



WEST ROAD MEDICAL
CENTRE

Fair Care For All

WELCOME TO OUR *Newsletter*

DECEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

Meet a staff member...

Pharmacy Technician

We have a Specialist Pharmacy Technician, Joe, at the surgery.

The Pharmacy Technician supports the team to make sure medicines are given safely and correctly. This includes repeat prescriptions, controlled drugs, and helping with medication reviews. They also work with pharmacists in the community and hospitals.

Their work can include:

- Checking prescriptions
- Carrying out medicine audits
- Updating medicines after a patient leaves hospital

Pharmacy Technicians are an important part of the primary care team. They help make medicines safer, improve efficiency, and support better patient care.



Welcome, Dr Al-Khabouri!

Dr Al-Khabouri is a Salaried GP here at the practice, she joined us in October 2025. You may very well have met her already!

She enjoys cooking, crocheting, aerial fitness, and jogging.

Dr Al-Khabouri's health tip is:

Find one form of physical activity you enjoy and make it a habit. Whether it's dancing, running marathons, or gardening, a small positive change can have a big impact on your physical and mental wellbeing.



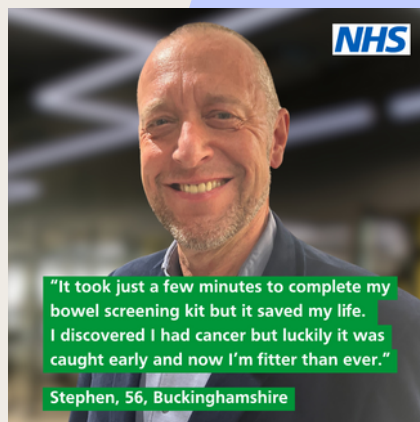
Bowel Cancer Screening

Is your bowel cancer screening kit sitting at the back of a drawer?

If you're 50 to 74, you should have received your NHS bowel cancer screening kit (also known as a FIT kit) through the post. That's because the NHS will automatically send you a kit every two years. Out of every 5,000 people who use their test kit, nine turn out to have cancer. But if it's spotted earlier, the chances of recovering from bowel cancer are higher.

The test can be done in the comfort of your home and only needs a tiny sample of poo to test for signs of cancer. So, dig out the bowel cancer testing kit that you hid in that bottom drawer. Or, if you haven't received it yet, look out for it in the post. And then put it by the loo.

Don't put it off. Find out more about bowel cancer screening at nhs.uk/bowel.



"I've always been in good health and eaten well so I never thought I'd get cancer. But I did.

When I received an NHS bowel screening home test kit in the post I made sure I completed it.

I assumed everything would be ok... but a couple of weeks later I was invited for a colonoscopy and they found a malignant tumour in my bowel. I couldn't believe it - I had no symptoms.

It turned out I had stage 2 bowel cancer. I was devastated.

Soon after, I had bowel surgery. It was successful and luckily the cancer hadn't spread. I've recovered and have started boxing. I feel as fit as I was before my diagnosis and surgery.

If you do have bowel cancer, finding out early is crucial because the sooner it's found, the better the outcome.

So, if you've got a test kit at home in the back of a drawer, do it today. The chances are there's nothing to worry about. But it might just save your life!"

WRMC Drop-in sessions

In our neighbourhood there is a very low uptake of childhood immunisations. This is very dangerous and we have had cases of children with measles for the first time in decades. Measles is an illness that can kill. It can also be prevented by immunising your child. We also have low uptake of cervical screening. Cervical screening can save your life.



We have tried some 'drop in' clinics to give everyone the opportunity to book in for these important appointments without needing to book in advance. The next dates are: 9th December (evening), 13th January (evening) and 6th December (Saturday) 10th January (Saturday).

Patients do not need to wait for these drop in clinics. If you are told you or your child are due please speak to us to book in, or ask reception if the nurse can 'fit you in' on the day you are here without an appointment. These are so important.

Your Health Matters is a pilot project run by West Road Medical Centre and Riverside Community Health Project. The programme helps Romanian, Czech, and Slovak families use health services and feel confident about their wellbeing. Our Family & Community Practitioners, Linda and Delia, work closely with patients. They give support one-to-one and in groups.

- Understand how to use health and digital tools like the NHS App
- Attend important screenings and appointments



Here are some ways they support the community:

- 🌐 Language support so patients can talk confidently with healthcare staff
- 📱 Help using digital tools like the NHS App and eConsult to book and manage appointments
- 🗣️ Explain what health, welfare, and community services are available and how to access them
- ✉️ Support with forms, letters, and self-referrals
- 💬 Organise group activities like the Women's Group, which helps women connect, feel well, and have fun

Linda and Delia's work makes a big difference. They help people feel confident, independent, and connected in the community.

Are you missing out on help?

- of your age
- you are named on an award for a certain benefit
- you have a valid exemption certificate

If you're not automatically entitled, the eligibility checker will show you other help available, including the NHS Low Income Scheme or Prescription Prepayment Certificates.

If you claim free NHS prescriptions when you're not entitled, you could have to pay a penalty charge of up to £100. Check before you tick www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check



Can you claim free NHS prescriptions?

Check if you're eligible

Scan the QR code or go to
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check



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Check before you tick 



Join Our Patient Participation Group

A PPG is a group of patients who work with the surgery to make things better for everyone – patients, doctors, and staff.

As a PPG member, you can:

-  Speak up for other patients and carers
-  Share your ideas and feedback
-  Help us understand patient experiences
-  Learn how the surgery and the NHS work
-  Play a part in improving our services

If you are interested in joining our PPG group, ask for a sign up sheet at the reception desk

We wrote to all of our PPG members recently to ask them what feedback they have about our new appointments system, and what things they want the practice to focus on in the next 12 months.

Appointments system

60% told us the new 'e consult' appointments system is easier than what we had before. This is great news. We want to work with all of our patients to help them use the new system.

Looking ahead to the next 12 months

The PPG survey asked us to look at:

1. Making it easier to get an appointment
2. Make sure appointments are available for people who can't use technology.

The PPG also asked us to communicate with them via surveys rather than meetings. We will do this to capture as many views as possible.

We will do this in the following ways:

1. We will put on more 'drop in' sessions to help patients use the NHS app – bring your device and we will show you what to do.
2. Advertise the exceptions to our 'e consult' first system for those who genuinely can't use it to make sure everyone knows how to contact us.
3. Constantly review our staffing levels and appointment data to meet demand as best we can. This will include referring patients to the pharmacy for minor illnesses, or to the TIMS service for musculoskeletal issues. This saves GP time for patients that need it.
4. Asking patients to cancel their appointments if they don't need them. This could free up over 230 appointments with per month (equivalent to over 8 days of clinical time).

We would really like to have as many patients in our PPG as possible. We know lots of you have views about the practice and joining the PPG is a great way to work with us to shape the practice. Surveys are usually sent by text message so there isn't a big time commitment. Please consider joining us today!

Appointment System – Mythbusters

Recently, we surveyed patients to ask what they thought of our e consult system. The responses were very helpful and we have been able to answer a lot of questions posed to us. Some of these are below. We hope you find them useful. If you have any questions about our appointments system you can ask any member of staff.

1. I always have to wait on hold for ages to get through to the surgery

FALSE!

We have a 'callback' function. If you call us and there is a wait, you will be offered a call back instead. No more waiting on hold! Using E consult means you don't need to call in at all for an appointment.

3. Using E consult first means my query is looked at more quickly than before and is sent to the right clinician first time.

TRUE!

Every e consult is triaged by a senior clinician within 24 hours and any follow up needed is arranged there and then.

5. Appointments are hard to get because the practice takes on too many patients.

FALSE!

We are not permitted to close our 'books' to new patients, it is not a decision the practice can make. We can apply to do this in very specific circumstances which have not occurred in our practice. We do monitor patient numbers closely including the numbers of patients who leave each month.

2. My elderly relatives can't get an appointment because they are forced to use online e consult and they don't know how to do it.

FALSE!

We understand that there are barriers to e consult. If you are over 75 you are automatically flagged on our system as someone who can ring up to book an appointment. This also applies to patients in other given circumstances. For these patients things are improved because we are receiving over 600 less calls per week and they can access us more quickly. Being over 70 doesn't stop you using e consult, in fact we have many patients over this age who use it and find it works very well!

4. It is harder to get an appointment than ever before!

FALSE!

Our new appointments system has improved patient access, and it has nearly halved the wait time for a 'routine' appointment. This is allowing more patients to be booked in with the person who has seen them before as well, improving continuity.

6. E consult has lots of questions – too many

FALSE!

These questions are designed to make e consult safe. We do not get any say in the way e consult works, but, the questions are there to highlight symptoms that are more concerning than others.