Trowbridge Health Centre

Winter 2023

Surgery Update

Our team at Trowbridge Health Centre, like so many other healthcare providers at present, is currently facing significant demand.

We are doing our utmost to continue to provide the best service for all our patients with patient and staff safety being our top priority. Our phone lines are extremely busy, and our receptionists are doing the best they can – please be kind.

Please use your surgery considerately – appointments can be made face-to-face, over the phone, online or via video calls. You many also wish to consider other options including seeking advice from your local pharmacy or visiting www.111.nhs.uk. More information can be found at www.bswtogether.org.uk/yourhealth We would ask all patients to please be patient with us as we work through these challenging times. We are grateful for your ongoing support.

The Memory Café

The Memory Café has been an enormous success. Every month the staff at Trowbridge Health Centre support the café by donating cakes and gifts. In December's meeting Christmas gift bags were handed out to the carers, while they enjoyed the cakes and tea that the kind THC staff have provided.

The lead organiser Kylie works so hard to make each meeting an enjoyable experience organising entertainment such as a sing along, which this month were with Jon and Tony.

The memory clinic is held at Florence Court on the second Tuesday of the month. Please come along with the person you care for and enjoy the fun and company

Caring for elderly relatives

If you look after someone else, whether because they are older, or disabled, or due to ill health, it's important to make sure you get the help you need. AgeUK has lots of information to help and support you. https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/helping-a-loved-one/

If you find that you or someone you care for needs more help and support, there are ways you can get the support you need. Depending on the situation, care may be provided by the local authority, NHS or a private care organisation. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/introduction-to-care-and-support/

If you care for someone, you may be able to get access to some support and respite. It's important to make sure you take the support offered so you can continue in your caring role. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/support-and-benefits-for-carers/

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Mental health

The winter months can seem long and dark, and for many people, this leads to feeling low. Seasonal Affective Disorder affects around 2 million people in the UK, and the Met Office has some advice on how to keep it in check. https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weathe...ice/health-wellbeing/winter-and-mental-health
You can reduce the effect of Seasonal Affective Disorder and improve your mental health by taking some simple steps such as making sure you get enough daylight and enough exercise during the winter. https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/overview/

If you feel in urgent need of help with your mental health you can find out how to access support here. https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/
Samaritans is a non-judgmental listening service, available 24/7 if you feel you need to talk. https://www.samaritans.org
If you're struggling with your mental health, we're here to help you. Please ask to speak to one of our team so we can get the right support in place for you.
If you're a barber or hairdresser, whether or not you have heard of "BarberTalk" or the Lions Barber Collective before, it's well worth a look. You'll know how many clients open up in the chair about their lives, and BarberTalk aims to harness that by supporting you to signpost organisations that can help with mental health. https://www.thelionsbarbercollective.com/about-us

Maintaining healthy eating

Eating well gives us the best chance of staying healthy over time. You can find out about a healthy diet here. https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/
You can eat healthily on a budget. Some of the healthiest food options are cheap to buy. https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/nutrition/eat-well-on-a-budget

Staying warm and cost of living

The BBC has done some research about how cold weather affects your body. Cold weather makes serious conditions like heart attack and stroke more likely. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-63602501
British Gas has some advice on the most efficient ways to keep your home warm in winter. https://www.britishgas.co.uk/the-source/beat-the-weather/warm-home-winter.html
The Met Office offers advice on ways to keep your home warm in winter. This helpful article also links to some of the support you could receive to help with the cost of living. https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/seasonal-advice/your-home/keeping-your-home-warm-in-winter
Heating Force offer some extra tips on how to keep the heat inside your house, including some easy, affordable tips you might not yet have thought about. https://heatingforce.co.uk/blog/keep-house-warm-winter/
The Guardian has a host of tips using everyday items that are already available in your home to help you stay warm for no additional cost. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeand...-to-stay-warm-without-whacking-up-the-heating
If you were born before 26th September 1956, you are eligible for the Winter Fuel payment to help with your fuel bills. Following the link will also show you other payments you might be entitled to. https://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment
If you receive certain benefits or Support for Mortgage Interest, you may receive an additional payment if the weather is very cold. You can find out more here. https://www.gov.uk/cold-weather-payment

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Patient Participation Group - PPG

Hello, we're back!

Despite the enforced Covid restrictions over the past two years which meant a hiatus for the activities of the PPG we are now very keen to get the ball rolling again.

Patient Participation Group – what is it?

The PPG is an independent group of patients who are interested in improving the services of the practice and to build a positive relationship between us the patients and the practice. The NHS requires every practice to have a PPG

Who is a PPG member?

Anyone registered with the Practice or is a Carer of a registered patient can join. If you regularly visit the surgery or if you don't your experiences matter and you can bring different ideas to the surgery to help them treat patients better or to improve the services in some way. As patients we also have a responsibility to use our services appropriately so the PPG can help in getting useful information and advice out to patients.

We currently have a small Committee that attend regular meetings with members of the medical and management team to discuss current issues. Patients can activate their membership to the PPG via the surgery website under 'Patient Participation Group' which allows us to contact this wider group of patients via email to invite them to help with activities if they are able, ask for their opinions on things such as questionnaires or for them to contact the PPG with their ideas or concerns. Even if you do not wish to join the PPG your ideas and suggestions are always very welcome and you can contact us via the email below or fill out one of the suggestion slips situated in the reception at both of the surgery sites and post in the box provided.

The PPG produces its own newsletter too, as well as contributing to the THC newsletter, so watch out for our next newsletter, which is sent to all members of the PPG via email.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Norman Owen - Chair

Our email is ppgenquiries.thc@nhs.net (please do not send personal medical information or any complaints via this email as it is managed by volunteers not Trowbridge Health Centre staff)