



# The Doctors Notes

The Cranborne Practice Community Newsletter

Late Summer 2025



## Get Winter-Ready with Your Vaccines!

Our drive-through Vaccination clinics will start from 1st October at Lake Road Surgery, Verwood. This year, **eligible patients will be able to receive their COVID-19 and Winter flu vaccine at the same time if they wish.** We have started to invite eligible patients.

### How to book:

Use the link in the text message we send to eligible patients to book online, or if you don't have a smartphone, call us on 01202 822825 or 01725 517272.

**Please note a change to eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination this year, which now focuses on those at the highest risk of serious illness.**

### Now eligible:

- Adults aged 75 and over
- Care home residents (older adults)
- Immunosuppressed individuals aged 6 months and over

### Not eligible (unless immunosuppressed):

- Adults aged 65-74
- Other clinical risk groups

**Stay protected this winter. Look out for your text!**

## From Seed to Sanctuary: Lake Road Community Garden Officially Blossoms

**Together, we're growing something special.**

Thanks to the fantastic support of our Community, the garden is now planted and blooming beautifully!

Since its official opening on 16th May, **the garden has flourished into a beautiful, welcoming space** for patients, staff, and the wider Community.

At the launch were members of the practice, our Patient Participation Group, people who had donated time and plants, NHS Dorset and local residents. Hosting the event were **Practice Managing Partner Jo Morris**, and GP Partner, **Dr Andy Levinson**.

The garden was created **in memory of Stephen Sheppard**, the Practice's clinical pharmacist who sadly passed away at the end of last year at a young age. A cherry tree was planted in memory of Stephen. Pictured below is volunteer Lionel Foreman and Stephen's mum, Vivien, planting the tree.

Whether you're popping in for an appointment or just enjoying a stroll nearby, **the garden is now bursting with colour, life, and the peaceful charm** we had always envisioned.

Our **heartfelt thanks go to all the volunteers, local groups, and staff members** who made this garden possible - and continue to help it thrive.

If you want to get involved, **we are always looking for more green thumbs or helping hands.** If you'd like to volunteer or donate to support the garden, please contact Jayne Walton by phone on 01202 117370 or email her at: [jayne.walton@dorsetgp.nhs.uk](mailto:jayne.walton@dorsetgp.nhs.uk).



# Community Switch - One Year On: Making a Real Difference

Readers may recall information from previous newsletters on Community SWITCH, a **local programme linking people to health and wellbeing resources** beyond traditional GP care.

However, what makes SWITCH unique is that **social prescribers and Patient Participation Group members have identified and reviewed the resources** within the Crane Valley network. This ensures that Community SWITCH **caters to the needs of vulnerable populations such as older people, financially vulnerable individuals, and those with disabilities or living with chronic illnesses**. Tailoring assistance to meet the specific requirements of these groups ensures that no one is left behind in their pursuit of good health.

Nearly a year since launching Community SWITCH, the results speak volumes. It was built to support social prescribers by providing them with a live, peer-reviewed resource to **help patients find local, relevant, and often life-enhancing community services**. Individuals can also use the Community SWITCH website for self-help and to find resources that may meet their specific needs. However, it has become much more than a signposting tool - it's now a hub for connection, capacity building, and meaningful community change.

**Here's what has been achieved since the Community SWITCH programme commenced:**

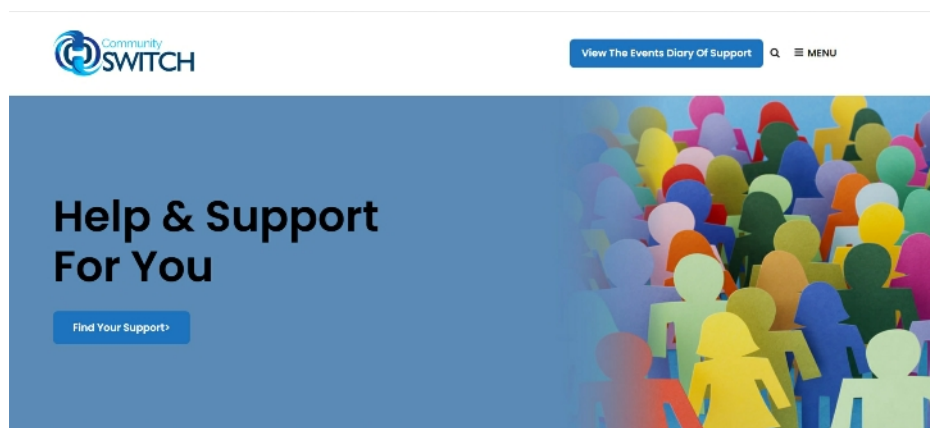
Community SWITCH **brings together over 80 organisations, agencies, and local groups**, all peer-reviewed by patients, to help you find trusted support for a wide range of health and wellbeing needs - from mental health and addiction to menopause, neurodivergence, and much more. Each listing clearly **explains what the service offers, the benefits you can expect, and how to access support**. Where available, you can also hear directly from real users through short videos sharing their personal experiences.

Over the past year, **the most frequently accessed resources have focused on tackling loneliness and social isolation**. In response, an events diary has been added - highlighting local opportunities in East Dorset to help people build connections, feel part of their community, and boost their overall wellbeing.

Whether you want to **meet new people, try something different, or simply get involved**, the diary makes it easy to find events that suit you.





Start exploring support that's right for you.

[www.communityswitch.org](http://www.communityswitch.org)



## Free NHS WiFi Is Now Available at All Our Surgeries!

Enjoy these benefits during your visit:

- ✓ Stay connected while you wait
-  Access trusted NHS health information online
-  Use NHS apps to manage appointments and prescriptions
-  Connect for video consultations or fill in digital forms
-  Support for carers, parents, and families during visits

Just connect to:

**NHS WiFi**

Safe. Secure. Free.

## Step into better health and new friendships

**Why not join a free East Dorset Health Walk, led by trained volunteers?**



East Dorset  
**Health Walks**

These walks are **ideal for beginners**, offering a great opportunity to get out in the fresh air and meet new people.

The walks are **free of charge**. Just turn up, there is **no need to book**.

Follow this link and find a walk near you.

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/eastern-dorset-health-walks>



## Your Health Matters - Book Your Cervical Screening Today

Cervical screening (also known as a smear test) helps **prevent cervical cancer** and could save your life.

Still, it's completely normal to feel unsure or a bit anxious about it - and some people simply aren't aware of how important it is.

In England, **nearly two women lose their lives to cervical cancer every day**. That's why it's so important to go when you're invited. If you've missed your last screening or think you might be due, don't wait - **book an appointment with us today**.

For more information, visit [www.nhs.uk/cervicalscreening](http://www.nhs.uk/cervicalscreening)



### Armed Forces Veteran Friendly Accredited GP Practice

#### We are an Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP Practice

This means that, as part of the health commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant, at The Cranborne Practice we:

- Have a **clinical lead for veteran health** - Dr Andy Levinson
- Ask patients **"Have you served?"** to identify veteran patients
- Support veteran patients to access **dedicated health services**
- Undertake **specialist training** to meet the health commitment of the Armed Forces Covenant.

This is important in helping ex-forces to **get the best care and treatment**.

The accreditation scheme is run by the Royal College of General Practitioners in partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement.

If you are a veteran patient, **please let us know that you have served** so that we can make sure that we understand your health needs.

## Changes to the Community Equipment Loan Service in Dorset

As of the first of August 2025, **Medequip became the new provider of the Community Equipment Loan Service** for Dorset Council, BCP Council, and NHS Dorset, taking over from NRS Healthcare. The service will initially operate on an urgent and critical basis.

For information on how this may affect you, [please visit the Dorset Council website using this link](#) or contact the Adult Access Contact Centre by phone on 01305 221016 (Monday - Friday 8.30am to 5pm).

Alternatively, email: [adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).

**Blood donors make a difference.  
Upcoming sessions at The Hub in  
Verwood:**

**3rd September and  
1st and 11th November**

**If you're able to  
donate, you could  
help save lives in  
our community**



## The NHS Change Programme Explained

Earlier this year, HM Government published its 10-Year Health Plan to make healthcare easier to use, more personal, and ready for the future.

#### What's the focus?

- **More care closer to home** - GP practices, local clinics, and community teams will play a bigger role, so fewer people need to travel to the hospital.
- **Better use of technology** - things like online appointment booking, the NHS App, and shared records will help you get the right care faster.
- **Keeping people healthy, not just treating illness** - more support for healthy living, early checks, and help before problems become serious.

These changes are designed to make it quicker to get help, simpler to manage your health, and easier to stay well without always needing hospital care. **The Cranborne Practice has already taken the lead in improving access to its services** by offering same-day GP appointments, investing in a new phone system, and introducing SystmConnect to provide patients with better options for online consultations.

**Want to know more about the NHS 10-year plan?** You can read about the whole plan at [change.nhs.uk](http://change.nhs.uk).

## Waiting for test results?

We want to ensure you never miss important information about your health. Remember, **our Practice doesn't automatically call patients with test results.** Instead, we ask that you check them yourself once they're ready.

The quickest and easiest way is online- you can **view your results at a time that suits you**, without waiting on the phone. It's simple, secure, and helps you stay in control of your own care. **Scan this QR code** to visit our Test Results web page to find out how.

If you are unable to get online to view your test results, please telephone or call in to the surgery after 2:30 p.m.



Thank you for helping us help you - by checking your results promptly, we can make sure any next steps happen without delay.



## Back to School? Make Sure your Child's MMR Protection is Complete

As your child gets ready to head back to school, it's important to **ensure they're fully protected** against illnesses that can spread quickly in classrooms. Two doses of the **MMR vaccine offer the best defence against measles, mumps, and rubella.** If you think you or your child may have missed either dose, please **contact us to check** and stay protected for the new school year.

## Your GP Practice in Numbers – April to June 2025

At The Cranborne Practice, every number tells a story about how we're **caring for our community.** Here's what the last **three months** looked like:

- **13,532 people are now registered with us** - that's a lot of families, friends and neighbours we're proud to look after.
- We offered **29,365 appointments** - making sure help is there when you need it.
- **85%** of GP appointments were **same-day**, so when something can't wait, neither do we.
- **68%** of appointments were **face-to-face**, because sometimes there's no substitute for seeing your healthcare professional in person.
- Just over **1% of appointments were missed** - thank you for letting us know when you can't attend, so someone else can be seen.

These figures aren't just statistics - they're part of our shared effort to keep our community **healthy and supported.**

Whether it's urgent care on the day, a reassuring chat in the consulting room, or simply making sure every appointment slot counts, **we're here for you.**



## Changing Faces at the Practice

We were sad to say **farewell to Dr Rhys Watkins** who left the Practice at the end of May as he moved out of the area. Dr Watkins was a much-valued part of our team, and he will be greatly missed by both colleagues and patients. We wish him all the very best for the future and thank him for his dedication and care. But we are delighted to welcome **Dr Tara Godin**, who will be taking over Dr Watkins' clinics. Dr Godin is in surgery on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and we know she's looking forward to getting to know you. **Dr. Stephen Gadd** has joined the Practice as a GP Registrar, alongside Dr Michael Whittington. GP registrars are fully qualified doctors who have completed medical school and the initial years of postgraduate training but are in the final stage of their GP training with us.

We're proud to have a friendly and experienced team of doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals who are here to provide you with the very best care. You can find out more about our team by visiting the Staff page on our website: [www.thecranbornepractice.co.uk/our-staff](http://www.thecranbornepractice.co.uk/our-staff)