



THE PPG - SURGERY NEWS SHEET

Surgery News

Firstly we would like to say thank you for your support over the past year for working with us in such uncertain times. We had to change the way we work very quickly and that has been possible because you our patients have adapted to new ways of working. General Practice nationally is under huge pressure and we are busier than ever and there has been a lot in the media about this. We are dealing with a huge surge in demand as a consequence of the pandemic and we understand that it has been difficult to get an appointment.

Our call volumes have risen dramatically from around 200 calls a day in 2019 and 2020 to 450 calls a day in 2021 with only a 5% increase in our patient list during that period. Across our 3 sites we have on average 8 GPs/Advanced Nurse Practitioners offering around 200 appointments a day in line with national recommendations. We want to reassure you that we are working closely with our Care Commissioning Group and Local Medical Committee and NHS England to manage this significant rise in demand and also reassure you that we are open as normal. We are offering face to face services as well as dealing with patients on the phone as appropriate. Working this way allows us to keep our patients safe and continues to allow for social distancing in our premises. If you are unwell or worried about your health then we do urge you to call us but also please do seek self-help advice where appropriate. (See the PPG suggestions below).

We are always looking to expand our clinical team to meet increasing demand and despite a national shortage we are very pleased to announce that we have successfully recruited 2 additional GPs to our team of 10 GPs and 2 trainees and we are actively looking to recruit a clinical pharmacist to join the team as well. We have recently welcomed Cris Krywon a First Contact Physiotherapist to the team who acts as the interface between our Practice and the local musculoskeletal services. If you have any musculoskeletal concerns you can book to see Cris directly through the reception team. We have a Social Prescriber working with us on a weekly basis and we will soon be welcoming a Health Coach to the team.

Our Covid vaccination programme continues at pace in addition to our normal services. We are running weekly Pfizer and Astra Zeneca clinics on Wednesdays and Fridays and larger weekend clinics as vaccine availability allows. We continue to run a

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dedicated Covid information line and we are currently inviting those aged 25-29 to have their first vaccination.

Lastly please do be kind and respectful to our hard working team who are under enormous pressure in these unprecedented circumstances and are doing their utmost to help all our patients. Please also be mindful of comments online and on social media platforms and the impact that these have on our dedicated team who read them. We ask that our staff treat our patients and their carers with kindness and respect and expect them to be treated the same in return.

Thank you very much for all the kind and supportive comments we have received over the past year it has meant a lot to us and has kept us going!



**Making a GP appointment currently may be difficult, however -
Call 999 immediately if you or someone else is having a heart attack
or stroke or any of the following symptoms.**

• Life-threatening emergencies	• Severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
• Loss of consciousness	• Severe allergic reactions
• An acute confused state	• Fits that are not stopping
• Breathing difficulties	• Falls in elderly people (especially if on anti-coagulants)
• Severe chest pain	• Severe burns or scalds

If you are unsure, always call 111 to speak to a clinician and get advice, then 111 can decide, with the information given, the right pathway. Parents/carers of children can always call 111 to get the right advice unless there is an obvious rash, abdominal pain or headaches.

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You may find the Pharmacist can help you?



About pharmacists

Pharmacists are experts in medicines who can help you with minor health concerns.

As qualified healthcare professionals, they can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains.

If symptoms suggest it's something more serious, pharmacists have the right training to make sure you get the help you need. For example they will tell you if you need to see a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional.

All pharmacists train for 5 years in the use of medicines. They are also trained in managing minor illnesses and providing health and wellbeing advice.

Many pharmacies are open until late and at weekends. You do not need an appointment.

Most pharmacies have a private consultation room where you can discuss issues with pharmacy staff without being overheard.

Pharmacy Services

Some of you may have experienced trouble getting GP appointments.

Did you know the local pharmacies can offer a wide range of help and advice if you are ill? There is obviously a charge but if you are eligible for NHS treatment there are many services which are free.

The PPG have contacted the local pharmacies in Buxted, Uckfield, Horam and Heathfield and these are some of the many services they can offer.

- (NHS): Medication review service
- (NHS): Condom supply
- (Non-NHS): Blood pressure monitoring
- (Non-NHS): Chlamydia screening and treatment
- (Non-NHS): Emergency contraception
- (Non-NHS): Inhaler technique service
- (Non-NHS): Weight management
- Appliance dispensing
- Appointment booking available for consultations
- Inhaler recycling
- Medicines use review (MUR) service
- New medicine service
- Prescription collection from local General Practices
- Prescription delivery service
- Private consultation room

All of these services are available at **Buxted**.

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Most pharmacies will give you advice and may suggest medication for a wide range of problems including:

Headaches	Aches, pains & sprains	Mild skin infections
Sore throat	Heartburn & indigestion	Hay fever & allergies
Sore eyes	Constipation & diarrhoea	Head lice
Colds & flu	Fungal nail infections	Thrush

At Boots – Uckfield you can speak to a GP on line (£19) or have an on line physio appointment (£37.50) and have your urine dipped in store for STDs and cystitis treatment. **Tesco** also offer Diabetic Screening

Some symptoms require a GP appointment. Please make sure you tell the receptionist when you ring in, if you have any of the following:

- Using blue inhaler far more frequently (asthma)
- Sudden severe headache
- Rectal bleeding - usually with abdominal pain and no history of constipation
- Severe backache accompanied by neurological symptoms such as sciatica or urinary frequency
- Leg ulcers – don't try to treat yourself - you might make them worse!
- Cellulitis - may need IV antibiotics
- Children under 5 with a rash or high temperature
- Anything that's sudden and severe

To help you further there are useful factsheets on the Self Care Forum website:

[Fact Sheets - Self Care Forum](#) and

NHS Choices <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>

The PPG now have a Facebook page: [Buxted, East Hoathly and Horam Patient Group](#) Take a look, you may find helpful information there too.



NAVIGATING THE NHS

HOW TO HELP YOURSELF TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR APPOINTMENT ...

How to Prepare for a Doctor's Appointment

1. Make a list and prioritize your concerns.
2. Write down your 2 or 3 most important questions

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3. Take information with you to the **Doctor**. List or bring all your medicines and pills – including vitamins and supplements.
4. Write down details of your symptoms, including when they started and what makes them better or worse
5. Consider bringing a family member or friend to the **Doctor's** visit.
6. Be sure you can see and hear as well as possible.
7. Request an Interpreter if you need one.

Appointments last around 10 minutes. During the appointment your Doctor will ask you questions about your health. Try and be as honest as possible with your Doctor. Give them as much detail as you can about how you're feeling and what your symptoms are **and don't leave the most important issue until last.**

Do not be afraid to ask questions about things you find unclear. Let the Doctor explain it to you, until you are sure you understand.

Below is listed some example questions that you may find useful.

Tests, such as blood tests or scans

- What are the tests for?
- How and when will I get the results?
- Who do I contact if I do not get the results?

Treatment

- Are there other ways to treat my condition?
- What do you recommend?
- Are there any side effects or risks? If so, what are they?
- How long will I need treatment for?
- How will I know if the treatment is working?
- How effective is this treatment?
- What will happen if I do not have any treatment?
- Is there anything I should stop or avoid doing?
- Is there anything I can do to help myself?

What next

- What happens next?
- Do I need to come back and see you? If so, can I make an appointment now?
- Who do I contact if things get worse?
- Do you have any written information?
- Where can I go for more information?
- Is there a support group or any other source of help?

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Ringing in for results?

If you have to ring for results, please call
after 4pm.

The telephone lines are busy with patients making appointments in the early morning. Calls for results will not be taken until later in the day.

If you are referred to a consultant at a hospital

Make sure you have a note of:

- the Consultant's name
- the Hospital
- the Department
- the telephone number of the hospital and the department
- How long you should expect to wait before calling the hospital.

Also read our advice on [meeting the specialist before having an operation.](#)

HAVE YOU HEARD?

If you are referred by your GP to a consultant or another service i.e. Physio, make sure you ask the doctor

- who he/she is referring you to
- which hospital/clinic
- and write it down.



If after 4 weeks you have not heard about your appointment, please call the hospital/clinic reception to find out the contact information for the specialist/clinic and phone them directly to find out where you are in the process.

Please remember that they have variable waiting times for patients.

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How to Prepare for a Consultant Appointment

1. Take with you your appointment card or contact letter – this will detail any special instructions and includes your hospital number.
2. A list of any questions you want to ask.
3. A list of all medication that you take or use, including prescription medications, medicines you have bought, alternative medicines such as herbal remedies, alternative medicines such as herbal remedies.

After your appointment, do not forget the following

- Write down what you discussed and what happens next. **Keep your own notes.**
- Book any tests that you can and put the dates in your diary.

Ask:

- What happens if I'm not sent my appointment details?
- Can I have the results of any tests?
- If you do not get the results when you expect – ask for them. Ask what the results mean.

During your appointment

- Do not be afraid to ask if you do not understand. For example: "Can you say that again? I still do not understand."
- If you do not understand any words, ask for them to be written down and explained.
- Write things down, or ask a family member or friend to take notes.

Before you leave your appointment

Check:

- You have covered everything on your list.
- You understand, for example: "Can I just check I understood what you said?"
- You know what should happen next – and when. Write it down.

Ask:

- Who to contact if you have any more problems or questions.
- About support groups and where to go for reliable information.
- For copies of letters written about you – you're entitled to see these.

After your appointment, do not forget the following

- Write down what you discussed and what happens next. Keep your notes.
- Book any tests that you can and put the dates in your diary.

Find your healthier you

Plan for success

Plan ahead

Make a food plan for the week and keep it varied.

Track your progress

Set goals and track how well you do.

Change your normal

Small changes can help you achieve your goals.



Healthy Eating Week
June 14th -18th

Find your healthier you

Make healthier choices

For more information about healthy eating and nutrition, visit the

British Nutrition Foundation's website: www.nutrition.org.uk

Read the label

Compare nutrition labels to make healthier choices.

Get portion wise

Choose the right size portion for you.

Make super swaps

Go for lower salt, fat and sugar options.



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Men's Health Week 2021 (14-21 June)



Find out more at mhw@menshealthforum.org.uk

MAN v FAT is back!

[One You East Sussex](#) is re-launching MAN v FAT for those men resident of East Sussex and with a BMI of 27.5+ who want to lose weight and love football. MAN v FAT Football is the male weight management programme for those who can win by losing.

Held in Eastbourne, Hastings and Falmer, MAN v FAT is an exciting and fun way to lose weight playing football with groups of like-minded men. It's a 14-week league, playing 30-minute games each week with continued support for all players through weight loss coaches and 24/7 online support. Points are awarded for the amount of weight lost plus for winning games! For every two players that lose weight each week, their team gains an extra goal on the pitch.

In June we celebrate Men's Health Week. If you are an employer, you can promote men's health and wellbeing by supporting your male employees who would like to lose weight and be more active to join the programme. If you have enough staff interested, they can even sign up as a team. You can join as an individual; you don't have to be

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employed. Weekly over 220 men play MAN v FAT in East Sussex. In previous years, 95% of the players lost weight by taking part. For more information, see the website or contact **Dan Ford** at dan.ford@oneyoueastsussex.org.uk

[Learn More](#)

Child Accident Prevention

If you have young children, this is a very useful website to look at. It has lots of helpful information.



The image is a screenshot of the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) website banner. At the top left is the CAPT logo, which consists of a blue hand icon and the text 'child accident prevention trust'. To the right of the logo is the tagline 'Accidents can be prevented'. Further right is the website address 'www.capt.org.uk'. Below this is a navigation bar with links: 'Safety advice', 'Who we are', 'What we do', 'News', 'Child Safety Week', 'Get involved', 'Prevention in action', and 'Shop'. The main banner features a cartoon illustration of a young girl with brown skin and curly hair, wearing a pink shirt, crawling on a tiled floor towards a yellow spray bottle with a red trigger. To the left of the girl, there is a text box that reads: 'If you have young children, take a look at the Child Accident Prevention Trust website. There you will find lots of useful information to help keep your little ones safe.' At the bottom of the banner, a blue bar contains the text 'Child Safety Week runs from Monday 7th to Sunday 13th June'.

It is not too late to take a look

[Child Safety Week](#)

Follow the link to find lots of useful information

[Child Safety Week Information Pack.](#)

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Carers Week, 7th – 13th June 2021

Making Caring Visible and Valued

Are you a Carer? There is lots of helpful information on this site.

www.cftc.org.uk



What are my rights?

Unpaid carers have rights to support them in their caring role. Find out more.



Information for Carers

Read our fact sheets and sign up to our CareLine magazine and monthly e-newsletter. [Read more.](#)



Grants for Carers

We can help you access grants for carers. [Read more.](#)



Digital Resources

Access information, e-learning and guides to support carers. [Register here.](#)



Online Help

Read about the range of carer services and help on our online directory for carers. [Read more.](#)



Carer FAQs

Our FAQs and tips for carers give help and guidance. [Read them here.](#)

Diabetes Week - 14th - 20th June

<https://preventing-diabetes.co.uk/know-your-risk-dtc/>



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Have you downloaded the NHS app?

NHS Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination status for travelling abroad

If you're planning to travel abroad, you can get proof that you've been vaccinated against coronavirus (COVID-19). This is your COVID-19 vaccination status.

Some countries may also require a negative COVID-19 test result. Always check the entry requirements for the country you are visiting before you book your travel. There is [step by step travel advice on GOV.UK](#).

Who can get a COVID-19 vaccination status

You can get your COVID-19 vaccination status if all the following apply:

- you have had a full course of the COVID-19 vaccine
- you were vaccinated at a GP surgery, vaccination centre or hospital in England
- you are aged 16 or older

Currently a "full course" means you have had 2 doses of any approved COVID-19 vaccine.

Children under the age of 16 cannot get a COVID-19 vaccination status. They may need to show a negative test result instead. Check the entry requirements for the country you're visiting.

You can choose how to get your COVID-19 vaccination status.

In the NHS App

You can view and download your COVID-19 vaccination status using the NHS App.

You need to create an NHS login to use the NHS App if you do not have one already.

NHS login registrations may take longer than usual when there are high numbers of requests. You will need to register at least 2 weeks before your departure date.

To use the NHS App you must be registered with a GP surgery in England.

THIS IS NOT THE NHS COVID-19 APP.

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Download the NHS APP



If you do not have a smart phone to get the app. get your COVID-19 vaccination status by calling 119 for a letter.

You can call 119 and ask for a letter with your COVID-19 vaccination status to be posted to you.

This must be at least 5 days after you complete your course of the vaccine.

You do not need to know your NHS number to get a letter, but the process to request a letter may be quicker if you do. You can find your NHS number online.

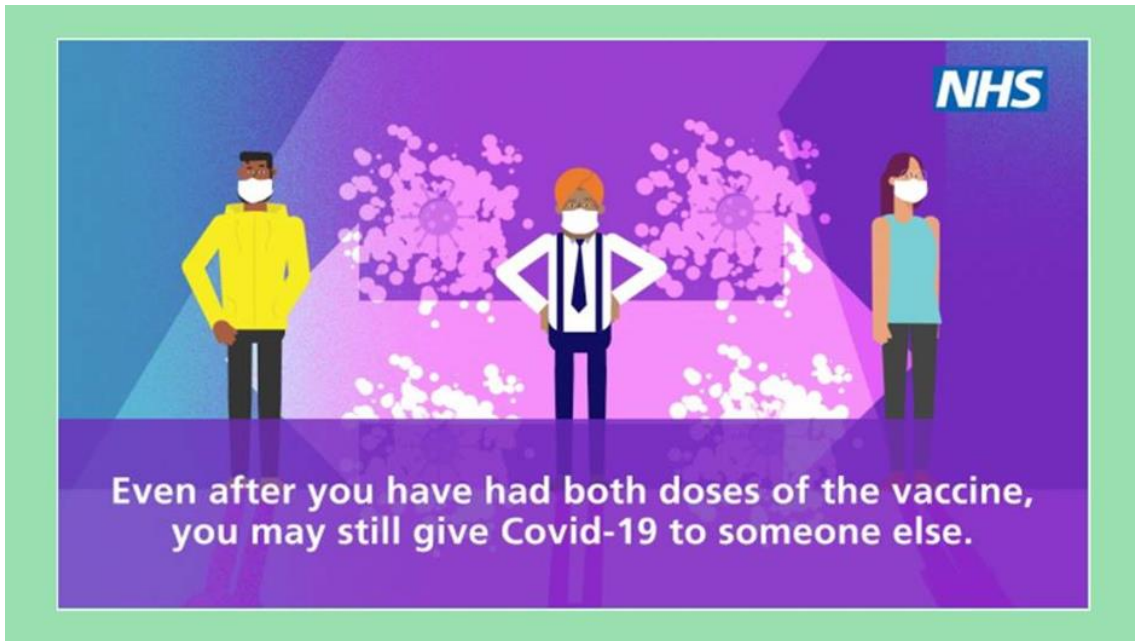
You should get this letter within 7 working days.

Only request a letter if your departure date is within the next 4 weeks. If not, 119 may ask you to call again later.

Important

Do not ask your GP surgery for a COVID-19 vaccination status letter. GPs cannot provide letters showing your vaccine record.

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Keep to the rules after your vaccination and when lockdown lifts and follow the travel guidelines at

Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



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