

# POTTERELLS PATIENT GROUP NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2022



## Chairman's Welcoming Remarks

As we now exit the worst of the Pandemic, this Newsletter provides an opportunity to extend a warm thank you, not only to the Potterells Team, but also to you, the patients who have played your part in supporting Potterells through adapting to zero 'face to face appointments', to getting to grips with telephone consultations and to the online Econsult.

The Potterells Team have worked tirelessly during difficult times and as human beings, have not been immune to catching the worst of Covid-19.

Thank you also to the Potterells Patient Group who recruited around 50 volunteers to assist with the 'jabbing' at the University hub; many of you received your jabs there and we are pleased with the positive feedback received.

**Martin Connolly (Potterells Patient Group)**

## Website and Social Media

A functioning, easy to navigate up to date website is much needed at Potterells, it should be the 'Go to' for most information. The existing one is not patient friendly and is in need of a make-over. It is a great way to communicate, provides links to much needed information and eliminates the need for patients to contact the surgery. It has becoming obvious that we, as patients, can and should help ourselves by turning to the website to get information and ask questions.

With the re-vamp of our website Potterells is delighted to introduce a new member to the Team who will bring the website to 2022 required levels. We welcome Kirsty Williams who has been appointed Medical Secretary/Digital Administrator. Kirsty has been working behind the scenes and has brought her skillset to this challenge. Currently she is pulling together sections of the site. These are in the background and are not yet visible.

Extensive testing will be needed in order to deliver 'right first time'. I am pleased to say the Patient Group have been involved with input from a patients' perspective.

As part of the remit, Kirsty will be looking at how we as a Practice, can utilise Social Media.

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Once the website is completed the Patient Group will assist at Workshops, specially set up to assist patients to navigate and better understand the various sections.

This is the way forward for our Practice.

## High Street Pharmacies—Update

Pharmacies are now paid to spot signs of cancer in a drive to catch more tumours early and ease pressure on GPs. They are receiving special training so that they will be able to refer customers/patients directly to a specialist for scans and checks on the NHS without the need to see a family doctor first.

**Sick Notes**—It was announced that pharmacies and nurses would be given powers to issue sick notes from July 2022 freeing up GP appointments

## Health Walks

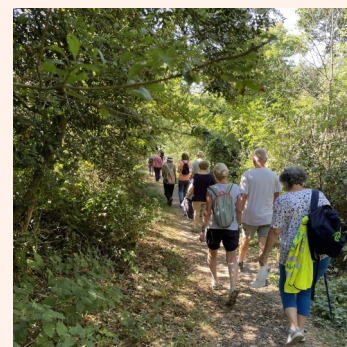
Walking is a real positive for your health. Research shows that walking improves mental and physical wellbeing and can also prevent, help manage and rehabilitate from illnesses.

Hertfordshire Health Walks are an ideal way of taking exercise.

Potterells Patient Group started the 'Brookmans Park Health Walks' in December 2015; 47 people attended. How times flies?

We now organise our walks from the Brookmans Pub in the village. Every Thursday we set off promptly at 10:30am and walk for about 1– 1½hrs following one of the many different walks that have evolved over the last few years.

Walks are FREE and friendly, you will be sure of a warm welcome. ***Come and join us!***



## It's Important to Talk

Sometimes we need to voice how we are feeling or talk through something we are experiencing, but finding someone to speak to isn't always easy. This month during its annual awareness campaign 'Talk to us' the mental health charity Samaritans is reminding us all that they are there for anyone who is struggling to cope—24/7, 365 days a year.

Samaritans can be contacted free by phone on 115 123 or email on [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).

Alternatively you can find your nearest branch on the Samaritans website.

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## Bowel Screening—have you completed yours?

A campaign that launched in West Essex last month encourages those eligible for bowel cancer screening to complete their tests—but the message is relevant wherever you live. Everyone aged 70 to 74 is entitled to free bowel cancer screening every two years. If they are registered with a GP, the test is automatically sent to their home along with instructions and a free return envelope—but only a proportion of people send these back.

Bowel cancer is the 4th most common type of cancer and screening can help prevent it, or find it at an early stage, when it is easier to treat.

To help encourage more people to complete their test, please help spread the work amongst anyone you know who is eligible for the free screening.



**If you are worried about a family history of bowel cancer or have any symptoms, speak to your GP for advice.**

## NHS Structure Changes

Patients may have heard that the NHS has recently introduced structural changes.

Commissioning functions and information that has been previously held by East and North Hertfordshire CCG is transferring to the new NHS **Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board** who will become the new data controller.

The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) was established on 1 July 2022. Its role is to plan and buy healthcare services for 1.5 million people, working closely with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities.

What is very important with anything NHS, is that Patient Voice must be heard, and influence the content of any new structure. Potterells Patient Group are involved in the process of ensuring that patient engagement meets patient needs. Potterells Patient Group will update patients on any changes that affect the surgery and its users.

For further information visit: <https://hertsandwestessexics.org.uk/>

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## Potterells Patient Group (PPG)

The PPG is a active group of volunteer patients who work together with the Practice to represent its patients.

If you are a patient at Potterells and would like to get involved in some way, then please reach out via email at [enhertscg.potterells.patientgroup@nhs.net](mailto:enhertscg.potterells.patientgroup@nhs.net)

Alternatively, give your name to reception at Potterells and we will get in touch

**NB:** We should emphasise that the PPG is *not* a route for complaints about individual issues within the Practice. Please take these up with the Practice Manager or your GP.

## Flu Season - Vaccinations



The UK flu programme will begin from September with all surgeries expected to be fully operational by September 19. Visits to care homes will begin from September 5.

In addition to the flu jab, medical staff will also be issuing the new Covid booster vaccine, which targets the original virus strain as well as Omicron, to those who are eligible.

Our flu and Covid vaccination clinics start from Saturday 24th September

**You will be contacted by the surgery to book your appointment.**

## The lasting effects of COVID-19—Long COVID

There are lots of symptoms that linger on after a COVID-19 infection.

**Contact your GP if you are worried about symptoms that have lasted more than 4 weeks.**

Visit <https://www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk/> for more information.

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## Practice News—from Tracey Mostyn

Potterells is now returning to normality with appointments now 'face to face', with the exception of those patients who now prefer telephone appointments.

On the subject of appointments, do please attend your appointments. Potterells are still getting significant 'NO SHOWS'. This takes an appointment away from someone who needs to see a clinician

Dr Punam SHAH who previously was part of the Salaried GPs, has accepted a partnership and joins as a new Partner to the Practice.



We are Welcoming two new Registrars (trainees) – Mahsa Azar ( Full Time) and Bashir Al Saigh ( Part time registrar) from September and December respectively.

We say goodbye to Dr Madgalena Cybulska and wish her every success as she leaves to continue her training.

Also new to our team are Practice Nurse Beryl Appleby and Stephanie Stratford – sadly we bid farewell to Practice Nurse Sue Rumble who we hope to see periodically as a locum bank nurse in the very near future.

We also welcome two Health and Well-being Coaches who join the Hatfield PCN team in additional support roles.

### An Introduction from Eva and Clare:-

**Eva Wiktorko** : works across four surgeries—Potterells Medical Centre, Wrafton House, Burvill House and Lister House. Her working hours are 9-5pm (flexible hours are available). The role is designed to help patients empower themselves in improving their health and wellbeing, increasing knowledge and skills in order to achieve their goals

**Clare Glenister**: My role as a Coach is to provide our patients with dedicated time to receive support with their health and wellbeing goals. It's an exciting opportunity for patients to increase their confidence, skills, and motivation. I am passionate about helping our patients feel more empowered in managing their own healthcare and lifestyle choices. I work full time in my role and cover all four surgeries in the Hatfield PCN. I look forward to meeting more of our Potterells patients in time.



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## Do you care for someone?

Carers play a **very** important role in the provision of health and social care and we want to help you as much as possible to obtain the support you need. If you look after someone who couldn't manage their day to day life without you — then you are a **CARER**.

Do let the Practice know if you have a caring role.

If you would like further information about Carers or you would like a Carers' Pack contact the Practice and ask to speak to the Carer Champion Telephone No: 01707 278883.

Alternatively contact Carers in Herts at <https://www.carersinherts.org.uk>

## Carers' Afternoon Teas



Our Carer Afternoon teas were suspended during the Covid pandemic. The Practice is looking to reinstate these again in the near future.

Please see the website for updated information on when and where our first post-covid event will take place, or contact the Practice on 01707 273338 and ask to speak to the Carer Champion

Everybody needs a little help sometimes so no matter what is worrying you HertsHelp are only a phone call away. Ring 0300 1234044 and someone will talk with you about your problems and point you in the right direction. Alternatively email: [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net)

## Welham Green Friendship Group

The Welham Green Friendship Group has now restarted.

Meetings are held monthly on Tuesday mornings at 11am at the Sibthorpe Arms, Station Road, Welham Green. Admission is free of charge but a voluntary contribution is requested to cover the cost of tea and coffee.



For further information contact: [sandrenibonfante@gmail.com](mailto:sandrenibonfante@gmail.com)