



Highview Medical Centre

The Elms, High Street, Potters Bar, Herts, EN6 5DA



Welcome to the first Newsletter produced by Highview Patient Participation Group (PPG) in partnership with Highview Medical Centre.



In this edition we have tried to give you relevant and current information about health matters. We hope you find it useful.

Our PPG has been running since 2011. We actively support the running of the Practice and meet quarterly with the Practice Manager and Staff to discuss patients' views and experiences. This provides an opportunity for us to be the voice for patients on local health related matters, keep up to date with local/regional/national initiatives and to offer suggestions and support the Practice.

I would like to hear from anyone (registered with our Practice) interested in knowing more about our PPG to get in touch with me via the email below*.

I do hope you enjoy reading the newsletter, find it interesting. Please email us on highview.ppg@nhs.net and let us have your feedback and suggestion so that we can make it better, more interesting and relevant for you next time.

Mekhola Ray, Chair of Highview PPG

Surgery Update

Highview continues to operate a telephone triage system to protect the most vulnerable patients. Patients initially phone reception to arrange a telephone consultation with a GP. The GP will then either deal with the query on the phone straight away, ask for photos to be sent or will arrange a video link or arrange for you to attend the surgery for a face-to-face appointment.

Following your telephone consultation, if the GP requires you attend the surgery for a face-to-face appointment, you are required to wear a face covering unless exempt.

The nurses are working as normal for most things such as dressings, blood tests, diabetes foot checks etc. Only a few services such as Spirometry cannot be offered as yet.

Health Checks, Asthma check-ups, COPD and Weight Management are, where appropriate, being conducted over the phone at the moment.

Staff Changes

Over the last few months Dr Pratheesh Puvanagopan and Dr Jessica Samuel have left to work closer to their new homes. Highview have increased their GP provision and have recruited Dr Louise Parker, Dr Jessica Hayes, Dr Chee Tang and Dr Roshni Patel (joining in October).

Remaining GPs are Dr Anup Shah, Dr Sammy Glekin, Dr Jayna Gadawala, Dr Stephanie Hann and Dr Binta Patel.

Highview is also a GP training surgery and will typically have an additional 3 GPs to those specified. Training to be a GP takes 10 years, so trainee GPs at the surgery are in either year 8, 9 or 10 of their training, having previously worked purely in hospitals on 'acute medicine'. They have then chosen to specialise in General Practice medicine and will undertake clinics at the surgery followed by a debrief at the end of each clinic with one of the trainers (Dr Shah, Dr Glekin, Dr Gadawala, Dr Hann).

Online Consult

Highview's new online consultation system gives you 24-hour access to a wealth of health advice, self-care tips and information on your next steps.

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Online Consult continued.....

If you then need further guidance, you can complete and submit an online form about your health issue and submit it to the surgery. It is reviewed by a GP and relevant information and advice to your situation is given in stages. This might include suggestions for initial self-help, use of over the counter medication, referral to another medical professional or organisation or the need for an appointment in the surgery with a GP or Nurse.

You can access Online Consult via Highview's website. You need to be registered with Patient Access to use this service.

If you require urgent medical advice, please contact the surgery via the normal routes or if out of hours call NHS 111.

Flu Vaccines

Highview has flu vaccine clinics planned for some Saturdays in September and October, plus Monday evening clinics. These are dependent on vaccines arriving on time.

Patients aged 65 years and over are entitled to a free NHS flu vaccination and patients aged 18-64 with certain medical conditions. Additionally this year the government have stated that over 50's are also entitled to a free NHS flu vaccination.

Patients will be invited by appointment as Highview is operating a COVID safe clinic as last year which patients were very happy with. Most flu vaccination call ups will be done via text messages. You will also have the opportunity to decline should the date not be convenient or should you not wish to take up this opportunity. Please remember to update the surgery if you have a new mobile phone number.

For children 0-18 requiring a flu vaccination due to having certain health conditions the surgery will contact you to arrange an appointment.

COVID Booster Vaccinations

At present the surgery is awaiting the government announcement regarding this. If it does proceed then patients will get invited (no need to call the surgery) and it will be at Allum Hall, Borehamwood, unless you are Housebound due to a medical condition where alternative arrangements will be made.

Although this may be a little inconvenient for some Potters Bar residents, Highview supports this being at Allum Hall due to the complexities involved and not wanting to disrupt usual services and the flu vaccination programme for patients at our surgery. To deliver COVID vaccinations 'at scale' across 9 surgeries in Hertsmere necessitates a centrally coordinated effort with appropriately trained staff and facilities to store vaccines.

Waiting times for hospital appointments/abuse to staff

Waiting times are now longer for hospital tests/investigations and procedures and it is a very difficult time for everyone. Due to hospital appointment delays, doctors and nurses are additionally supporting patients to manage their conditions during their waiting times. Regrettably, due to this, staff are dealing with very frustrated people. Surgery staff cannot influence your waiting time. If you wish to chase your appointment then please contact the hospital directly.

Should patients be abusive to staff they will be advised that they need to seek another surgery. There is zero tolerance at Highview.

These are difficult times for everyone so we ask for you to support the surgery, which continues to provide a service, and be civil to staff at all times.

Get In Touch

We would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions for future newsletters. We would like to include topics that you, as patients of Highview, want to hear about.

Please email your feedback and suggestions to highview.ppg@nhs.net

This email address is monitored regularly but not every day. Your suggestions will be anonymised to maintain your confidentiality.

*By emailing this address you are aware that you are contacting the PPG who are patients at the surgery that volunteer to support the surgery. Please do not use this email for medical or personal questions as we are not qualified or authorised to deal with such enquiries. Any such questions must go through the usual channels and will not be acknowledged or passed on to the Practice.