients should turn up to be seen when needed and removing patients from the practice list who repeatedly miss appointments. Sarah reminded the group that the practice has a policy in place for patients who repeatedly miss appointments and they are removed from the list after receiving warning letters. The increase in same day appointments should reduce the number of missed appointments.