



## Autumn Newsletter



You are still required to wear a face covering in all NHS settings. This is to protect you as well as other vulnerable patients and our staff; unless you are exempt on medical grounds. If you forget to bring a face mask we can provide one for you free of charge.

### Flu Clinics

We have been notified that there is a delay to our flu vaccine delivery because of a shortage of HGV drivers delivering vaccines from our supplier Seqirus. We now have confirmation of our expected delivery date and are contacting patients affected to rebook into a new clinic.

**We are now back open for booking flu vaccines. Call us on 0151 334 4019 to book or check if you are eligible.**

Those eligible for the flu vaccine are:

- Anyone over age 50
- Those with certain long-term health conditions such as diabetes, most people with asthma, COPD, heart disease, immune deficiency, history of stroke etc.
- Those with a learning disability
- Carers
- Pregnant women
- Those with a BMI of 40+

When you arrive at our flu clinics you will be asked to wait outside so please wear clothing suitable for the weather.

When you come into the building you will need to wear a face covering and will be asked to use the hand gel provided.

The nurse will need access to the top of your arm so please wear something loose fitting or short sleeved.

We will be checking that your records are up to date so we may ask to weigh you or to come back to check your blood pressure or to book a health review if needed.

We will be operating a one-way system during our clinics and ask that you stay at least 1 metre away from other patients.

If you or a relative are housebound and need to receive your flu vaccine at home, please let us know as soon as possible. Please note, housebound patients are those who can never leave the house at all due to severe immobility.

We may also contact you if you are due a shingles or pneumococcal vaccine. The shingles vaccine is available to anyone aged 70 or 78/79 and protects against the pain associated with shingles. The pneumococcal vaccine protects against 23 different strains of pneumonia and is available to everyone over the age of 65 as well as children and adults with certain long-term health conditions, such as a serious heart or kidney condition. If you think you may be eligible for the shingles or pneumococcal vaccine, please check with reception.

## Covid 19 Vaccines

Over the last 10 months 44,500 first and second doses of Covid vaccines have been delivered at the Oval hub run by our Healthier South Wirral Primary Care Network. So far 93% of our patients over the age of 18 have been vaccinated against Covid 19. We have worked really hard since December to vaccinate our patients and protect those who are elderly and vulnerable, but due to the increasing workload for our nurses in practice, we will not be continuing with any new first doses or with the autumn booster programme. If you receive an invite to book your first Covid vaccine or for your booster dose, please book via the National Booking Service using the instructions in your invite. The nearest main hub is at Clatterbridge hospital.

Covid vaccine figures for age 18 years plus:

Wirral average total	84.55%
Spital Surgery patients total	93%
Of these:	
Age 70 plus	99%
Age 56-69	97%
Age 30-49	88%
Age 18-29	78%

The Covid vaccine is recommended to all pregnant women after their first 12 weeks of pregnancy. If you are pregnant and would like to discuss whether to have the vaccine, please contact either [angelakerrigan1@nhs.net](mailto:angelakerrigan1@nhs.net) or [libbyshaw@nhs.net](mailto:libbyshaw@nhs.net) at WUTH Maternity Service for advice.

## Proving your vaccine status

If you need to provide your Covid vaccine status for attending events or going on holiday etc. you can download the NHS app. If you have problems with the app or do not have a smartphone you can apply for an NHS Covid Pass Letter by going online to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-pass/get-your-covid-pass-letter/> or calling 119. Please note, GP practices can not provide proof of vaccination.

If you are travelling abroad, the name on your GP record will need to match the name on your passport. If this does not match because of marriage etc, we will need to see your valid passport or driving licence before we can change the name on your medical record.

You should be registered with us in your legal name so if you have changed your name through marriage or deed poll we will need to see the marriage or deed poll certificate plus proof of identity via a valid passport or driving licence before we can change it on your medical record.

## National Data Sharing Upload

The roll out of the National Data Sharing upload has been delayed indefinitely to allow time for greater consultation with the public. You will now be able to opt out at any time and not just before a certain deadline. To opt out go to <https://www.nhs.uk/your-nhs-data-matters/manage-your-choice/> and complete the online form with your preference.

## Surgery Staff

We would like to welcome Dr Shamsun Begum to the team. Dr Begum will be training with us for 12 months and holding clinics on Monday to Wednesday.

We are helped by a number of staff roles to provide the best possible care to our patients:

**Health Coach** – Georgia Lilley is our Health Coach and can help you with a personalised plan to lose weight, become more active or live a healthier lifestyle.

**Wellbeing Practitioner** – Jeanette Attwood can help with accessing support services, filling in forms, housing issues, applying for benefits, as well as supporting those who are feeling lonely or vulnerable.

**Cancer Care Coordinator** – Tracey Pilgrim can offer practical advice and support to patients on their cancer journey.

**Learning Disability Care Coordinator** – Sue and Amy can provide advice and support to those with a learning disability or autism.

**Mental Health Care Coordinator**- Rachael Kinnear can help support patients with mental health issues, conducting annual reviews and advising how to access services.

**Clinical Pharmacists** – Our Clinical Pharmacy team, led by Rocco, conduct medication reviews, answer prescription queries and support our GPs with the most up to date prescribing knowledge.

If you would like to speak to any of the above team members, please contact reception.

## Weight Management Service

We are working with our NHS partners and our Health Coach Georgia to support the NHS Weight Management service. Anyone over 18 with a BMI of 30+ or who has a diagnosis of diabetes or hypertension can be referred for weight management help and be supported by Georgia or a new digital platform which is coming soon.



If we haven't seen you for a while, we may get in touch with you to ask for a current weight measurement so we can make sure our records are up to date and offer you support if needed.

## Blood bottle shortage

A supplier to the NHS has advised us of a global shortage of some equipment used for taking blood tests.

Anyone who needs a test for urgent health problems will still get one but, where your clinician recommends that it's safe to do so, then you may be asked to come back for a test at a later date, or your appointment may be rescheduled.

Given the nature of the shortage, we cannot give an exact date for when the test will be rescheduled, but please be assured that if your condition or symptoms require it, then you will get a test, and we will be re-booking your test when supplies become more easily available.

**If your condition or symptoms change or get worse, please let us know.**

## Military Veterans

If you have served in the armed forces, please let us know as we may be able to offer more support.

We are an accredited Veteran Friendly practice.

## Support for ex-Armed Forces personnel at Veterans in Mind Cheshire and Merseyside

**To refer yourself to this service,  
please contact single point of  
access on 0151 908 0019**

**Alternatively complete the  
online referral form via  
[www.gmmh.nhs.uk/military-  
veterans-services/](http://www.gmmh.nhs.uk/military-veterans-services/)**



The service delivers specialist, high quality, and effective clinical treatment to veterans who suffer from ongoing psychological issues, resulting from their time as a serving member of the armed forces.

The established staff team has developed expertise in working with military service related psychological difficulties, giving us the right skills and knowledge to work effectively with our service users. Types of psychological difficulties can include trauma related problems; various anxiety based problems; substance misuse;

problems with self-management, including anger; depression and problems related to adjusting to civilian life after military service.

We also provide the necessary links to support veterans and their families with housing, financial and social needs. We do this by working in partnership with local Veterans' agencies, who can offer a range of service users, from increasing social networks, to linking in with other services that may be useful, promoting long-term recovery.



## The first call for help takes courage

### Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Specialist care and support for Service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families

The first step to getting help is to contact Op COURAGE or ask your GP, a charity or someone else, such as a family member or friend, to do this on your behalf.

#### Contact details

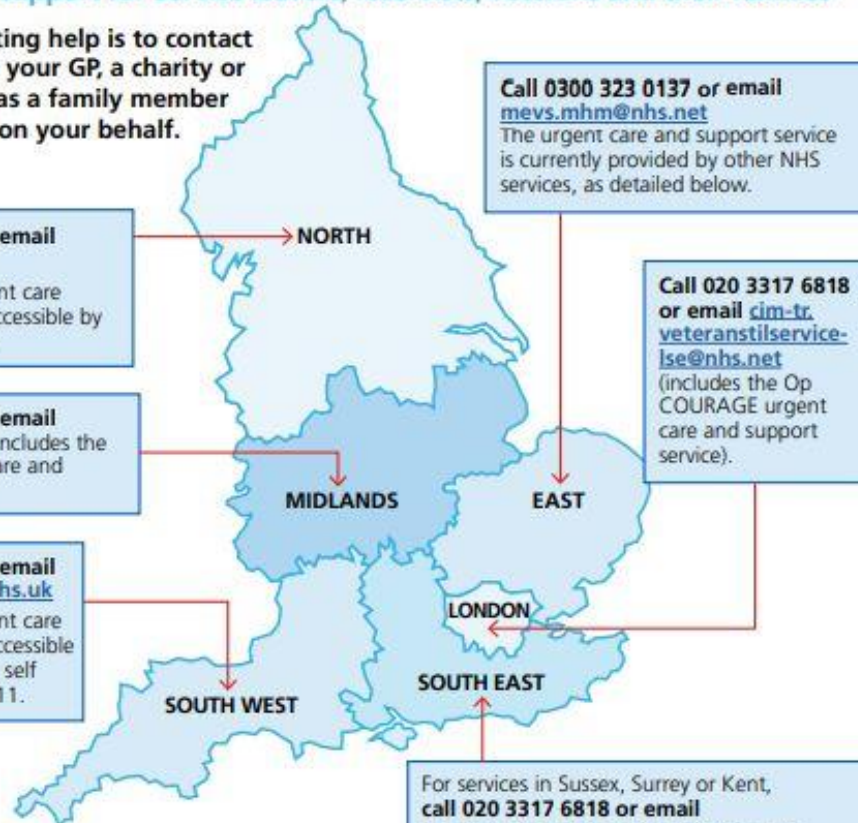
Call 0800 652 2867 or email [VTILS@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:VTILS@cntw.nhs.uk)

The Op COURAGE urgent care and support service is accessible by healthcare referral only.

Call 0300 323 0137 or email [mevs.mhm@nhs.net](mailto:mevs.mhm@nhs.net) (includes the Op COURAGE urgent care and support service).

Call 0300 365 2000 or email [gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk)

The Op COURAGE urgent care and support service is accessible by healthcare referral or self referral by calling NHS111.



#### Urgent and emergency support from other NHS services

If you experience a mental health crisis you can also get help by dialling **111**, booking an emergency GP appointment, visiting A&E or calling **999**. If you are still serving, you can also call the Military Mental Health Helpline on **0800 323 4444**.

#### Register with a GP

If you've left the military, it is important to register with an NHS GP and tell them that you've served in the Armed Forces so you can access dedicated services for veterans. To find your nearest GP visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

For further information on Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service, visit: [www.nhs.net/opcourage](http://www.nhs.net/opcourage)

## Maggie's Culture Crawl

Our Cancer Care Coordinator, Tracey, is completing the Cancer Crawl in Liverpool to raise money for Maggie's on the 17th September 2021.

Tracey says:

*"Maggie's will always hold a special place in my heart as I used to go there weekly when I was having chemotherapy for breast cancer, the atmosphere is so welcoming and there are lots of people who are going through the same thing as you are, and it's also a great place to take your family too as they can ask questions that they don't want to ask you.*

*Maggie's is a breathing space away from the hospital, the centre at Clatterbridge Wirral helps people take back control when cancer turns their life upside down, there is professional support for anything from treatment side effects to money worries. All the support is free, and you don't need an appointment or a referral you can just turn up.*

*Maggie's Culture Crawl is a way of raising funding for the centre, as the centre survives on fundraising and donations. For me personally, Maggie's was a life saver. It was somewhere I could go to and bring my relatives and friends too, such a warming lovely place where there are people going through the same thing as you are. I am doing the culture crawl to raise funds for this amazing place to thank them for all the support they gave me while going through my cancer journey."*

If you would like to donate and support Tracey's Maggie's Cancer Crawl, please visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Cancercarecoordinator>

Learn more about Maggie's on their website: <https://www.maggies.org/>

## Accessing our services

If you need advice from a GP you can either call us on **0151 334 4019** or fill in an **eConsult** form on the Home page of our website.

A GP will triage your request and get back to you to arrange a telephone consultation or a face to face appointment if needed. The GP may text you with advice or to let you know your prescription is ready etc. if appropriate.

When we are closed, call 111 for anything which can't wait until we reopen.

## Think Pharmacy

Your local pharmacy can help you with many minor ailments without the need to see a GP. Ask your pharmacist if you have minor ailments such as a UTI (urinary tract infection), migraine, conjunctivitis, impetigo, fungal skin infection, oral thrush etc.

## Spital Surgery Patients Group



Our Patients Group will be meeting on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm in the Oval Leisure Centre Sports Hall.

This will be our first face to face meeting since February last year and will be socially distanced in a well-ventilated setting.

If you would like to attend the meeting or would like more information about the group, please email our Chair Steve at [stephenevans03@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stephenevans03@hotmail.co.uk)

### And Finally...

We think our reception team are amazing. They have worked extremely hard throughout the pandemic dealing with more patient calls than ever before, working extra hours to cover isolation and to support the Covid vaccine programme. If it takes a while to answer the phone, it is because we are very busy with an increased demand for services and if we can't offer you an appointment straight away, it is because our doctors are triaging all appointment requests to make sure they can deal with the most urgent problems more quickly.

If you abuse our staff or if you are aggressive or threatening, it is very upsetting for them and very disappointing for the whole practice because we are honestly trying our best. We have a Zero Tolerance policy in place so you may be asked to register elsewhere if your behaviour is unacceptable.

There have been reports in the press and on social media about GP practices being closed and not seeing patients. We would like to reassure you that this is not the case! Our doctors and nurses have been working harder than ever with patient contacts up to approximately double what they were pre-pandemic. Our GPs have been seeing patients face to face throughout and often work 12 hour days seeing patients, making phone calls, handling prescriptions, writing referrals, completing forms, conducting home visits... The whole team have worked extremely hard and continue to do so, so a little bit of patience and understanding is very much appreciated.

We would also like to thank patients who have responded to our Friends and Family questionnaire, with 100% positive feedback during August. We had some lovely comments, and it means a lot to us to have such a positive response.