



# Three Shires Medical Practice Newsletter

**Summer 2025**

## **Partner Update**

### **Introduction**

I hope you have been able to enjoy the fine Spring weather we have had recently. Like most GP practices in England, we had been eagerly awaiting the arrival of the new GP contract for the coming financial year (2025/2026) in the hope of some positive news regarding the allocation of funding for Primary Care. Some of you may be aware of the various challenges that GP practices have had to deal with over the last few years. In summary, the funding we receive in General Practice has not kept up with increasing demand for our services or with the inflationary costs associated with operating the surgeries.

The Three Shires Practice is particularly vulnerable to the latter, partly due to operating four sites over a large rural area. It was therefore with some relief that we heard that the Department of Health recently announced some increased funding for primary care in this year's contract. Unfortunately, the Treasury has also significantly increased our costs in other areas, such as by increasing our employer's national insurance (NI) contributions. Whilst many NHS organisations, such as hospitals are exempt from this, it was decided that organisations such as GP surgeries would not be.

We operate four sites and so this increase will have a very significant impact on us. Unfortunately, from our initial analysis it would appear that most of the promised additional funding in this year's GP contract will be largely negated by the increased costs brought about by changes from the Treasury e.g., the changes to employers NI contributions.

We understand there are negotiations underway to discuss the future long term GP contract and that this is likely to contain significant changes from the current one. We hope that this new contract brings about a real change to allow us to effectively manage the challenges facing our practices in the longer term.

### **Quality Outcomes Framework (QOF)**

The 'Quality and Outcomes Framework' (QOF) is an annual points-based program for GP surgeries in England that is designed to encourage practices to provide high-quality care for the management of various chronic medical conditions e.g., diabetes, asthma, cardiovascular disease. It does this by

setting various points-based targets regarding the management of these conditions. I am pleased to report that the practice achieved an overall score of 99% for this.

### **Attending other branch sites of the Three Shires Medical Practice.**

We will usually try to deliver your care at the branch of the Three Shires Medical Practice at which you are registered. That would usually be your initial contact point with the practice.

There may be occasions where you will be asked to attend a neighbouring branch for your medical care. (e.g. for a blood test). This may happen if the branch you are registered with is short of appointments and a neighbouring branch has more availability.

At certain times of the year when our staffing levels are reduced (e.g. due to sickness or holidays), you may also be contacted by a health professional from one of our other branch surgeries about your query. They may ask you to attend there if they feel you require urgent care at the time. This would usually only be for that urgent appointment and if further ongoing care is required, this would normally be carried out back at your usual branch surgery.

Please remember that if you have a life-threatening emergency (e.g., severe bleeding, chest pains), it is best to call 999 directly so as not to delay your treatment.

### **Dispensing and time required to process repeat prescriptions (four working days)**

The practice has seen a gradual increase in the number of items it is dispensing over the years. In addition to that, our suppliers are often reporting shortages of certain medication. Please remember to allow at least four full working days for the dispensing team to process your repeat medication request. Please be patient with staff at busy times e.g., around bank holidays as they will be dispensing increased volumes of items over these periods.

It should also be noted that processing patient requests for new medication that has never previously been prescribed by the practice is likely to take longer than four working days (e.g. a new medication that has been advised by a specialist). This is because a clinician at the practice will need to review your medical records and find the documents relating to this request. Also, sometimes there may be a delay from when the patient has their appointment in hospital and the letter from this appointment (with the details of the required medication) eventually reaches us.

*Dr Pedro Pinto*

## **Staff update**

We said goodbye to Practice Nurse Diane Warsinski and Dr Paula Kenwright and wish them both a wonderful retirement. We also said goodbye to Jason Kennedy ANP who has relocated to the North with his family.

Message from Dr Paula Kenwright,

*"I would like to say thank you for all the cards and gifts and for the extremely kind words. I have enjoyed working in the practice for the past 16 years and wish you all a fond farewell and best wishes for the future."*

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## **Disposal of Clinical and Medical Waste**

Our surgeries cannot manage the disposal of sharps or clinical and medical waste. For a Sharps collection, go to the South Gloucestershire website, click on bins and recycling, additional waste services, disposal of clinical and medical waste and there request a Sharps collection.

Infectious or potentially infectious clinical waste, has to be handled, transported, and disposed of, separately. It must not go in your black bin but in bags that the Council will provide on reception of an application form (on the Council website), signed by a health care worker.

Other medical waste such as uninfected items like sanitary and incontinence pads can be put in your black bin.

To talk to someone at South Gloucestershire Council about disposal of Sharps, clinical and medical waste, phone the Council on 01454 868000.

To talk to someone if you live in Wiltshire, either use the link <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/hazardous-clinical-waste> or phone 0300 456 0100. If you live in Bath and North East Somerset Council area, phone 01225 394041 or use the link <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/clinical-or-sharps-waste>

## **Workwell West**

WorkWell is a free support system for people with health conditions who want to return for work, stay in employment or want to find new or different work opportunities. WorkWell is a partnership of local councils, the NHS, and the Department for Work and Pensions, aimed at helping people who live in Bristol, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset to overcome health related barriers to employment. WorkWell seeks to connect people with a wide network of GP's, Job Centres, and community organisations. Their website address is [www.workwellwest.org](http://www.workwellwest.org) and the phone number is 0117 922 3623.

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is about any action taken to promote the welfare and ensure the safety of adults and children at risk of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation. Any organisation with a role in securing and maintaining the health and well-being of adults and children, has a responsibility to ensure that vulnerable peoples' health and well-being is safeguarded.

Safeguarding protects people unable to look after themselves because of age, sickness, infirmity, and/or disability. This includes older people, people living with severe illnesses and adults and children living with physical and/or learning disabilities, life limiting conditions and mental health issues. The principles of safeguarding include empowerment, protection, prevention, and proportionality, aimed at protecting vulnerable people from abuse, harm and neglect.

There are separate policies, procedures and guidance for safeguarding adults and children. Safeguarding duties and responsibilities for vulnerable adults are set out in the Care Act 2014. For children, the legal background is set in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004. Adults and children face some similar but several different risks, so they require different ways of dealing with them.

The overall aims of safeguarding include:

- To stop occurrence of harm, abuse, or neglect to a vulnerable person,
- To reduce the risk of that harm, abuse, and neglect,
- To enable vulnerable people to make choices and have control over their lives and improve their well-being,
- To raise awareness and provide information to enable recognition of abuse, harm, and neglect.

The Care Act identifies ten types of adult abuse, self-neglect, modern slavery, domestic abuse, discrimination, organisational, physical, sexual, and financial abuse, neglect, and emotional / psychological abuse.

Safeguarding is extremely important for care of children as they are particularly vulnerable to abuse, neglect and exploitation. They must be protected from maltreatment and abuse and kept safe from harm to their health and development. Child abuse is defined as any act where a child experiences intentional harm caused by an adult or another child. It includes acts of domestic, emotional, and physical abuse, neglect, bullying and cyberbullying, sexual and criminal exploitation, and trafficking.

So, if you are worried about a child, young person, or adult who you are concerned is being abused or neglected, then please report it. The numbers to call for a child or young person is 01454 866000 and out of working hours 01454 615615. If concerned about an adult call 01454 868007, out of hours 01454 615615. In an emergency use 999. For more information, please go to Safeguarding on the South Gloucestershire Council website.

## Parkinsons

Parkinsons is a progressive neurological condition first identified by James Parkinson in 1817. Parkinsons is caused by a loss of brain cells in the part of the brain called the substantia nigra. These brain cells produce a chemical called dopamine which enables communication between the brain and the part of the nervous system managing body movement.

As these nerve cells become damaged or die, dopamine production in the brain reduces, leading to the part of the brain controlling movement, ceasing to work normally. Research continues, aiming to identify causes, with genetic and environmental factors believed to be the most likely.

Symptoms usually develop gradually, are generally mild at first and tend to be different for each person. The main symptoms of Parkinsons are:

- Involuntary shaking, i.e. tremor,
- Slow movement
- Stiff and inflexible muscles.

Other less common physical and psychological symptoms may include:

- Problems with balance
- Loss of sense of smell
- Insomnia
- Memory problems
- Depression and anxiety
- Dizziness
- Swallowing difficulties and excess of saliva.

There are no specific tests to diagnose Parkinsons; diagnosis will begin with your GP who will probably refer you to a neurologist. While there is no cure for Parkinsons, there are treatments to manage symptoms. Physiotherapy can offer relief from muscle stiffness and joint pain making movement easier and helping maintain independence. Occupational therapists can advise and assist with practical solutions to ensure you stay as safe as possible at home. Speech and language therapists can advise if you have swallowing, excessive saliva, or speech problems.

Medication can help improve some Parkinsons symptoms; a medication which can be absorbed by nerve cells and made into dopamine, can be effective. As with any medication, you can experience side effects so it would be a matter of finding the right medication for you.

Living with Parkinsons does become life changing. It is important to ask for support if you are the person living with Parkinsons and if you are family members and friends who are providing care support. More information about care and support services can be found on the Parkinsons website, [www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk) by phoning 0808 800 0303 or by email [hello@parkinsons.org.uk](mailto:hello@parkinsons.org.uk). Your local Carers Support organisation on 0117 965 2200 if you live in South Gloucestershire or 0800 181 4118 if you live in Wiltshire and Social Services in South Gloucestershire 01454 868007 or Wiltshire 0300 456 0111 can offer information and support.

# **One Big Thank You**

We would like to thank the Friends of Three Shires Surgeries for raising funds for us to be able to buy the following pieces of equipment.



2 New Examination Couches for Marshfield & Pucklechurch



3 New Pulse Oximeters for Colerne, Marshfield & Pucklechurch



2 New ECG Machines for Marshfield and Colerne Surgeries



2 New Clinical Fridges for Marshfield and Wick Surgeries



The Friends of Three Shires continue to fundraise to help us to purchase essential equipment. By the end of May, they had raised in excess of £17,000. As well as the items above, emergency packs, privacy screens and a new defibrillator for each surgery are to be purchased. If you would still like to contribute, the Friends have a Lloyds bank account. Cheques can be made out to Friends of Three Shires, the account details are, sort code 30 99 50 and the account number is 54449863, or you could use this QR code.

## Defibrillator Sites in Three Shires Catchment Area

A defibrillator is a piece of equipment that gives a controlled electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. The shock is called defibrillation, and it can be a vital part of saving the life of someone who is having a heart attack. The best thing that you can do if you come across someone experiencing cardiac arrest is:

- 1. Call 999**
- 2. Start CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), the call handler on the other end of your 999 calls, will tell you what to do.**
- 3. Ask someone to bring the nearest defibrillator.**
- 4. Turn it on and follow the instructions.**



This list has been put together from a defibrillator finder website and with help from PPG members.

**AV** means that the defibrillator should be available at all times.

**RS** means that the defibrillator has restricted access.

### Pucklechurch

1. Community Centre, Abson Road BS16 9RH (AV)
2. Eagle Crescent Play Area BS16 9SE (AV)
3. Village Sports and Social Club St Aldams Drive BS16 9QQ (AV)
4. Between café and shop Westerleigh Road BS16 9RB (RB)
5. Primary School Castle Road BS16 9RT (RS)
6. Parkfield Rank BS16 9NR (AV)

### Shortwood

1. Phone Box on Main Road BS16 9NQ (AV)

### Westerleigh

1. Wall Ye Olde Inne BS37 8QP (AV)
2. Village Hall BS37 8QN (AV)
3. Crematorium BS37 8QP (RS)

### Abson

1. Glebe Cottage BS30 5TT (AV)

### Dyrham

1. Dyrham Park SN14 8EE (RS)

### Doynton

1. Holy Trinity Church village centre BS30 5SU (AV)

### Wick

1. Village Hall off High Street BS30 5RG (AV)
2. Oldbury Lane BS30 5RJ (AV)



**Cold Ashton**

1. Parish Hall SN14 8JU (AV)

**West Littleton**

1. Telephone Box SN14 8JA

**Tormarton**

1. Village Hall GL9 1HU (AV)

**Marshfield**

1. Almshouses Chapel High Street SN14 8LX (AV)
2. Cricket Club Ashwicke Road SN14 8AB (RS)
3. Community Centre The Hayfield SN14 8RA (AV)
4. GP Surgery 2, Back Lane SN14 8NQ (AV)
5. Tennis Club Withymead Road SN 14 8PB (RS)

**North Wraxall**

1. Community Hall SN14 7AF (AV)

**Colerne**

1. Outside Premier Stores Market Place SN14 8PF (RS)
2. Recreation Ground Bath Road SN14 8BZ (RS)

Every effort has been made to ensure that this is an up-to-date list of defibrillators. Please let Mike know of any errors or any defibrillators that we have failed to include. Leave message at Pucklechurch surgery.

## **Healthy Immune Systems**

A healthy immune system is vital in our defence against illness and disease. Keeping your immune system healthy depends on developing and maintaining healthy habits. Those habits include a balanced diet, regular exercise, sufficient sleep, managing stress, keeping well hydrated and good gut health.

Plenty of fruit and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins provide the vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that help to support your immune system.

Regular exercise helps move immune cells around the body. The reparative and regenerative power of sleep is essential for a healthy immune system. Managing stress and drinking plenty of water will be beneficial as will quitting smoking and limiting alcohol consumption.

Several vitamins are crucial for boosting the immune system, these include vitamins A, B6, B12, C, D, E and K. However, before starting any new vitamin supplements, it is vitally important that you take medical advice from a doctor, nurse, or pharmacist.