

The Garden City Practice proud to be



accredited

PATIENTS' VOICES

Helping you live healthier



"Your Practice, Your Voice" July 2023 Newsletter

It has without doubt been a very hot June, & with July provisionally seeing even higher temperatures forecast, we would like to remind everyone to check stock of **sunscreen**. Long periods spent outdoors even on days that are not too sunny can lead to sunburn and/or heat exhaustion or even heatstroke. Keeping well hydrated is vital. The Met office & UKHSA will post heat health alerts when necessary & these will be shared via the group facebook page "**Garden City Practice Patients Voices**". If you are elderly or vulnerable with long term health conditions it is recommended to stay indoors during the sunniest & hottest times of the day.



Your local pharmacist can recommend the best sunscreen product for you & your Family.

Did you know? Pharmacists can help with a wide range of minor illnesses : sore throats, coughs & colds,

Hay fever/Allergies This time of year also heralds an increase in pollen count and other allergens. Again your local pharmacist can give you advice and recommendations for the most appropriate over the counter product

Can you spare a few hours each month?

"Your Practice, Your Voice"your opinions matter! The patient group is very keen to hear from you about your experiences. We know pressures & waiting times are higher than ever, but your thoughts & suggestions can be of enormous benefit not just to the hard working team but also to fellow patients. We are particularly keen to hear about your opinions on the issues that are important.

Would you like to join Patients' Voices? Please do let us know! We are aiming to create a truly diverse group, bringing patients from all backgrounds & all ages to help the practice understand the needs of all, leading to better healthcare through healthy living & sharing knowledge of other services available, minimising waiting times & maximising patient satisfaction, safety & a practice under less pressure.

The core philosophy is to focus on **Healthy Living & early intervention** via awareness & screening initiatives. Our aim is to collaborate with the practice in developing a truly holistic overall view of Health & Well-being for all Patients from all backgrounds, in turn reducing pressures on all Healthcare professionals. You can contribute to this newsletter, research health topics & resources & much more!!!

Garden City Practice has a Patient Group with a remit of liaising with Practice Management & a Clinical Lead in the spirit of continuous improvement to deliver the best standards of Healthcare possible. Group membership is voluntary & only involves an hour or two each month, but you are more than welcome to contribute more! We meet with the practice every two months to examine areas of concern voiced by practice & patients. We navigate at flu & covid clinics, hold open mornings for Carers & host awareness events such as Cancel Out Cancer. We also write & publish this newsletter & manage a Facebook page, frequently posting specific health awareness days. One of our greatest achievements was helping the practice relocate to the current premises at Birdcroft Road to meet accessibility needs.

Turn over for July's Health awareness campaigns & resourcesplus, details of local events & places for you & your Families to visit during the school holidays as well as activities for any rainy days, attached separately!!!





HEALTHCARE AWARENESS THEMES & CAMPAIGNS FOR JULY



1st-31st July

Sarcoma awareness month. Every day 10 people are diagnosed with one of three main types of this rare but treatable cancer if diagnosed early enough:

- ◆ *Soft tissue Sarcoma*
- ◆ *Bone Sarcoma*
- ◆ *Gastrointestinal stromal tumours*

For further information visit <https://sarcoma.org.uk>

3rd-9th July

Alcohol Awareness Week. A chance for everyone to get thinking about drinking. For further information visit alcoholchange.org.uk

24th July

24/7 Samaritans - The Big Listen. Every six seconds, somebody contacts Samaritans. Ten times a minute they help someone turn their life around.

28th July

World Hepatitis Day. A day that calls on everyone to help find the "missing millions" unaware they are living with viral hepatitis, taking action to raise awareness and signpost them to care. Further information can be found on the NHS website.

Blood Pressure



A reminder that you can check your blood pressure whenever the surgery is open; no appointment necessary! Awareness & early intervention can help reduce the risk of Stroke and/or Heart dis-

Become a Hypertension Hero!

It is a truly challenging & worrying time for so many of us struggling with high inflation, interest rates & financial issues of all kinds. The impact on mental health is very severe, in turn leading to effects on physical well-being. If you are experiencing difficulties please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the in-house Social Prescribers, as well as any of the local & national support organisations that can offer practical advice & reassurance, as they help you find solutions. These include www.stepchange.org, **Citizens Advice Bureaux**, www.mindinmidherts.org.uk (on 10th July they will be hosting a "Spot the signs & save a life" suicide prevention event), <https://jocarugby.co.uk> whose mission is to create a better understanding of & to de-stigmatise mental health & mental well-being of all, by being "just one click away". This is just a small selection of a significant range of resources. You can also self-refer for Counselling without seeing your Doctor. Whatever you are facing, please do not hesitate to reach out & ask for help.



Online Access & Appointments

If you are unable to attend an appointment for any reason, please try to let the practice know as soon as possible. You can do this by calling **01707 321500** and when prompted press option **2**. This will help the practice reduce the number of "**Did not attend**" statistics. Demand for GP appointments continues to be very high, & the practice will do as much as it can to ensure you get to see or speak to your Doctor as soon as possible. **However, you may well be able to resolve your problems by making an appointment directly with one of the in-house pharmacists, physiotherapists, prescribing nurses or social prescribers. You can book appointments directly at reception & if there is still a need for you to see your Doctor this can be arranged.** Online Access will also enable you to order repeat medication & manage future appointments. Please do speak to one of the reception team who will help you to register for this.

Just a reminder of services that can help when the practice is closed:

- **NHS 111**
- **Herts urgent care: QEII Hospital, Welwyn Garden City**
- **Any of the local pharmacies**

**See you
In August!**