

# PRESCOTT SURGERY PATIENT NEWSLETTER

July/August 2024

**Latest News from The Surgery – From Nick Storey, Business Manager and Jackie Jones, Chair, The Patient Participation Group.**

## **Important News from your Patient Group (PPG)**

### **Rural Mental Health & Wellbeing**

During July and August the patient group will be initiating a promotional display in the surgery regarding ‘**Rural Mental Health and Wellbeing**’. There will also be a **new A4 binder** in the waiting area containing information and helpful contacts to help any patient who needs support. The GP’s at the surgery are always available to help and provide support to patients.

Our community and neighbouring villages is home to many farmers and their families. Keeping physically and mentally well is so important given all the challenges farming brings. Having the confidence to start conversations about mental health with family, friends, and colleagues, is so important and we need to support people in our community to feel confident talking to each other about how they are feeling. Every farming person matters and deserves to be heard.

There is a lot of support available online and via the telephone. The patient group felt it most important that this support is promoted and the new binder of information will remain in the surgery indefinitely. “**No member of the farming community should have to face adversity alone**” – RABI (Royal Agriculture Benevolent Institution)

### **Dr Helen Whitworth**

The Practice and PPG would like to congratulate Dr Helen Whitworth on recently achieving a Diploma in Herbal Medicine, after 5 years of training with Heartwood Education.

Dr Whitworth has been a GP for 28 years and has worked part-time as a Salaried Partner at Prescott Surgery since 2018. She is a keen organic gardener and has been increasingly drawn to the use of Plant Medicine over time, embracing traditional knowledge and modern research. She will be continuing to work one day a week as a GP but will also work privately with her own Herbalism business in Baschurch. We wish her every success.

### **Jackie Jones, Chair - Prescott Surgery Patient Group**

## **Important News from your Surgery**

### **Changes to the GPs (by Nick Storey)**

In early August we are making a few changes to our GP team to improve access to GP appointments. As mentioned above, Dr Whitworth will be reducing her commitment at the surgery by dropping her Thursday clinic to focus on her new Herbalism business. Dr Roberts will be taking on an additional clinic and will be in practice all day on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Dr Nia Williams who many of you will remember spent a year at the surgery in training, will be joining the team as a salaried GP. Dr Williams will be working all day on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. I am sure that you will join me in wishing Dr Whitworth success in her new venture and in welcoming Dr Williams back to Prescott Surgery.

## Flu & Covid Vaccinations Autumn & Winter 2024 (by Nick Storey)

Although we are still in summer (or waiting for the summer weather to arrive at the time of writing), we have already started putting our autumn flu vaccine campaign plans in place. This year, NHS England will only be making flu vaccines available to GP surgeries and to pharmacies from 1<sup>st</sup> October onwards. This is to ensure that the benefit of the vaccines lasts longer into the winter months. It will not be possible to obtain a flu vaccine anywhere before the start of October.

We will be running 2 dedicated flu clinics on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October and on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October. In September, **we will contact eligible patients to book appointments**. Patients with mobile phones will be able to book appointments through a link received by text message. The flu vaccine will be available to patients aged 18-64 years old who have a chronic health condition and to patients aged 65 and over. For more information on eligibility for the flu vaccine please visit [www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine/](http://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine/) .

We are also hoping to be able to offer the Covid booster vaccine to eligible patients at the surgery at the same time as the flu vaccine. At the time of writing however, NHS England have not provided any information on who will be eligible for a Covid booster vaccine nor when the vaccine will be available. As and when we are able to confirm that we are able to offer the vaccine here at the surgery and soon as we receive more information regarding who will be eligible, we will publish this as a pop-up' on our website [www.prescottsurgery.co.uk](http://www.prescottsurgery.co.uk)

## Why Mental Health Matters (by Dr Guildford)

### Rural Mental Health challenges

It is well known that some mental health problems, such as stress, anxiety, depression and suicide are more common in rural communities. Farmers and other agricultural workers in particular, are known to have higher rates of stress, depression and suicide than other groups. There are multiple potential reasons for this, but key factors include social isolation, stigma about seeking help, lack of awareness of available support services and in some cases lack of local support services.

Within the UK, suicide is the biggest killer of men under 50 years and is responsible for 1 in 4 deaths of men aged under 35. Seeking help for mental health problems can feel very challenging for many people, particularly men and for some, there is still a perception that admitting there is an issue is a sign of weakness. Clearly this is not the case, anyone can be affected at some point in their lives, and we need to get the message across that support is available.

There are a variety of organisations available locally to help with any mental health problems including our surgery. We support patients with a variety of mental health needs daily with GP appointments at the surgery or with our PCN mental health nurses. There are various other alternatives available locally but the teams below are both NHS services, which can be accessed directly by patients:

**Access Team: 0808 196 4501** (this is the contact number for the local mental health team and patients can refer themselves directly if they wish).

**IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies): 0300 123 6020** (this is the local NHS talking therapy service & again patients can refer directly to them).

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**Please do contact the surgery if you have a medical need during our opening hours, Monday to Friday 08.30am-6.00pm. If you have a non-urgent medical query during the evening and weekends that cannot wait until the surgery re-opens, please call 111, this service is available 24 hours. If you have a medical emergency, please dial 999**

**Nick Storey – Business Manager**  
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