

SURGERY NEWS - WINTER 2024

It's been a busy Summer and Autumn!

❖ STAFF UPDATE!

- New receptionists Katy and Amanda started at Guildhall during the summer....and you may remember Jo, who used to work at the surgery and has returned! Also a welcome back to Ashleigh who has returned after her maternity leave!
- Sarah our reception manager went on maternity leave at the end of August and now has a beautiful little girl....
- Lucy, our previous HCA, completed her nursing placement with us during the summer and after taking her exams, is now a qualified Registered General Nurse at the surgery....
- Finally, Selina, our new HCA started with us in September.

Welcome and Congratulations!

- ❖ **NEW WEBSITE** – Hopefully you have now seen and had a chance to explore our new style website that went live on 01 August. We hope you are finding it easier to manoeuvre around and find the information you are looking for. If you have any comments or suggestions for the website (or any other matter), please do complete one of our patient questionnaires in the ground floor waiting room, so we can continuously improve the surgery and services.
- ❖ **MACMILLAN CAKE MORNING 27 SEPTEMBER** – Did you enjoy one of the mouth-watering, delicious cakes and cookies we had? Sincere thanks to all the staff, family and friends who baked, donated and helped on the day. We are very proud to have raised £296.23 for the charity.



- ❖ **AUTUMN / WINTER COVID-19 & INFLUENZA FLU CLINICS** – We held two weekend clinics recently for Guildhall, Wickhambrook and Glemsford patients. Out of the 952 appointments available to Guildhall patients, 758 were booked with 85 appointments not attended. A **BIG** thank you to all those that contributed to the preparation and running of these clinics and Guildhall partners for providing them lunch and refreshments throughout the day. The campaigns run until 20 December 2024 for Covid and 31 Mar 2025 for Flu. There is still time to get vaccinated (20 December 2024 for Covid and 31 Mar 2025 for Flu) so, if you are eligible – please contact the surgery for an appointment:-

The NHS recommends flu vaccination for several groups:

- Everyone aged 65 years and over
- Individuals under 65 with certain medical conditions, including children and babies over 6 months of age
- All pregnant women
- All children aged 2 and 3 years (provided they were aged 2 or 3 on 31 August 2024)

- All primary school children (provided by Community School Nursing Team who also run a catch-up programme)
- Some secondary school children (Years 7 to 11)
- Care home residents
- Carers
- Those living with people who are immunocompromised
- Frontline health and social care workers

❖ **CHECK IN SCREEN** – We are still waiting for the supplier to implement the option to opt out of inputting a mobile and / or home number if you do not have one – please bear with us.
Always feel free to speak to the reception team or complete a suggestion form, so we can do our best to rectify any additional issues with the supplier.

❖ **PCN UPDATES** – On 1st October, the Integrated Care Board approved a request for Wickhambrook, Guildhall and Glemsford practices to form a new Primary Care Network (PCN):- West Suffolk Rural (WSR) PCN, led by Wickhambrook GP and PCN clinical director Dr Jon Ferdinand. This change is a result of Long Melford practice's move to Haverhill PCN. Wickhambrook, Guildhall, Glemsford and Long Melford (WGGL) PCN has been dissolved.

As part of the PCN contract, we are required to work in collaboration with Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT's). These teams bring together multi-disciplinary professionals from different organisations across health and care services; aiming to deliver joined up preventative care at a neighbourhood level. Katy Cowling, Education and Wellbeing Improvement Lead, will be working closely with Sudbury, Haverhill and North Essex INT's to identify, support and implement outreach clinics, offering health checks for severely frail patients in rural areas.

❖ **DID NOT ATTENDS (DNA)** – between 03 June and 31 October we had a huge **296** appointments that were not attended – that works out at over **3** per day! Please do check your appointment day/time and if you are unable to attend – **PLEASE DO LET US KNOW** so we can re-allocate it. Did you know that we have a cancellation line where you can leave a message when the surgery is open (see table below for info)?

❖ **Zero Tolerance Policy** – Unfortunately, there have been a couple of incidents lately at the surgery, where our staff have been verbally abused. Our practice staff are here to help you and our aim is to be as polite and helpful as possible; we would ask you to treat our staff the same. If you consider you have been treated unfairly or inappropriately, we will be happy to address your concerns. However, shouting and swearing at practice staff will not be tolerated under any circumstances and patients who are abusive will be issued with a written warning and may be removed from the patient list.

❖ **LEAD PRACTICE NURSE JODIE SAYS**

Hello to all ☺

There has been a few changes within the nursing team here at Guildhall since our last newsletter. We have had Lucy join us as a newly qualified nurse after she completed and passed her nurse training in the summer, well done Lucy! We are very pleased to welcome Lucy to our nursing team at Guildhall; she is and will be, a great asset.

We also have a new HCA (Health Care Assistant) Selina, who joined us at the start of September; some of you may already have had the pleasure of meeting her! Selina is new to the role of a HCA but has extensive experience in healthcare and we are very pleased to also welcome her to our team.

With Lucy and Selina joining us, along with myself and practice Nurse Sandra, our nursing team at Guildhall is now complete and we hope that you, our patients, will see the benefits of this moving forward.

As we are heading into the throws of winter, I wanted to remind you on additional ways to help keep yourself protected during the colder weeks to come. Those who are at most risk from the cold weather include:-

- People who are aged 65 and over
- Babies and children under the age of 5
- People on low income (so cannot afford heating)
- People who have a long term condition
- People with a disability
- Pregnant women
- People who have mental health conditions.



If you fall into any of these categories, it is even more important that you have your annual flu and Covid-19 vaccinations. If you have not had these vaccines yet and are eligible for them, please do call and speak to reception to get these done.

Please see the NHS link for further advice on winter health @ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well/>.

On the 1st September we started giving the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine to those of our patients who are older adults. Those who turn 75 and those already aged 75-79 and woman who are 28 weeks pregnant or more, are all eligible for this free vaccine to protect them from the RSV. This virus is an infectious disease of the airway and lungs and in some cases, can lead to pneumonia and other life-threatening conditions. Some of you may have had a call from us to invite you in for this vaccine and we have seen a good uptake so far. Although the RSV infection can occur all year round, cases do peak every winter. Therefore if you fall into any of the above cohorts and you have not been offered the RSV vaccine yet, please do call and speak to reception to book your appointment.

All year round our busy admin team are inviting those of you with a long term condition (LTC) for an annual review on the month of your birthday. An LTC for example, is if you have a condition such as diabetes, hypertension (high blood pressure), asthma COPD etc. When your birth month is coming up you will receive a call from our team who will advise you on the process and anything we need you to do prior to an appointment i.e. blood tests, home blood pressure readings etc. You will then have an appointment booked for you with the appropriate clinician (usually a nurse) to complete your LTC review. These reviews are an essential part of the ongoing management of your condition/s and an opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have - so please do attend.

Lastly I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I hope you all enjoy the festivities with your loved ones, eat, drink and be merry! And most importantly keep well and healthy.

Lots of Christmas wishes and cheer.

Jodie

BUSINESS AS USUAL

APPOINTMENTS

If you do need to contact us for an appointment, our care navigators / reception team will triage your request and ask you for a description of your symptoms; THIS IS AT THE GP'S REQUEST and will assist in enabling the team to provide you with the right appointment with the most appropriate member of our clinical team. This also includes the need for any urgent / same day appointments.

VACCINATIONS

PNEUMONIA

Everyone over the age of 65 and those with certain underlying medical conditions will be called for a pneumonia vaccination throughout the course of the year. Did you know this vaccine can also help fight septicaemia and Meningitis? If you are on the fence about having the vaccination, please go to <https://www.pneumoaware.co.uk/> for more information or call the surgery to book an appointment with the nurse.



SHINGLES

Patients who qualify (see table) will continue to be called systematically to allow for the allocated and restricted amount of vaccinations we can order at a time. You can get shingles more than once, so it's important to get vaccinated even if you've had shingles before.

- People aged 70 to 79
- People who turn 65 on or after September 2023
- People aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system

HPV (Human papillomavirus)

All children from year 8 are eligible for free HPV vaccination at school as part of the NHS national vaccination programme. However, some children may have missed the vaccination. If you are 18-24 and have not had the vaccination, you can still get it before your 25th birthday. Please call the surgery to book/discuss with the nursing team.

Turning 70?

ELIGIBLE FROM (YOUR BIRTHDAY)	DATES OF BIRTH	PROGRAMME START DATE	PROGRAMME YEAR
± 70 th	1 September 1953 – 31 August 1954	1 September 2023	Year 1
	1 September 1954 – 31 August 1955	1 September 2024	Year 2
	1 September 1955 – 31 August 1956	1 September 2025	Year 3
	1 September 1956 – 31 August 1957	1 September 2026	Year 4
	1 September 1957 – 31 August 1958	1 September 2027	Year 5

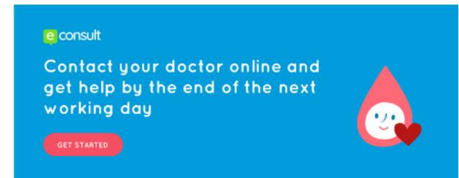
Turning 65?

ELIGIBLE FROM (YOUR BIRTHDAY)	DATES OF BIRTH	PROGRAMME START DATE	PROGRAMME YEAR
± 65 th	1 September 1958 – 31 August 1959	1 September 2023	Year 1
	1 September 1959 – 31 August 1960	1 September 2024	Year 2
	1 September 1960 – 31 August 1961	1 September 2025	Year 3
	1 September 1961 – 31 August 1962	1 September 2026	Year 4
	1 September 1962 – 31 August 1963	1 September 2027	Year 5

WEBSITE

Please visit our website (www.guildhallsurgery.co.uk) for a host of information, forms and links, including:-

- how to register for GP online services;
 - o NHS app can be used to view your medical information, request medication as well as making appointments.
 - o 'E' Consult requests can be used to receive advice and guidance for a health concern or medical condition as well as requesting repeat medical certificates such as sick notes.
- Consent - If you need to act ON BEHALF OF ANOTHER PERSON or discuss their care with us, we will need a 'Consent to Disclose Health Information' form completed by the person and witnessed by a 3rd party. The form is available in the 'Further Information_ Data Protection & Patient Health Record Information' section of our website (alternatively a copy of the form can be collected from reception). Unfortunately WITHOUT this, NO member of our team will be able to disclose information or discuss patient care with a third party.
- Feel Good Suffolk (<https://feelgoodsuffolk.co.uk/>) is a new way to support people in Suffolk to improve their health and wellbeing; stop smoking, manage your weight and be more active.

**PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)**

Our PPG helps to communicate to us the views and perceptions from our patients of the services that we provide as well as ideas about how we could improve our service. Our Facebook page is very active and we are making it more interactive. Questionnaires are also always available in paper form in our downstairs waiting area. We also encourage our patients to visit our Facebook and Website for information, updates and general health information and news.



REMINDERS

HOME VISITS

If you are housebound and require a home visit, it is important that you telephone the Surgery before 11am. You will still be asked for a description of your symptoms and in some cases a clinician may also telephone you prior to a visit for further details.

LONG TERM CONDITIONS & MEDICATION REVIEWS

If you have diagnosed long term condition/s (e.g. arthritis, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, angina, heart failure, high blood pressure), the Surgery will be in touch to make an appointment for your annual review (by month of birth order). For annual medication reviews, please contact the Surgery for an appointment (review dates are detailed on repeat prescription form/s).

In some cases, blood test results will be required prior to these reviews and if necessary, a blood test form will be provided for you to book directly. Your review will need to be scheduled in line with test result availability.

PRESCRIPTION REQUESTS & QUERIES

Your repeat prescription request is required in writing via the prescription post box located at the side of the surgery, or via the NHS app or online service. Patients should order their repeat medication when they have 7 days of medication left.

Our prescription team CANNOT take medication requests over the telephone; this is to minimise the risk of a potential error.

Please allow TWO working days for your prescription to arrive at your nominated Pharmacy (allowing additional time over bank holidays). Your Pharmacy may be able to sign you up for text alerts when your prescription is ready to collect.

For more information please visit: - [Prescriptions - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

For prescription or medication *queries*, please phone our dedicated PRESCRIPTION LINE (see below) and/or leave a message on their answering service and they will call you back (our Reception team will not be able to help you).

**CLINIC AND DISCHARGE LETTERS**

At time of your **discharge** from hospital, you will have been provided with your regular medication as a 'TTO' (To Take Out). Any medication amendments will be reconciled by the Surgery, upon receipt of your discharge letter.

At your **clinic** appointment the Consultant might suggest prescribing new medicines for you or might want to make changes to the medicines that you are already taking. The Consultant is responsible for giving you the first prescription to collect from the hospital pharmacy.

Our Doctors will only be able to continue prescribing this medication if the consultant requests this in a written clinic letter. This process usually takes around TWO weeks upon receipt of the clinic letter.

Private Consultants may suggest medications to patients which would not normally be prescribed by NHS GPs. If either the Consultant or your GP informs you that this is the case, then you will need to contact your Consultant directly to organise prescriptions.

For more information please visit: - [Being discharged from hospital - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

SAMPLES

If you have been asked by one of our team to supply a urine, stool, sputum sample etc., these need to be back to the Surgery before 12:00pm / mid-day.

INFECTION CONTROL

Guidance from the government and NHS regarding infection control measures in the Surgery have not changed and we would request patients to continue to be vigilant along with their hand hygiene. Please **DO NOT** attend the surgery if you have **Covid 19** symptoms **OR diarrhoea and vomiting** but instead request a telephone appointment or complete an [eConsult](#) on our website. This will help to protect our staff and vulnerable patients. For the latest information on these subjects, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-symptoms-and-what-to-do/> and <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>.

INFORMATION

01787 277523 - Monday – Friday (exc. Bank Holidays)	
Opening Times	08:00 – 18:30
Surgery Times	09:00 – 12:00 & 15:30 – 18:00
Reception Telephone Lines	08:30 – 13:00 & 14:00 – 18:30
Appointments & Cancellation Messaging Service - Option 1	
Prescriptions - Option 2	10:00 – 13:00
Secretarial - Option 3	14:00 – 16:00
Test Results - Option 4	16:00 – 18:30
Reports – Option 5	14:00 – 16:00
General Enquiries – Option 6	08:30 – 13:00 & 14:00 – 18:30

Integrated Care Board (ICB) Training Events

The Guildhall Surgery WILL BE CLOSED on the following days & times in 2025:-

- ❖ 12:30pm Wednesday 05 March until 8am Thursday 06 March 2025
 - ❖ 12:30pm Thursday 22 May until 8am Friday 23 May 2025
 - ❖ 12:30pm Tuesday 15 July until 8am Wednesday 16 July 2025
 - ❖ 12:30pm Thursday 25 September until 8am Friday 26 September 2025
 - ❖ 12:30pm Tuesday 25 November until 8am Wednesday 26 November 2025
- If you need advice for any minor ailments, please see your local Pharmacist.
 - If you require urgent medical attention, please contact 111.
 - If you have a life threatening medical emergency please call 999 immediately.

Useful Websites:-

Guildhall Surgery website	www.guildhallsurgery.co.uk
Find us on Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/GuildhallsurgeryClare/
Government COVID 19	https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus
Flu injections	www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/
Current Prescription and Pre-Payment Certificate Charges	https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions/nhs-prescription-charges/

WISHING YOU ALL A WONDERFUL AND HEALTHY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

The Guildhall Surgery Team