

# Talkback

**NHS**

**Basildon and Brentwood**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

June 2017

## Welcome

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Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group is a team of GPs and officers who choose and buy most of the NHS health services for Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford. NHS England commission GP services in this locality.

*Hello,*

Welcome to the first edition of **Talkback**, our new monthly patient newsletter. We hope you find the articles informative and interesting and that it gives you an insight into the work being undertaken by Basildon and Brentwood CCG and its partner organisations. Here at the CCG, we are passionate that patients are 'at the heart' of all that we do and we continually strive to engage and involve you in our work.

The NHS is continually changing and adapting to meet the future needs of our local population, so it is more important than ever that your voices are heard and your views are taken into account when decisions are being made about your local health services. If you want to get more involved, then

have a look at the article on page 2 which tells you about taking the first step to join a Patient Participation Group at your GP surgery.

Please circulate **Talkback** to your family, friends and colleagues and if you have any suggestions for future newsletters then just let us know at [bbccg.contact@nhs.net](mailto:bbccg.contact@nhs.net)

*Alison Reeve* - Lay Member, Patient and Public Involvement



## Coughing for 3 weeks? Out of breath easily?

This month the CCG is supporting the **BE CLEAR ON CANCER** campaign to raise awareness of the respiratory symptoms that you should get checked out by your doctor.

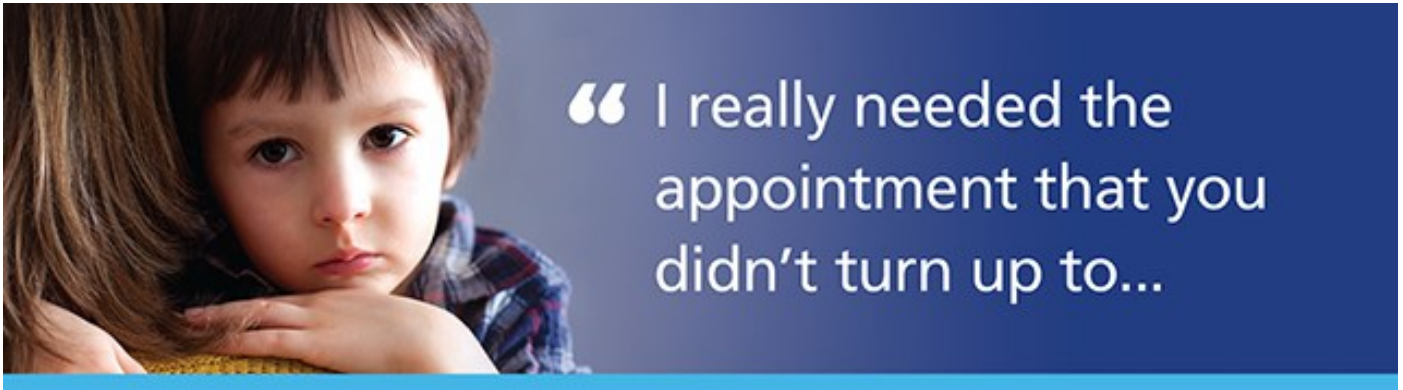
If you've had a cough for three weeks or more, or if you get out of breath doing things you used to be

able to do, it could be a sign of lung cancer or other lung disease or heart disease.



Working for a better NHS for everybody

# 450 hours of GP appointment time are wasted in Basildon and Brentwood every month



**GP appointment?  
Can't make it?  
Don't need it?**

**CANCEL IT!**

**GPs work hard to meet your needs and make it as easy as possible for you to see your doctor.**

But we need you to do your bit letting your GP practice know if you need to cancel or rearrange your appointment.

By cancelling in advance your appointment can be offered to someone else who needs to see a GP.

Missed appointments are contributing to increased waiting times for GP appointments and more people with minor injuries and illnesses are attending local A&E departments.

What you can do?

- **Make a note of your health appointments in a diary, calendar or on your smartphone**
- **Register for online services - speak to your GP practice about how to do this**
- **Ask your GP practice if they have a text message reminder service**

## **Make a difference: come and join your Patient Participation Group**

Would you like to get involved with our campaigns and make a difference in the care patients receive? Your GP surgery has its own small team of people who provide a voice for all patients on the practice's list and work with the GPs and practice staff to improve the way things are run. That team is called a PPG - a **Patient Participation Group**.

Basildon and Brentwood CCG listens to the feedback from the PPGs when making decisions about local health services. Just ask at your GP reception about how you could join your PPG.

# Carers Week 12-18 June

There are 146,000 carers in Essex. Basildon and Brentwood CCG will be joining partnership organisations during National Carers Week (12-18 June) to celebrate and recognise the vital contribution family carers make to our community.

We want everyone to 'Think Carer' to help create more carer friendly communities.

Everyone has a role to play in building communities which support carers to look after their loved ones well, while recognising that they are individuals with needs of their own.

Did you know there are 6.5 million people across the UK who currently provide unpaid care for a disabled, ill or older family member or friend? Many carers are young children. Anyone can be a carer.



For carers, life can be a constant juggling and balancing act, sometimes without a moment's proper rest. Nearly half of carers also work, alongside caring. If you know someone with a caring role - a relative, friend, neighbour, work colleague or employee - could you show support by offering practical and emotional help with their caring role? **Carers Week** is a great opportunity to talk to carers and understand what they do and the impact caring has on them.

If you are a carer, please see the information and advice on the [Living Well Essex](http://www.livingwellessex.org) website at [www.livingwellessex.org](http://www.livingwellessex.org)

You can also contact [Action for Family Carers](http://www.affc.org.uk) at [www.affc.org.uk](http://www.affc.org.uk) acts as a single point of contact in Essex. Call them on **01621 851640** for free and confidential advice.

Find more information on Carers Week at [www.carersweek.org](http://www.carersweek.org) where you can also search for events taking place locally.

## Please buy your own simple painkillers

Prescriptions for paracetamol and other basic over-the-counter medicines are swallowing up NHS money which could be better spent on other healthcare services.

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen can be bought for pennies from pharmacies and supermarkets. They cost the NHS more than six times as much when they are provided on prescription.

That is why we are asking you to purchase basic medicines such as paracetamol and ibuprofen yourself instead of asking your GP for a prescription.

Remember, please talk to your local pharmacist at the first signs of feeling unwell.

## 'Don't forget your green medicines bag' says nurse Emily

Basildon University Hospital medicine management nurse Emily Harris has come up with the simple idea of giving patients a green bag to remind them to bring their medicines to hospital each time they visit.

Patients receive the bags when they are admitted through Accident and Emergency and when they are discharged with medicines to take home.

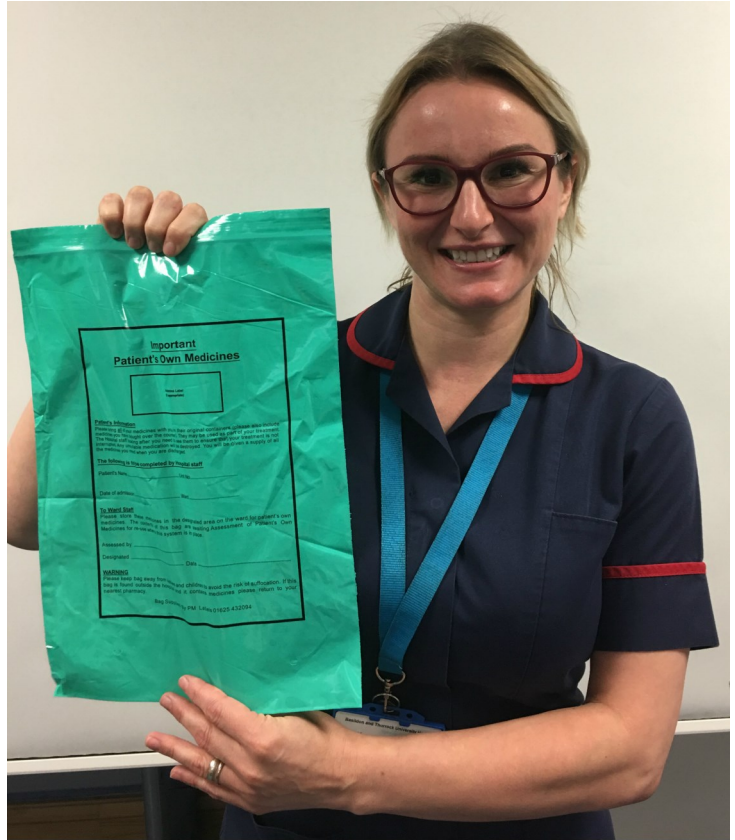
The bags are also available from some GP practices.

The East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST) is working closely with the hospital Trust by checking if patients have their green bag with them.

The bags are large enough to hold several packs of medication in their original boxes and include a space for a patient details label.

The bags are helping to reduce medicines waste as the hospital is not having to prescribe the same drugs a patient has left behind at home.

Emily, who came to a patient meeting at the CCG offices, said: "Our message is grab your green bag before you leave home to come to hospital."



## Cervical Screening Awareness Week 12-18 June

A smear test lasts **5** minutes.

The impact of cervical cancer lasts a lifetime.

Attend your smear test. Reduce your risk.

Jo's cervical cancer trust

Contact us: **0808 802 8000** [jostrust.org.uk](http://jostrust.org.uk)

Registered in England and Wales. Company Limited by Guarantee. 7111375. Registered Charity No. 1133542 / SC041238.

**Every day in the UK 9 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 2 sadly lose their lives.**

Cervical screening (smear tests) can protect against developing cervical cancer yet 1 in 4 women do not attend this potentially life-saving test.

All women registered with a GP are invited for cervical screening:

- aged 25 to 49 - every three years
- aged 50 to 64 - every five years
- over 65 - only women who haven't been screened since age of 50 or those who have recently had abnormal tests.

Being screened regularly means any abnormal changes in the cells of the cervix can be identified at an early stage and, if necessary, treated to stop cancer developing.

If you are called for a smear test, please attend your appointment.

Find further information at [www.jostrust.org.uk](http://www.jostrust.org.uk)

Go to [NHS Choices](#) and search cervical screening

## Your CCG goes out and about at MayFest Basildon

**Basildon and Brentwood CCG joined groups and community organisations at the second annual Basildon MayFest celebration on Saturday 13 May.**

The CCG set up a stall in the Town Square to highlight health campaigns.

Activities included a Human Fruit and Veg Machine game designed to raise awareness of healthy eating and a 'Tipple Test' which used juice and water to demonstrate how much a unit of alcohol actually is.

Men and women should drink no more than 14 units of alcohol a week - the equivalent of six pints of average strength beer or seven glasses of wine - in order to keep their health risks low.

The event coincided with the end of **Dying Matters Awareness Week** (May 7-14) and the **Die Well Essex** campaign which was about encouraging people to start conversations about death, dying and bereavement. Throughout the awareness week, people shared images of loved ones who have passed away.

The CCG would like to thank everyone who took part in the **Die Well Essex** photo conversation on Instagram using the hashtag #DieWellEssex. A selection of the images were displayed at MayFest.

**If you are organising a community event and would like to help the CCG promote health campaigns, please contact [bbccg.contact@nhs.net](mailto:bbccg.contact@nhs.net) or call 01268 594350.**



Winning combination for three lucky cadets



Chain reaction as Mayor visits the CCG stand

### Pop up events in outpatients

If you have an appointment in the outpatients department of Basildon Hospital on the following dates, look out for a pop-up stand run by the CCG and come and say hello.

Patient representatives will be helping the CCG run an information point with advice on the latest health campaigns.

The monthly events are an opportunity for people to talk to the CCG about their experiences of local NHS services or comment on any public consultations.

**Dates:**

Tuesday 6 June  
 Tuesday 4 July  
 Tuesday 1 August  
 Tuesday 5 September

**Times:** 10am-3pm

### Community Voices wanted

The CCG wants to seek out and gather the views of community groups with an interest in health and social care.

We are especially keen to build relationships with minority groups who are often under represented. Our mission is to strengthen community links and talk to groups and organisations at a grassroots level.

We want to start more two-way conversations on how our decisions on health and social care services are affecting people or what impact any planned changes could have in the future.

If you belong to a community group and would like to join our growing network of 'Community Voices', please email [bbccg.contact@nhs.net](mailto:bbccg.contact@nhs.net) or call our main switchboard on 01268 594350.

## Want to know about STPs? A 10-year-old finds out..

A ten-year-old girl is helping to improve understanding of Sustainability and Transformation Plans - STPs.

STPs are plans to overhaul the health and social care system and they are happening all over the country.

Healthwatch Essex chose a ten-year-old girl, Harriet, to quiz NHS bosses on what an STP means, asking them to explain the proposals in simple terms.

You can view Harriet's film *What on earth is an STP?* on the Healthwatch Essex website at [www.healthwatchesessex.org](http://www.healthwatchesessex.org).



Basildon and Brentwood CCG is part of the **Mid and South Essex STP** which is also known as the Mid and South Essex Success Regime. All of the services that provide health and social care in the region are working together on a shared plan for the next five years.



The options are being discussed with local people and everyone will have the chance to have their say in a public consultation later this year. For further information visit [www.successregimeessex.co.uk](http://www.successregimeessex.co.uk)

### Keeping in touch...

NHS Basildon and Brentwood CCG, Phoenix Place, Christopher Martin Road, Basildon SS14 3HG

email: [bbccg.contact@nhs.net](mailto:bbccg.contact@nhs.net)

website: [basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk](http://basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk)

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