

Welcome to the PPG newsletter - please take time to read it - feedback is encouraged!

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The main surgery telephone line (01933 412777) is open from 0800 to 1830 except for the second Wednesday of every month where we close at 12.30 for training.

Your PPG - listening to patients' opinions

Patient Participation Groups (or PPGs) have been around since 1972 and are usually run by volunteer patients. They are not a 'forum for moaners' but nor are they 'doctor's fan clubs'.

They give **patients** a way to advise and inform the Practice on what matters most to **them** and to help identify solutions.

Any registered patient can join and we would particularly welcome younger patients to our group. If you are interested please email us on highamferrers@nhs.net

The brief for PPGs is quite open, but the role usually includes:

- ♦ Acting as a 'critical friend' to the Practice, helping it to understand what patients are thinking and are saying about issues such as, opening hours, making appointments, repeat prescriptions and range of services.
- ♦ Undertaking appropriate surveys or research as well as talking to patients to find out what matters to them.
- ♦ Improving communication with newsletters, notice boards and leaflets that provide patients with information about their health and how to access services.
- ♦ Participating in health promotion events to raise patients' understanding of their health and how best to look after it.
- ♦ Fundraising to support the work of the PPG and to improve the care that is available to patients of the Practice.

The PPG is always open to your feedback about the services offered by the practice. It is not a route for administrative or clinical complaints. Our role is to work with the practice to help facilitate the services offered and to make improvements.

Complaints should go to the practice management.

Health Focus - don't die from embarrassment!

Recent reports suggest that two women a day are dying from Cervical Cancer with approximately 815 women dying in 2016. A smear test usually lasts no more than 15 minutes and the results are normally available within two weeks. Your GP will explain the test and give you the opportunity to ask any questions.

Men, you also need to be aware. 47,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer with 11,000 dying each year. 1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime. The prostate examination may not be pleasant but it could save your life.

Q Doctor

This new service is an online consultation tool. You can use Q Doctor for a consultation if you have a computer fitted with a camera and microphone. You can find more information here: <https://www.qdoctor.io/>

Missed Appointments (DNA)

Appointments with both doctors and nurses are precious. If you find you cannot attend please ring and let the practice know so the time can be allocated to another patient.

In the jargon of medical practices, DNA means 'did not attend'. When patients book but do not attend an available time slot is lost. The number of DNAs that occur at Higham Ferrers is a cause for concern, as can be seen from the data for the last three months:

JUNE 2019 **LOST DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS – 23**

LOST NURSES APPOINTMENTS – 20

JULY 2019 **LOST DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS – 35**

LOST NURSES APPOINTMENTS - 62

AUGUST 2019 **LOST DOCTORS APPOINTMENTS – 43**

LOST NURSES APPOINTMENTS - 53

So, if you have an appointment to see a Doctor or Nurse please make every effort to attend. If your condition has improved and you no longer need the appointment, or are unable to attend, PLEASE cancel your appointment.

The surgery now sends text reminders and you can help this by making sure your mobile phone number is registered.

The surgery monitors DNAs and patients who regularly fail to attend without notice may find that their access to services is restricted.

New staff !

- ◆ New partner GP
- ◆ Prescribing Nurse
- ◆ Paramedic
- ◆ Practice Manager
- ◆ Deputy Practice Manager

Overall this is a significant step forward in staffing levels and patients can expect to see an improvement in services as a result.

But please remember that staff should never be subject to threatening, violent or abusive behaviour. Practice staff have the right to work in an environment free from violence, threats or abusive behaviour.

Two additional administrative staff have also been recruited and start work in a few weeks.

CQC report

We have now received our CQC report for 2019. Please click here to view the report <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-547103717>

As you will see the surgery remains in 'special measures' but a huge effort is going in to address the areas for improvement.

With the significant increase in staffing described above things are happening and feedback from patients indicates that services are improving.

Over the Counter Medicines (OTC)

THE NHS spends around £136 million a year on prescriptions for medicines such as paracetamol and vitamins that can be quite cheaply bought from a pharmacy or supermarket. By reducing this spend the NHS can give resources to treatment for people with more serious conditions.

Therefore, NHS England has recommended that medicines for minor ailments such as colds, hay fever and mild dry skin should no longer be routinely prescribed.

Please purchase these medicines yourself in future. A pharmacy can offer advice on this if needed.

Fund Raising

The PPG tries to raise funds for additional facilities at the Practice. If you have any ideas or suggestions for fund-raising activities we might undertake please do speak up. You could attend one of our meetings, leave a note at reception (addressed to PPG), or send an e-mail to the surgery at highamferrers@nhs.net.

Events - Higham Ferrers Farmers Market

We have booked a stall at the farmers market on Saturday 30th November 2019. Members of the PPG and surgery staff will be there to listen to your comments and offer help in getting support where appropriate.

Please do come along! We also welcome volunteers to man the stand.

NHS Choices feedback/reviews

Please consider leaving a review of Higham Ferrers Surgery , either **good** or **bad**, on NHS Choices.

Useful information

Surgery telephone number (for appointments)	01933 412777
Practice Web site	www.highamferrerssurgery.co.uk
To order a repeat prescription	Go to Web site
When surgery is closed:	
For life-threatening conditions -	Phone 999
For urgent medical assistance -	Phone 111
There is a 'Walk-In Centre' at	Lakeside Surgery, Cottingham Road, Corby, Northants, NN17 2UR Open 8am - 8pm, 7 days/week inc. Bank Hols
To get mobile phone reminders	Register your number with the receptionist

Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust run many clinics, support groups and so on. Here is a Web page giving a list of hospitals, clinics, cafes, education centres and other venues run by NHFT:

<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/northamptonshire-healthcare-nhs-foundation-trust/main>