



The Doctors Notes

The Cranborne Practice Community Newsletter

Early Spring 2025



New Community Garden at Lake Road

Thanks to all the volunteers who turned out on the 21st of March for the launch of our new Community Garden, which is being developed in an area of land behind the Bungalow next to our Lake Road Surgery.

The garden – a space for staff and patients to relax and connect with nature – includes a seating area with a memorial bench dedicated to our pharmacist, Stephen, who sadly and unexpectedly passed away last year. A picnic table, purchased using generous donations received during the COVID pandemic, has also been installed.

Dr Nikki Scott recently led a team of volunteers at our initial planting of seasonal spring blooms, herbs and native plants, and we welcome ongoing gardening support from volunteers and plant and materials donations to help complete and maintain the garden. If you can assist, we will be extremely grateful, and you can also be assured you will be helping out patients and staff.

To offer donations or get involved, please ask at Reception.

NHS Health Checks

An NHS Health Check is a free check-up of your cardiovascular health. It can tell you whether you're at higher risk of getting certain health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease or stroke.

Patients aged between 40 and 74 years of age who do not already have a pre-existing condition are invited for a free NHS Health Check once every 5 years.

Why not under 40?

For those under 40, the risk of these conditions is generally lower. Instead, younger people are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle and visit their GP if they have specific health concerns, risk factors, or a family history of certain conditions.

Why not over 74?

For those over 74, regular health reviews and targeted screening programs (such as for cancer or dementia) are available. Since individual health needs vary more with age, care is usually tailored rather than following the standard NHS Health Check format.

Please get in touch with us if you are eligible but have not been invited.

That said, regardless of age, anyone with concerns about their health should always speak to their GP!



Spring 2025 COVID-19 Vaccinations

The spring COVID booster vaccination programme starts from the 1st of April 2025.

Who is eligible?

- Adults aged 75 years and over (including adults who turn 75 years old by the 30th of June 2025).
- Residents in care homes for older adults
- Immunosuppressed individuals (who meet specific criteria and will be contacted if eligible).

If you are eligible for the COVID-19 Spring Booster, you will have been offered an appointment to attend one of our drive-through clinics, which commence in early April. If you think you may have been missed, please contact us.

You may receive invites and reminders from other NHS service providers. Patients may choose to book their vaccinations wherever they wish, but we hope you will book an appointment with us for your convenience and continuity of care.

Why the Wait?

Understanding Delays in Your Appointment



The NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) gathers patient feedback so we may review our service continually (see more on Page 4 of this newsletter). FFT from last year shows that some patients have been frustrated because they waited a longer than expected time when attending their appointments. We understand that waiting can be frustrating. Here are some reasons why there might be a delay:

- **High Demand:** Our GPs are seeing a high number of patients each day to ensure everyone gets the care they need.
- **Emergency Cases:** Sometimes, urgent cases need immediate attention, which may cause delays for scheduled appointments.
- **Thorough Consultations:** Our GPs take the time to provide thorough care to each patient, which may sometimes take longer than expected.
- **Limited Resources:** We are working with limited resources and staff, which may impact waiting times.

Your health and well-being are our top priorities. We are doing our best to see everyone as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your understanding and patience.



Cost of Living Help

The colder months can be challenging, especially as cost-of-living pressures can affect your health and well-being. Keeping warm and nourished is essential for your health, and we want to assure you that support is available to help you stay well. Crane Valley PCN has collated information on local community organisations and specialist agencies that can provide support, advice and help with energy costs, food support, and other essential needs.

Ask at Reception for our information sheets on how to access warmth, food and community support when facing financial challenges or download and view the information online at www.communityswitch.org/cost-of-living-help.

Take Back Your Life - Quit Smoking today

There are lots of good reasons to stop smoking - what's yours? Whether it's to improve your health, protect the health of those you love or save money, there are so many positives.

Quitting without support (relying on willpower and going 'cold turkey') is the least effective way of quitting, but is how most quit attempts start...and then fail. This is where your NHS can help.

Getting support from your local stop smoking service gives you the best chance of quitting smoking successfully.

There are a range of free quitting support available to help smokers quit for good. Contact us to find out what options to quit could work for you.



Take Control of Your Appointments – Go Paperless with the Online Patient Portal

Our Patient Participation Group wants to ensure that fellow patients know that they can manage their hospital outpatient appointments more conveniently online. Opting in to use the online patient portal made available by University Hospitals Dorset, means that appointment and consultant letters for many outpatient clinics at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Hospitals can be received securely online. This will reduce the number of letters sent by the post, reducing costs for the NHS and the risk of important letters being lost in the post.

Patients who opt in will be able to:-

- View Upcoming Outpatient Hospital Appointment letters
- View Clinical letters following Outpatient Hospital appointments
- Opt In/Opt out of receiving Text Messages
- Update contact details

Scan this QR code to find out more >>





**Help build a
health service
fit for the future**

Help Shape the 10 Year Health Plan for England

In October 2024, the UK Government initiated a public consultation to gather input on the future direction of the National Health Service (NHS). This initiative, known as **Change NHS**, has invited contributions from the public, healthcare professionals, and experts to gather views, experiences, and ideas to help shape a new 10 Year Health Plan for England.

The Plan will set out how the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) can create a truly modern health service designed to meet the changing needs of our changing population. It will be focused on the three shifts that the Government, health service, and experts agree need to happen, which include:

- moving care from hospitals to communities
- making better use of technology
- focusing on preventing sickness, not just treating it.

Since the start of the consultation, over 175,000 contributions have been received. However, the Government still wants people aged 16 and over living in England to tell them their **priorities for change** on some of the ideas from the engagement so far.

Find out more about Change NHS by scanning the QR code below or visit the website at change.nhs.uk.

We encourage our patients to share their views by responding to the Change NHS online survey by **5 pm on Monday, the 14th of April**. After this, the activities on the Change NHS website will close as the DHSC finalises the development of the Plan.

If you prefer to submit your response in another format, for example, a video in BSL, sharing your responses over the telephone or in a specific text format (e.g. with different contrast colours or font sizes), please email changenhs@thinksinsight.com.

You can also send a response by post to Thinks Insight and Strategy, West Wing, Somerset House, London, United Kingdom, WC2R 1LA.



Your Healthcare Team

We have a team of **experienced doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals** that are committed to providing you the highest standard of care and treatment. Dr Harriet Barrett and Dr Tara Godin have recently joined our GP team. You may also have a consultation with GP Registrar, Dr Michael Whittington, a fully qualified doctor who is training with us. During periods of high demand, you may be offered a consultation with a locum GP. Locum GPs are fully qualified GPs and therefore have the same training and qualifications as our salaried GPs.

Visit our website at www.thecranbornepractice.co.uk/our-staff to find out the days that our GPs are routinely in Practice. **Please note that this is subject to holidays or sickness.**

You may also be contacted by a Pharmacist to discuss your medication. Pharmacist Anisa Prifti has recently joined Simon Percy and Fatima Ghezal as part of the Crane Valley PCN Pharmacy team.

Shingles Vaccinations

Did you know there's a vaccine that helps protect against shingles, a common and painful skin disease?

If you're turning 65 or 70, you can get the shingles vaccine after your birthday. Previously, it was only available to those aged 70 to 79.

Eligibility details:

- You must be turning 65 on or after **the 1st of September, 2023** to qualify at that age.
- If your 65th birthday is **before the 1st of September, 2023**, you'll need to wait until you turn 70 to become eligible.
- The vaccine is also available to those **aged 50 and over** with a severely weakened immune system.

**You don't need to contact us—
we'll reach out when you become eligible.**

Are your contact details up to date?

Keeping the Practice updated ensures you receive timely care and important health information when needed. If you have changed your mobile phone, landline number, email address or have moved home, please let us know.

It's important for your GP to have your current contact details so that we may contact you about:

- Appointment Reminders
- Prescription Updates
- Referrals and Specialist Appointments
- Emergency Situations
- Public Health Alerts

The Cranborne Practice is part of the Crane Valley Primary Care Network (PCN), which also includes The Barcellos Family Practice, Verwood Surgery, and West Moors Village Surgery.

Being part of a PCN means we can better ensure the best health and well-being outcomes for our local community by offering a range of services such as Pharmacy Services, the Community Vaccination Centre, Social Prescribing, Care Coordination and Community SWITCH.

Find out more about Crane Valley PCN at www.cranvalleypcn.org.

Have Your Say – Join Our Patient Participation Group!

Your voice matters! By joining our **Patient Participation Group (PPG)**, you can help shape how our healthcare services are delivered. The PPG works closely with our Practice to improve patient experiences, share feedback, and support important initiatives. It's a great way to stay informed, meet others who care about healthcare, and make a real difference.

Our PPG meets 4 to 5 times a year via video call, so you can join us online if you have access to a smartphone, tablet or computer. Meetings start at 1 pm to increase the opportunity for working people to participate during a lunch break if they can.

Interested? Please get involved today and help us improve services for everyone! If you want to join the PPG, please ask at Reception for a join-up form.

Your GP Practice in Numbers: Appointment Stats & Patient Feedback

NHS Digital in England regularly collects data on GP appointments to improve healthcare delivery and planning. The information collected includes details like the number of appointments, the healthcare professional carrying them out, and the mode of delivery (e.g., face-to-face, telephone).

Here's a snapshot of Practice performance in January:

- Our registered patient list size in January was 13,157
- We held 11,360 appointments.
- Of these:
 - 6,201 (54.6%) were with GPs
 - 5,159 were with other healthcare professionals
- 5,297 (85.4%) of GP appointments were conducted within 24 hours of the patient contacting the Practice.

As a comparison, in the same month, 32,981,523 (nearly 33 million) GP appointments were recorded in England. The percentage of GP appointments recorded as being carried out within 24 hours across England is 29%.

While we are pleased that this appointment data compares very positively to the national average, we are always keen to learn patient feedback on your experience of the care or treatment you receive when we see you. The NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) gathers patient feedback so we may review our service continually. This is a vital feedback tool supporting the fundamental principle that people who use NHS services should be able to provide feedback on their experience.

Over the 6 months to the end of February 2025, the Practice received 423 FFT responses. From these results, we learned that 98.3% of these respondents said their recent experience visiting the Practice was Good or Very Good.

We received lots of positive feedback about the professionalism and friendliness of the staff, being listened to, access to same-day appointments, and the timeliness of being seen. Several patients suggested improvements related to the online appointment release time of 7 am and the waiting room environment, which we are reviewing with our Patient Participation Group. A summary and cross section of comments from patients is regularly published on our website.

Perimenopause and menopause

Perimenopause and menopause can bring unique challenges, but **you don't have to face them alone.**

We have created Menopause information page on our website, including links to the Community SWITCH website where you can find a range of resources and support services tailored to women's health and wellbeing during this transformative time.

Visit www.thecranbornepractice.co.uk/menopause

