

York Medical Practice Patient Group

Patient's Newsletter – 16

December 2024

Staying Well in Winter

Hello, my name is Dr Jordan Shoesmith, one of the salaried GPs at York Medical Practice. I am mainly interested in paediatrics, rheumatology and palliative care and I studied at Kings College London. Having worked in everything from A+E to GP to paediatric wards during the winter months, I am keen to help everyone avoid the pitfalls that we see so often this time of year.

There are three main things which tend to come up during the winter:

1) **Infections.** There are so many cough and colds flying around during the winter months - usually these are mild illnesses which you can deal with by resting and staying hydrated. For some of us however, especially for those at either end of the age range, they can be more severe. Prevention is always the better than the cure and we have had an amazing turn out for our Covid and Flu vaccine drives this year but you can also keep healthy by exercising, eating well and stopping the spread of germs. If you are laid low by a winter bug, please follow the NHS advice on how to get through and we always have an on the day emergency telephone doctor if you need us.

2) **Chronic illnesses.** All long term conditions tend to be worse in the winter, from mental health issues to lung diseases. While we are always here to help manage these, the best way to mitigate this is to look after yourself - this is through keeping warm, maintaining a healthy diet and staying active. If you are struggling with this, there is a wide range of services in addition to ourselves to help, like the local council and charities such as Hands and Skylarks.

3) **Loneliness.** While this time of year can be one full of family gatherings, parties and good cheer, for a lot of us it can be a very lonely time. Especially for our more vulnerable patients, the increasing cold and difficult conditions can make socialising nearly impossible. The most important thing to do in this situation is to speak to someone - a friend, family member or someone at the practice. If you are lucky enough to be well yourself, keep an eye out for neighbours who might be struggling - if you are wondering how to find help for them, we can signpost you in the right direction or you can access groups like Age Concern.

Overall, the main thing I really want to get across is that we are here to help. We aren't just here to dish out pills! We can provide a wide range of services from simple signposting to mental health support and lifestyle management help. At this vulnerable time of year, we want to make sure you have as happy and healthy a time as possible.

Pharmacy First - New Areas for Community Pharmacists

The Pharmacy First scheme was launched in January this year to give patients quick and accessible care and ease pressure on GP services. Community pharmacists can now supply prescription only medicines to treat seven different common illnesses without the need to visit a GP.

Below is a list, plus in brackets the gender and age range it applies to:

- * Sinusitis (12 years +)
- * Sore Throat (5 years +)
- * Earache (1-17 years)
- * Shingles (18 years +)
- * Impetigo (1 year +)
- * Infected Insect Bites (1 year +)
- * Some uncomplicated Urinary Tract Infections (16-64 women)

The pharmacist will speak to you privately and is able to access your medical records in order to prescribe the best course of treatment. The usual prescription charges will apply.

NHS App

The NHS App gives you a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services. Download the NHS App on your smartphone or tablet via the [Google play](#) or [App store](#). You can also access the same services in a web browser by [logging in through the NHS website](#).

You must be aged 13 or over to use the NHS App. You also need to be registered with a GP surgery in England or the Isle of Man. Find out more about [who can use the NHS App](#).

Order repeat prescriptions at your nominated pharmacy, book and manage appointments, view your GP health records, book and manage COVID-19 vaccinations, register your organ donation decision, choose how the NHS uses your data, view your NHS number ([find out what your NHS number is](#)), use NHS 111 online to answer questions and get instant advice or medical help near you.

Over 60% of patients at York have registered to use the App so far.

Any of the reception staff are able to help you with getting set up and started. A introductory video is also available at

<https://files.digital.nhs.uk/assets/Services/NHS%20App/NHS%20App%20promotional%20film.zip>

For a quick start guide, please visit the York Medical Practice website. Simply click on the 'Patient Information' box, then select 'NHS App' for more details.

Staff Changes

Dr Isabel White joined the practice as a GP Registrar in June and will be at the practice until the end of 2025.

Dr Zia Farooq joined the practice as a GP Registrar in August and will be at the practice until February 2025

Dr Watan Chantima joined the practice as a GP Registrar in August and will be at the practice until February 2025

Elena Jalba joined the practice as a phlebotomist in August

Bikash Gurung joined the practice as a Pharmacy Technician in August

Dr Ben Giles and Dr Shuting Xiong both completed their GP Registrar placements at the practice at the end of July and have moved on to new roles.