LONDON ROAD SURGERY

Website: www.thelondonroadsurgery.co.uk

Telephone: 01268 765533

**NEWSLETTER January 2024**

Welcome to the practice newsletter. In it you will find some useful information, especially if you are not able to use a computer. **However, there are references to important websites and it might be useful if you have a friend or relative who could gain access to the relevant information for you. This is a bumper issue this month as there are lots of campaigns listed for February 2024. Please see end of the newsletter.**

**All prescription requests must be made online via the NHS App or via Online Services accessed by using the London Road Surgery website. Alternatively, you can post your request through our letterbox or send it by Royal Mail.**

**We are experiencing a high demand for appointments please ask your Pharmacist for advice or use e-consult online consultation and receive a reply within 48 hours.**

**e-consults or Online Consultations**

**We have available via the website** [www.thelondonroadsurgery.co.uk](http://www.thelondonroadsurgery.co.uk) **a platform for consulting online a clinical or admin queries. This is called e-consult. Please follow the instructions to submit your query. You will get a response within 48 hours.**

**New Reception Staff**

We have new staff who have joined our Reception team. Please be patient while they deal with your queries. Our reception staff are now called Healthcare Navigators because they can sign post you to Health Care Professionals who support the doctors in primary care.

Thank you for your kind comments for some of our new reception staff.

These staff are trained professionals and if unable to support you they will refer you back to the doctor. These are: Pharmacists, Paramedic, Social Prescriber, Mental Health First Contact Practitioner, and retail Pharmacists. We also use the weekend appointments available to all the practices in Wickford.

**Ideas and Suggestions**

Please let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions by writing to us via the email address or by post.

Thank you.

**Veteran Friendly Accreditation**

**We are accredited as an Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice. Dr Richards is the Lead GP for this.**

**Patient Contact Details**

**Please keep us up to date with your contact details either by popping a note through our letterbox or by emailing us at** [londonroadsurgery@nhs.net](mailto:londonroadsurgery@nhs.net)

**Last month we had 660 patients with no mobile number on their record. Please email us with your mobile number and email address.**

**Primary Care Network (PCN) Staff**

**In line with NHS England guidance and the development of Primary Care Networks (PCN’s) some new allied Health Care Professionals have joined the team at London Road Surgery. We have a Paramedic and 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners who can treat minor illness. These staff members join the doctors and nurses and the new Social Prescriber and Mental Health First Contact Practitioner to help you.**

**To assist you with your request to see a clinician our Receptionists/Care Navigators will ask you the reason for your appointment so that they can guide you to the correct clinician for your condition.**

**PCN Pharmacists – now work at the surgery and you may be contacted by them before you see a doctor. They can sort minor illnesses as well as review all medication.**

**We encourage self-care and there are lots of information on our website and NHS App.**

**Local Pharmacists are happy to discuss with you about your minor illness and we can refer you to them using our clinical system. They will call you back in a few hours.**

**Basildon & Brentwood CCG website also has Health Information** <https://basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk/>

**Looking after yourself**

**We continue to offer free health checks for patients aged 40-74 who have not had a health check in 5 years and for those over 75 years.**

**Please call reception to book your health check with Natalie or Mel our Paramedic.**

**Contacting Us**

**Please do not use our email address to send any clinical queries to us. Please call the practice to make an appointment or use e-consult (see above). Please use NHS App to order repeat medication. We can process requests faster this way.**

**Patient Group Activity**

The Patient Groups of all 3 practices in Wickford are working together with **Action for Family** **Carers** to develop a Carer’s Directory. We will be discussing how the practices in Wickford can better identify patients who are unpaid carers. There is a Universal Form for patients to complete. Please check our website.

On 15 December 2023 the Alzheimer’s Society did a Drop-in session for those looking after someone with Dementia. We had 16 meaningful conversations, and they will be back later in 2024 to give more support.

**Next Patient Group meeting will be 1pm Wednesday 7 February 2024**

**Website**

We understand that lots of our patients are unable to view our website if you know a member of your community is housebound or without any computer access please print this and deliver it to them. London Road Surgery thank you for this kindness.

**Healthwatch Essex**

<https://healthwatchessex.org.uk/>

Is an independent charity set up under the Health & Social Care Act 2012 and they use your voice to improve health and care in Essex. They undertake high-quality research and engagement to uncover your experience of services and use it to shape health and care. They are also proud hosts to the Essex Neurology Network.

They can help you find out about and access health and social care services through our Information & Guidance Service**. Call 0300 500 1895, text 07712395398** between 10am and 2pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Outside of those times, you can use it to leave them a message. Check out how to get involved!

[info@healthwatchessex.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchessex.org.uk)

Message on **07712395398**, Monday - Friday, 9am to 4:30pm

**Looking After Your Mental Wellbeing**

Looking after our mental wellbeing sometimes falls behind on our list of priorities. But keeping mentally well helps us to keep physically well too. Visit this website for some tips on how to look after your mind: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

**Free listening services**

These services offer confidential advice from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that is troubling you, no matter how difficult:

Call [116 123](tel:116123) to talk to [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/), or email:  [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) for a reply within 24 hours.

Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the [Shout Crisis Text Line](https://www.giveusashout.org/), or text "YM" if you're under 19.

If you are under 19, you can also call [0800 1111](tel:0800%201111) to talk to [Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk/). The number will not appear on your phone bill.

**The Essex Wellbeing Service 0300** **303 9988**

We provide Essex residents (excluding Southend-On-Sea and Thurrock) with access to health checks; stop smoking services; weight management courses; and emotional health and wellbeing support.

We also support Essex organisations at work via our three-tiered Working Well Accreditation. This consists of workplace health and wellbeing sessions; Mental Health First Aid training; and the Working Well Accreditation itself where organisations can be recognised for their commitment to staff health and wellbeing.

EWS also runs a volunteering service where we recruit and connect volunteers with Essex residents in need of support with everyday tasks, social isolation and making long-term friendships.

The Service is commissioned by Essex County Council. But we couldn’t do this without our amazing alliance of partners…

**Provide CIC**

Provide CIC is a Community Interest Company (social enterprise) that delivers a broad range of health and social care services in the community throughout Essex, Cambridgeshire and East Anglia.

Provide works from a variety of community settings, such as three community hospitals, community clinics, schools, nursing homes and primary care settings, as well as within people's homes to provide more than 40 services to children, families and adults.

Provide CIC has been commissioned by Essex County Council to deliver the Essex Wellbeing Service, in partnership with all the organisations listed on this page.

**Priority Digital Health**

Priority Digital Health (PDH) build digital solutions which empower better self-management and service-management of patients' health and wellbeing.

PDH ensures people get the help and support they need, swiftly, whilst remaining true to their 'Tell Your Story Once' mantra.

PDH’s speciality is disease prevention; their background is in changing behaviour, and their focus is cost-saving and service efficiencies – but not at the expense of user experience.

They have three main products: The Priority Platform (customisable case management software); Diabetes Book & Learn (connecting people with Diabetes to the right education); and AmaraHealth™ (a whole-body health and wellbeing app).

For Essex Wellbeing Service, PDH provides the case management system that digitises lifestyle bookings; volunteer sign-up and management; and referral or self-referral for support with everyday tasks.  
  
PDH provides their marketing services for the EWS and Working Well website and social media. EWS also have access to PDH’s AmaraHealth™ app where Essex residents can track, analyse, and manage their whole-body health inside one app.

**Age Well East**

Age Well East offers community friendship services to anyone in Essex who is over 18 with an aim to end loneliness. They provide one to one volunteer friendship (befriending), pen friending and access to social groups and activities to empower people to live happier and healthier.

Age Well East believes everyone deserves to age well and they have been empowering people in later years since 1950. Their knowledgeable staff and volunteers provide excellent support services which are easily available.

They understand that changes in circumstances make people particularly susceptible to loneliness. When left ignored, loneliness can escalate from a temporary situation to a chronic challenge, which the NHS estimates as having the same detrimental impact as smoking 15 cigarettes a day on health deterioration. In Essex alone, as many as 80,000 people are thought to be lonely, which is one of many reasons Age Well East is so committed to providing excellent and trusted support.

**HCRG Care Group**

HCRG Care Group changes lives by transforming health and care. They are one of the UK’s leading independent providers of community health and care services, working with health and care commissioners and communities to transform services with a focus on experience, efficiency and improved outcomes.

The children and family healthy lifestyle service is here to support your family in making long term, sustainable adjustments to suit your lifestyle. If you are unsure if your child is within the healthy weight range, you can check their body mass index (BMI) using the NHS BMI Calculator. The calculator takes into account your child’s age and sex as well as their height and weight.

If you find your child is outside the healthy weight range - don’t panic! There are lots that the team can do to support you in making healthier lifestyle choices and to help your child achieve a healthier weight as they grow.

Being active and making balanced food choices is important, but HCRG Care Group will work with your family to make sure our support is the right offer for you and your family.

HCRG Care Group’s teams have lots of resources that they would like to make available to your family. If you would like to register your interest or find out more about what HCRG can offer your family, please contact EWS.

HCRG Care Group also runs Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service on behalf of Essex County Council.

**Rural Community Council of Essex**

Many Essex villages exude an air of prosperity. However, behind the affluent facade there is evidence of hidden deprivation, and with it the potential for people to be unreasonably disadvantaged by living in a rural location.

Rural communities are the reason for the existence of the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) and remain the focus of the vast majority of their work, but they do provide some services, notably Community Agents Essex and United in Kind Coaches on a countywide basis.

Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) works to provide local communities with the skills, resources and expertise necessary to achieve a thriving and sustainable future.

RCCE provides support and facilitation for local community organisations and projects; develops initiatives that improve the life chances of disadvantaged people and families; and provides an influential voice for rural communities in Essex.

Part of their attention focuses on helping people who may experience disadvantage and exclusion through factors such as low wage employment, the high cost of housing, lack of access to essential services and a scarcity of public transport.

**Terrence Higgins Trust**

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) team of specialist health and wellbeing coaches will work to re-engage those who have disengaged from or who have lost trust in the system.  
  
The service works closely with a diverse range of populations across Essex, and in partnership with the wider EWS service to maximize opportunities for LGBT+, Traveller, Roma, and Racially Minoritised communities, as well as Drug and Alcohol Misusers, Homeless / those at risk of Homelessness, as well as those within the criminal justice system.

THT believes that involving and empowering local communities, particularly disadvantaged groups, and young people is central to both promotion of excellent Health and Wellbeing and the reduction of health inequalities.  
THT champions that partnership approaches to service delivery, combined with innovation, improve engagement with service users, contribute to directly addressing marginalisation and powerlessness underpinning health and social inequalities and are effective in building sustainable communities.  
  
THT is also the UK’s largest HIV and Sexual and Reproductive Health charity.  
  
Building upon the already excellent established working relationship between THT and Provide in Essex the THT Essex Wellbeing Service (EWS) partnership will engage with and empower Seldom Heard From Communities.

Services

* [Stop Smoking](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/stop-smoking)
* [Physical Activity](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/physical-activity)
* [Social Isolation](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/social-isolation)
* [Mental Health](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/mental-health)
* [Alcohol Reduction](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/alcohol-reduction)
* [Sleep](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/sleep)
* [Health Checks](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/health-checks)
* [Child Lifestyle Service](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/child-lifestyle-service)
* [Weight Management](https://www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk/services/weight-management)

T: 0300 303 9988

E: [provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net](mailto:provide.essexwellbeing@nhs.net)

**Opening Hours**

Monday to Friday 8.00am - 7.00pm

Saturday 9.00am to 12.00pm

All enquiries, will be responded to during the opening hours above

**Complaints / Feedback**

T: 0300 303 9951

E: [provide.customerservices@nhs.net](mailto:provide.customerservices@nhs.net)

**NHS App**

If you have a smartphone you can download the NHS App which allows you to order repeat prescriptions and book appointments quickly and easily.

We encourage use of the NHS App as this saves time for the patients.

**Contact Details**

Don’t forget to let us know if you have new phone number or change address. You can email us or call us.

**The Good Grief Trust**

**Website** [**www.thegoodgrieftrust.org**](http://www.thegoodgrieftrust.org)

If you have been affected by a sudden bereavement during this crisis and need support, advice and guidance.

PLEASE CALL; SUDDEN BEREAVEMENT HELP 0800 2600 400,

OPERATING HOURS: 10AM – 4PM MONDAY – FRIDAY.

**Mental Health Information**

VitaMinds offer a free and confidential NHS Service and Psychological talking therapies. They offer support for Anxiety, Low mood, Depression, Panic attacks, Social anxiety, sleep problems, PTSD, OCD and specific phobias. You can self-refer online vitahealthgroup.co.uk or call 01268 977 171 Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm and Saturdays 9am – 12.30pm or Out of Hours emotional support 24/7 01268 977 171

**Contact Us Online**

We have updated our website and added a tab called Contact Us Online. This is for patients to send us administrative queries or medical issues. Hopefully this will free up our phone lines for those patients without internet access.

**Useful Telephone Numbers**

Boots Allianz The Wick 01268 574018

Boots Mayflower 01268 820235

Boots Willowdale 01268 761911

Co-op 01268 970532

Garbetts 01268 732042

Medipharm 01268 735777

Sainsbury’s 01268 270282

Shadforths 01268 733313

Shotgate 01268 768547

Tesco Mayflower 01268 367647

Wells Pharmacy 01268 762605

**CARING FOR OTHERS**

If you are caring for a relative, you can access information & advice, specialist support, groups & activities through Carers First. Carers First is a charity commissioned by Essex County Council:

Telephone: 0300 303 1555

Email: [hello@CarersFIRST.org.uk](mailto:hello@CarersFIRST.org.uk)

Please let us know if you are an unpaid Carer and if you need support

**Useful Resources:**

**Alzheimer’s Society:** 01245 260911 3 Lockside Marina Chelmsford CM2 6HF

**National Domestic Violence Helpline**: 0808 2000 247 https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

**NSPCC helpline**: 0808 800 5000

**ChildLine**: 0800 1111

**MIND**: www.mind.org.uk

**YoungMinds**: https://youngminds.org.uk

**ICON**: Babies cry: You can cope https://iconcope.org

**IRISi:** irisi.org/iris/find-your-local-iris-site

**February 2024**

**International Prenatal Infection Month**  
  
There are a number of infections that can affect your unborn baby. February is International Prenatal Infection Month and it’s important to raise awareness of infections that can affect your unborn child if you’re pregnant, but also to be aware that if you catch an infection, that infection may pose a risk to others.  
Some foods are best avoided while you’re pregnant or they need to be cooked in a certain way to ensure they’re safe. Making sure you check the guidance thoroughly can help keep you and your baby safe from some of the most common prenatal infections.  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/infections-that-may-affect-your-baby/>  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/keeping-well/foods-to-avoid/>  
  
**Keeping active when you don’t feel like it**  
  
The weather in the UK can be cold and miserable during the winter, and days are shorter so exercising can seem challenging. It’s still freezing outside, but that’s no reason to step back on your exercise. These helpful articles contain some brilliant hints and tips to help you stay motivated during the cold winter months.  
  
[https://www.theguardian.com/lifeand...eep-exercising-in-the-cold-dark-winter-months](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/dec/03/seven-ways-to-keep-exercising-in-the-cold-dark-winter-months)  
  
<https://www.everydayhealth.com/healthy-living/fitness/easy-winter-exercise-tips-help-you-stay-fit/>  
  
**Depression**  
Depression is more than a passing low mood. Mild depression can mean you’re unable to enjoy your normal activities, while severe depression can make you feel suicidal or as if life isn’t worth living. Getting outdoors and doing exercise are some of the well-known tips for helping mood, but are there others?  
If you’re struggling with feelings of depression, please ask for an appointment.  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/depression-in-adults/overview/>  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/tips-and-support/cope-with-depression/>  
  
**Childhood obesity**  
  
Overweight children have an increased chance of becoming overweight adults. Increased weight in adulthood can lead to long-term conditions such as Type 2 diabetes. There are some simple tips you can use to help your child regain a healthy weight. Checking what their BMI is can help too.  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/childrens-weight/advice-for-parents-overweight-children/>  
  
**Stress in children**  
  
Children can experience stress in similar ways to adults, but they may express their stress in different ways as their ability to describe their feelings may not match the depth of their emotions.  
  
Children often absorb more from their surroundings than we might imagine. Overhearing adults’ concerns about things like money, jobs and their own education can translate into stress and worry.  
  
<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/mental-health/what-is-stress>  
  
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/blog/children-and-stress-whats-worrying-them-most/>  
  
**Cold weather and staying well in winter**  
There are a number of things you can do to help keep you and your family safe and well over the winter months.  
  
Cold increases the risk of illness and hospital admissions in the vulnerable and very cold weather over a period of time increases this risk further. Keeping an eye on the weather forecast can help you to plan for cold weather spells.  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well/>  
  
<https://assets.nhs.uk/nhsuk-cms/documents/Stay_well_this_winter.pdf>  
  
<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/forecast/uk>  
  
**Heart awareness**  
  
In the UK, someone dies from a heart or circulatory condition every three minutes. That’s almost 500 people every day, and almost 200,000 every year. February is Heart Month, so let’s raise awareness and help reduce this number.  
  
<https://www.bhf.org.uk/>  
  
**Self-care**  
  
Over 15 million people in the UK are living with a health condition. This helpful toolkit shows ways in which you can learn to manage your condition to help improve your overall quality of life.  
  
[https://www.nhs.uk/planners/yourhealth/documents/self care toolkit booklet - oct 10 - read.pdf](https://www.nhs.uk/planners/yourhealth/documents/self%20care%20toolkit%20booklet%20-%20oct%2010%20-%20read.pdf)  
  
**Wash your hands**  
  
You should make sure you wash your hands thoroughly. It’s especially important to wash your hands:  
  
● After using the toilet or changing a nappy  
  
● Before and after handling raw foods like meat and vegetables  
  
● Before eating or handling food  
  
● After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing  
  
● Before and after treating a cut or wound  
  
● After touching animals, including pets, their food and after cleaning their cages  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>  
  
**NHS app**  
  
Are you using the NHS app? Filled with useful information and the ability to access GP services and your health records, now is the ideal time to try it out.  
  
<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>  
**Measles**  
  
Measles can cause serious complications, such as pneumonia, meningitis, blindness and seizures. After a 30-fold increase in measles cases in Europe in 2023, increased rates of measles in the UK suggest that we may see a significant increase in the number of cases here too.  
  
This is partly due to the reduced levels of vaccination against measles.  
  
If you or your child hasn’t received two doses of the MMR vaccination, you can ask your GP surgery to see if you can be vaccinated.  
  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-68007804>  
  
**Dignity Action Day, 1st February**  
  
If you receive care from others, you’ll know how important it is that you’re treated with dignity and respect. Dignity Action Day helps to raise awareness of this important issue.  
  
<https://www.dignityincare.org.uk/Dignity-in-Care-events/Dignity_Action_Day/>  
  
**Time to Talk Day, 1st February**  
  
Conversations are important for our mental health. Whether that’s a quick chat or something more meaningful, let’s make Time to Talk!  
  
<https://timetotalkday.co.uk/>  
  
**World Cancer Day, 4th February**  
  
Across the globe, there’s inequality of access to cancer treatment. In the UK, we’re lucky to have access to healthcare free at the point of need. Let’s help to raise awareness.  
  
<https://www.worldcancerday.org/>  
  
**Tinnitus awareness, 5th-11th February**  
  
Tinnitus is a condition that affects the noises individuals hear. Some sufferers hear buzzing, running water or ringing in their ears. The effect of constant noise on mental health can be significant.  
  
<https://tinnitus.org.uk/join-the-cause/tinnitus-week-2024/>  
  
**Children’s Mental Health Week, 5th - 11th February**  
  
‘Express yourself’ is the theme of this year’s Children’s Mental Health Week. Children should be able to express their thoughts and feelings, and have their thoughts and feelings considered.  
  
<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>  
  
**National HIV Testing Week, 5th - 11th February**  
  
5th February marks the start of National HIV Testing Week. Testing is free and confidential and you can find out more here:  
  
<https://www.tht.org.uk/news/national-hiv-testing-week-returns-2024>  
  
**International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM, 6th February**  
  
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is procedures that involve altering or injuring female genitalia for non-medical reasons. If you know someone who may be at risk, there are steps you can take to protect them.  
  
[https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-m...olice if you,who's already been taken abroad.](https://www.gov.uk/female-genital-mutilation-help-advice#:~:text=Contact%20the%20police%20if%20you,who%27s%20already%20been%20taken%20abroad.)  
  
**Safer Internet Day, 6th February**  
  
‘Together for a better internet’ is the theme of this year’s Safer Internet Day. If we work together, we can protect our children and each other from the harm that can be done on the internet.  
  
<https://www.saferinternetday.org/>  
  
**Chinese New Year, 10th - 24th February**  
  
Happy Chinese New Year! Chinese New Year is a time for celebration. You can find out more about how Chinese New Year is celebrated here:  
  
<https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/how-do-people-celebrate-chinese-new-year>  
  
**International Epilepsy Day, 12th Feb (the 2nd Monday of February)**  
  
Anyone can have a one-off seizure. If you have a seizure, you may be diagnosed with epilepsy if your doctor believes there’s a high risk that you’ll have further seizures. Around one in 100 people in the UK are living with epilepsy.  
  
<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/>  
  
**Eating Disorders Awareness Week, 26th February - 3rd March**  
  
This year, Eating Disorders Awareness Week focuses on Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID). People with ARFID eat very restricted diets and have few ‘safe’ foods. They may fear trying new foods and, over time, this can affect their health and wellbeing.  
  
<https://edaw.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>