

"Your Practice. Your Voice" October 2026

The nights might be "drawing in" but the temperatures still seem unusually high. I would not ordinarily expect to be advocating for applying sunscreen in October, but with so many unpredictable weather patterns including hot sunny weather, please don't put your suncream away just yet!

As always there are many topics to cover this month, on both physical and mental health issues. Flu vaccine also here. The practice will contact you to offer you an appointment in the coming weeks.



focusing season is

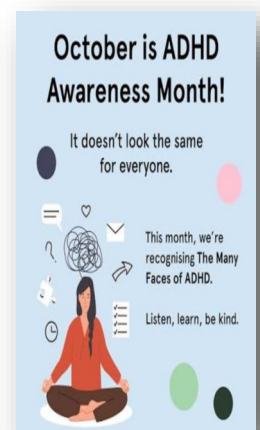
Next month, the newsletter will be receiving a "makeover"; watch this space!

For now, happy reading!

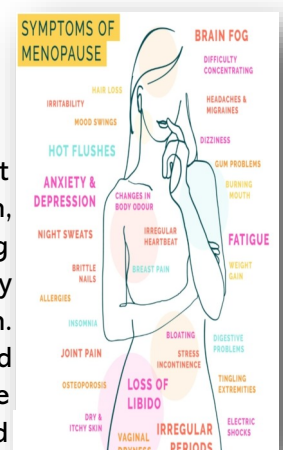
October is ADHD awareness month.....taking place every October and dedicated to raising awareness of *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*, a neurodevelopmental condition that affects millions of people worldwide. The month-long campaign aims to educate the public, challenge persistent myths and stigma, and celebrate the unique strengths that often accompany a neurodivergent brain. It is estimated that around 2.6 million people live with ADHD, though many remain undiagnosed. Late diagnosis is particularly common among women and girls, who often present with less visible symptoms such as inattention rather than hyperactivity.

Whilst much more is understood now about ADHD and other issues, it is acknowledged that obtaining an official diagnosis, and becoming "statemented" to help young people through their education can be a difficult and long process. There are a number of organisations and resources to turn to both locally and nationally who can help you, either local authority led or charities. Please also keep an eye on the surgery screens and notice boards which give further details.

For those aged up to 25, you can visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk, search for the **Hertfordshire SEND local offer** for further information and assistance.



Menopause Awareness Month, observed globally throughout October, shines a light on the experiences of women going through menopause, promoting education, support, and empowerment. This month-long observance is dedicated to raising awareness about the physical, emotional, and psychological challenges women may face during menopause, while offering resources for a healthy and informed transition. Menopause Awareness Month was established to address the lack of information and support available for women going through menopause. The initiative aims to remove the stigma associated with this natural phase of life, fostering greater empathy and understanding. Over the years, it has become a pivotal moment for education and advocacy around women's health, promoting a more supportive environment for all. For further information visit themenopausecharity.org

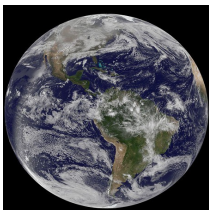


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October 2nd is **World Smile Day**, a heartwarming global celebration dedicated to spreading happiness and encouraging acts of kindness. This day reminds us of the simple yet powerful impact of a smile and the joy it can bring to ourselves and others. In a turbulent and stressful world, this simple gesture costs nothing but the huge potential for making a positive difference to your mental health and those around you is precious and invaluable.



Dyslexia Awareness Week is observed between 5th and 11th October, with 8th October marking **World Dyslexia Awareness Day**. This is an important annual campaign that aims to increase understanding and awareness of dyslexia, a learning difference that affects reading, writing, and spelling. This week-long event provides an opportunity to highlight the strengths and talents of individuals with dyslexia and to promote inclusive education and workplaces. Dyslexia Awareness Week encourages people to learn more about dyslexia, challenge misconceptions, and support those affected by this learning difference.



Smiles are
recognised
the world
over

Saturday 10th October marks **World Mental Health Day**, raising awareness of mental health issues worldwide and mobilising efforts to improve access to mental health care. The day is coordinated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and supported by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), which founded the observance in 1992.

Good mental health is equally if not more important than good physical health, with both inextricably linked. You might be in good physical health but if life events have a negative impact on your mental health, it will eventually lead to physical health problems; not necessarily immediately but somewhere down the line.

We must also be mindful of all neurodivergent people who face far greater challenges navigating through life and events they find much more stressful and not logical. There is a wealth of resources available to help those with poor mental health, either via the NHS or any of the charities devoted to helping. There are also situations in which we can all play a part, looking out for family, friends or work colleagues who might seem happy and confident at face value but may well be very stressed, anxious, depressed or going through a crisis but unsure who to turn to. Remember, "it's okay to not be okay". If you have concerns for the wellbeing of another, please try and reach out to them. You can make a huge positive difference to the lives of others around you!



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October is Breast Cancer awareness month

2026 Theme: Every Story is Unique, Every Journey Matters

The 2026 campaign theme, **Every Story is Unique, Every Journey Matters**, reflects the reality that breast cancer touches every person differently. From diagnosis to treatment and beyond, no two journeys are the same. The theme encourages listening to personal stories, reducing stigma, and building community among those affected – whether as patients, survivors, carers or supporters.

In the UK, [Breast Cancer Now](https://www.breastcancer.org.uk) leads the Wear It Pink campaign throughout October, inviting workplaces, schools and communities to raise funds by wearing pink.

What is Breast Cancer Awareness Month?

Breast Cancer Awareness Month takes place every October worldwide, bringing together charities, healthcare providers, workplaces and communities to raise awareness of breast cancer, promote early detection, and support those affected. The month was established in 1985 through a partnership between the American Cancer Society and AstraZeneca (then ICI Pharmaceuticals). The pink ribbon became the international symbol of breast cancer awareness in 1992.

In the UK, Breast Cancer Now is the leading organisation, funding research and providing support services including their free helpline and online community. Across Australia, the National Breast Cancer Foundation coordinates the national campaign, while in the US the Susan G. Komen Foundation remains the most recognised organiser.

Why Breast Cancer Awareness Matters: Key Statistics

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK. According to [breastcancer.org.uk](https://www.breastcancer.org.uk) :

- Around 56,000 people are diagnosed with breast cancer in the UK every year – roughly 150 diagnoses per day.
- 1 in 7 women in the UK will develop breast cancer during their lifetime.
- Survival rates have doubled since the 1970s: around 85% of those diagnosed now survive at least five years, largely due to earlier detection and improved treatments.

Breast cancer is not only a women's disease – approximately 350 men are diagnosed in the UK each year.

Awareness and early intervention is absolutely vital. Please do take up any screening invitations from the NHS. Most crucially? If you detect any unusual lumps or growths, please do seek medical assistance as soon as you can. For more information:

www.breastcanceruk.org.uk

[breastcancer.org.uk](https://www.breastcancer.org.uk)

www.cancerresearchuk.org



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Health issues: Recurring themes

Every month we look at a wide range of topics, which invariably link up with others, but it is also worth looking at those issues which if not monitored can lead to greater complications if left unchecked. One of the most important has been and continues to be undiagnosed hypertension, or high blood pressure. As many as 5 million adults (*source: British heart foundation*) go about their daily lives unaware their blood pressure may be too high and this applies to all ages. Left undiagnosed, hypertension can lead to more serious issues including heart attack or stroke. The NHS has had a long running campaign called "Know your Numbers" in place. Please do take every opportunity to check your blood pressure. There is an easy to use machine in the practice waiting room which you are more than welcome to use during practice opening times. Just ask at reception; once you have used the machine simply hand the reading to the reception team who will note it on your records. If the reading is high one of the healthcare professionals will contact you and invite you to submit blood pressure readings usually over 5 or 6 days. If further investigation and medication are needed they will organise an appointment for you.



Many of you may already wear a "smart watch" or fitness tracker which can provide estimates of blood pressure, heart rate etc but is only a guide. Cuff monitors are fairly reliable but the best option is always to be checked by your GP or Nurse.



You can find more information at www.bhf.org.uk

Awareness and early intervention.

Every month we hope to bring you information about as many health issues as possible; the newsletter could easily double in size to talk about everything each month! The most important thing to remember, no matter your age, is to encourage awareness—if you notice the slightest change about your body, no matter how slight? Please, please ask for your GP or another healthcare professional to investigate as soon as possible. Please do not wait. Naturally the same applies if you notice anything different in any of your loved ones.



Appointments. If you are unable to attend a scheduled appointment please try and let the practice know as soon as possible by calling **01707 321500** and pressing **option 2** when prompted. **"Did not attend"** or **DNA's** continue to be an issue and do cost the NHS.



Services for out of hours:

- **NHS 111** For both physical & mental health issues
- **Herts urgent care: QEII Hospital, Welwyn Garden City**
- **Any of the local pharmacies**

See you in November!!!

Remember: Awareness and early intervention!