

Porter Brook Medical Centre Newsletter

Spring 2023



We all know that the NHS is in crisis as a result of years of ‘challenging times’ and that the chronic shortage of staff is an important issue, especially in this post-covid’ period where medical services face a backlog of need which sometimes means that patients’ expectations are not met

The Patient's Representative Group is collecting evidence to help the practice to meet patients’ needs more effectively. To do this we would like to hear from you about your experience of the practice over the last year.

Have you have had difficulty getting timely treatment or been amazed at how good it was, frustrated with delays, had difficulty getting appointments etc? We want to hear praise as well as grumbles to pass on to the practice so that they can pick up on any issues as soon as possible. (All comments will be anonymous.)

You may also receive a patient access survey text from the practice. This is an opportunity for you to give the practice feedback about getting to see a doctor or nurse at the surgery.

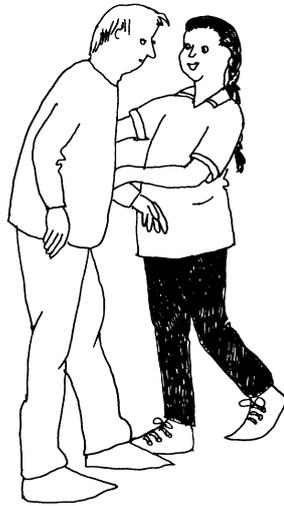


Please fill it in and return it as the more information we have the more we can do to try and get things working better for us all, or contact the patient group directly on prg.porterbrookmc@gmail.com

Specific Clinics

The practice has some specific clinics that can be booked directly without the need to see a GP first.

For example, if you feel you need to see a **physiotherapist**, you can call reception and book a face-to-face appointment. The clinics are on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.



Midwives clinics are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. You can book directly into these clinics when you are between eight and 11 weeks pregnant. The midwives will book your follow-up appointments.



We also have **Coil clinics** on Tuesday afternoon and implant fitting clinics. For these you will need to ring reception to book an initial consultation with a clinician, to discuss suitability, and to book in for the fitting.

Other sources of help and support

Do you have a new baby?

The health visitors are no longer based at the Sunderland Street practice but can be reached at their office on 0114 305 3224, option 3, to book a clinic appointment with them at Highfield Library or Flockton House. There is a drop-in self-weigh clinic at Highfield Library every Friday from 10am-2pm.

Shelter offers advice with housing issues at Highfield Library from 9am-12pm on Fridays.

The Children's Centre can be contacted on 0114 205 3471, or check online for information on any groups that they are running.



Are you facing a non-medical crisis?

Julie Wagland is a Pathways crisis worker based at Porter Brook on Wednesdays. She works with patients in a non-medical crisis which includes support with benefits, housing, debts, mental health and substance misuse and will refer them on to the most appropriate services when required. She has extensive knowledge of services and an interest in the benefit system and immigration law. She is very flexible and can support people face-to-face or by telephone. Referrals to this service will be made by your doctor and Julie tries to see people within two weeks from the referral date.

Healthy Start

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. Please apply on the NHS website – www.healthystart.nhs.uk

New Pharmacy Team



Belinda Pickett

The pharmacy team at Porter Brook has expanded. They now have two practice pharmacists **Belinda Pickett** and **Ruba Anadani** and pharmacy technicians **Helen Thompson** and **Magda Trojanowska**.

The role of the team is to support the surgery, patients and staff with medication and prescription queries.

This can include problems with medicines and liaising with local community pharmacies, help with new medicines following a hospital discharge and synchronising repeat prescriptions.

They also support the clinicians and pharmacists with medication reviews and to organise necessary monitoring tests where and when needed. They monitor medicines in care homes to ensure the highest quality patient-centred care and to reduce the risk of any harm from medicines.

The team works closely with the clinicians offering advice to aid safe, cost-effective, and patient-centred prescribing through education and

support of staff and patients.

The new focus of the team will be to help implement a new annual birthday review system for long-term conditions. The team also aims to have a more proactive and streamlined approach to medication and health condition reviews to improve efficiency and patient experience.

The team recently led an outreach blood pressure project (Barber Shop project) in the local community to help identify patients with undiagnosed high blood pressure.

By the way...

The pharmacy next door is run by Wellbeing and is a separate company from the Porter Brook Medical Centre.

You really don't need to shout

All the practice staff are there to help you and they try to be as polite and helpful as possible. The receptionists, in particular, do their very best to resolve all the queries and different questions that each patient seems to have. They don't make the rules but they do bear the brunt of people's frustrations, fears and impatience.

Shouting and swearing at them won't make anything different happen – **except that patients who are abusive will be removed from the practice list.**

If you feel that you have been mistreated, please ask the receptionist for the Complaints Procedure and the practice will look at and take your concerns seriously.





The bottom of Montague Street Open Space

A Walk in the Park

Few of us need to be told that physical activity, preferably outdoors and in green spaces, is good for our physical and mental well-being

If you want to know just how much, look at these statistics from a 2022 World Health Organisation (WHO) report.

If most days you walk for 30 minutes or cycle for 20, you can reduce your risk of death by 10%.

If you walk or cycle to work you can reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 30%.

But how and where can we fit in that daily practice if we live within the inner ring of the catchment area serving the Porter Brook Medical Centre?

Fortunately, patients registered here live near some of Sheffield's best-known and much-loved parks and green spaces, as the catchment inner ring stretches from Nether Green in the west to Heeley in the east and Kelham Island in the north to Beauchief in the south.

The open space and wildlife habitat visible from the surgery, (as seen in the photo above) is always open and also has the climbing rock on it. Next to it, the General Cemetery is under extensive repair and conservation work, making this Grade II* listed park even more appealing and accessible. The cemetery remains open and the work there is scheduled to finish this spring.

With our backs to the city centre, walking through the cemetery we soon reach Endcliffe Park, with its children's playground, extensive playing fields and café, then Bingham Park and Bluebell Wood, the famous Forge Dam with its playground and café. From there it's out onto the open countryside. Alternatively, if we leave the cemetery via the gatehouse, soon after crossing Ecclesall Road, we come to the Botanical Gardens.

Those with time, energy and good mobility might want to continue up to and across the surgery's inner-ring boundary to arrive at Western Park, the city's first municipal park and another green space with a Grade II listing. It houses the Western Park Museum, Mappin Art Gallery and tennis courts. All the parks apart from the General Cemetery have toilets. Endcliffe and Western Parks also have cafes.

A thirty-minute walk (or ten-minute cycle) heading south from Porter Brook Medical Centre will bring you to Meersbrook Park. On the way you can meander through and reccy various pocket parks and green activity areas: Highfield Adventure Playground; Mount Pleasant Park; Lowfield Park with its outdoor city run route; Heeley City Farm, which has a café, plant shop, animals, volunteer opportunities and more; Heeley People's Park with its climbing boulder, BMX track, mountain bike track and adventure playground. Each of these merits a visit depending on what activity you're after – from bouldering to having a coffee with friends.

If you get as far as Meersbrook Park, a smallish park set on a steep hillside, offering fantastic views over the city, you have a number of options: there's a playground, an all-weather football pitch, a skatepark, a tennis court, a bowling green, and two historical buildings; timber-framed Bishops House and Meersbrook Hall. The hidden gem of this green space, and



Highfields Adventure Playground one which I've only recently discovered, is to be found within Meersbrook Park's walled garden: the award-winning Japanese Garden.

A key part of outdoor physical activity for our health is breathing fresh, clean air. Air pollution is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide. It's linked to multiple diseases, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and stroke, as well as covid. So do try to get yourself, your family and friends outside and enjoy the spring when it finally arrives.

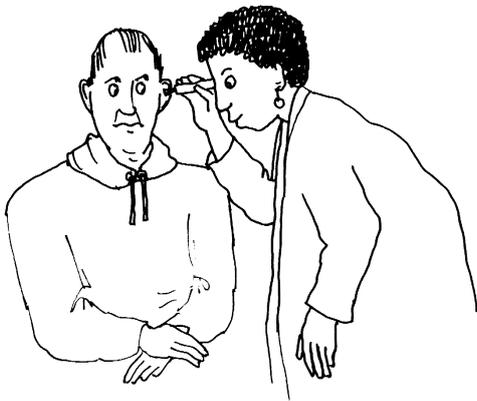
This article was written by Julia Podziewska, one of the Patient reps. To find out more about the Patients Group see page 8



No stopping them

Katie Fearn started working at Porter Brook Medical Centre as a receptionist in 2019. Here she tells us how she got to where she is today.

“ I had a real interest in becoming a clinical member of staff. Through hard work, dedication and opportunities, I progressed into a phlebotomist role. Though finally in a clinical role, I was eager to learn more and so took the opportunity to do the Health Care Assistant (HCA) apprenticeship. I finished this in early 2022 and have been working as an HCA since.



It's my job to do things such as blood tests, blood pressure checks, reviews for long term conditions, basic dressings and wound care, assist with minor operations, coil clinics and ear irrigations. Each patient will have a care plan and the tasks

will have been delegated to me by a more senior clinician such as a GP or nurse.

Alongside this I work as a GP assistant (GPA). This is a new role in primary care and the idea is to take admin jobs away from the GPs allowing them to spend more of their time with patients. A lot of the work happens behind the scenes to make sure that patients get the best care and have the maximum amount of access to appointments.

So far, I have supported the covid vaccination programme, and taken the lead in organising the monthly menopause clinic. I keep the housebound list to ensure that these patients are up-to-date with their reviews. I also oversee the planning of in-house training sessions and audits.

I hope to be starting my Trainee Nursing

Associate

Apprenticeship Programme in the future which will allow me to further my knowledge and progress in my career. ”

Hannah Sanderson is a registered nursing associate (also known as an NA) at Porter Brook Medical Centre. A nursing associate bridges the gap between a nurse and a health care assistant.

She joined the practice in November 2021 and says,

“ I absolutely love working here. Before this, I did my training on an acute mental health ward and have also worked for a private ambulance company. ”

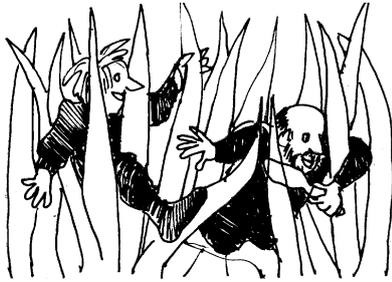
As an NA her daily tasks include wound care, phlebotomy and physical reviews for long term conditions such as asthma. She reviews contraception, discusses travel vaccinations with patients, and more.

She is currently studying with the Open University to 'top-up' from NA to a registered nurse, and should have completed her studies by May 2024.



Green prescribing

For many of us, the covid pandemic highlighted how important being outdoors was in helping to maintain our mental and physical health.



Green social prescriptions are for nature-based activities to help people's mental health.

These activities may include outdoor physical activities such as cycling or local walking for health schemes, community gardening or food growing projects, and meditation in green and blue spaces. These prescriptions allow GPs, other health and care practitioners and local agencies give people time to focus on what really matters to them as individuals.

Porter Brook is excited to be starting work with local

organisations to establish some such projects. The practice already has link workers – Community Support Workers, who are signposting patients to physical activities and some green projects to improve their health and well-being.

The NHS Long Term Plan commits to significantly expanding the number of social prescribing link workers. Watch this space!

Weight Management

Obesity is a serious health condition which increases the risk of many other conditions including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, joint problems, mental health problems and some cancers. Some evidence suggests that obesity may result in more severe health complications associated with covid.

The new **NHS digital weight management programme** offers online access to weight management services to those living with obesity who also have either diabetes, hypertension or both.

The programme is designed to help you develop healthier eating habits, be more active and lose more weight. However, you will only be able to access the programme if you have a smartphone or computer with internet access.

With the weight management programme, you can take control of your weight and significantly reduce further health risks all in your own time, at your own pace.

You will need to be referred to the programme by your general practice. You will then be sent an email or text message which will contain a link to a website giving you access to the available programmes.

From the website, you'll be asked to provide information to find most suitable programme for you!

You can read about the different 12-week programmes on offer to help make positive changes to your health and choose the one that you think will work best for you.



Once you've chosen your provider, your information will be passed on to them and they should be in contact within 10 days. You will then be able to begin your 12-week weight loss programme.

News from the Practice

During the lockdown NHS England asked practices to provide essential health care only. This meant that most of the routine reviews for long-term conditions were put on hold. Since April 2022 reviews have restarted. But most of these are overdue so please book in for your review if you receive an invite from the practice.

The new website has gone live. It is hoped that this will make it easier for patients to get in touch with the practice and also see live updates of events or happenings at the practice. Practices everywhere have struggled to fill vacancies and cope with staff absences. Porter Brook has faced the same but still managed to provide services and retain staff.

Under a new NHS scheme additional funding has been allotted to groups of practices that now work together in 'networks'. The funding is to provide alternate roles to support GP practices recruiting doctors and nurses, and the newer roles, such as the practice pharmacy team, nurse associate or physician associates.

Come to the Roadshow and find out more.

Are you interested in joining the **Patient and Practice Participation Group?**

We are particularly interested in recruiting students, young people, parents with young children and speakers of other languages to join the group.

As a member of this group you can get involved in initiatives such as working on this newsletter.

For more information contact
prg.porterbrookmc@gmail.com

Coming soon

The Porter Brook Medical Centre and local community organisations are planning a **Free**

HEALTH AND WELLBEING ROADSHOW

There will be:

Health checks and screening
Help to register on the NHS app.
Local organisations with information
A large range of exercise and activities including Zumba, Tai Chi, and Yoga for everyone whatever your age or current fitness level
with tea, coffee and light snacks

Patient Survey

You can help the practice prepare for if or when there is more money available. There should be a Patient Survey that comes with this newsletter, but if you haven't got one you can get it here ▲



Family and Friends



And you can help the practice meet its requirement from NHS England by filling in the Friends and Family Test form. ◀ You can find that here