

Northfields Surgery

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter, December 2024



Who are Physician Associates?

Physician Associates (PAs) are healthcare professionals with a first degree in a science subject & 2 years' postgraduate training in PA Studies.

PAs will have passed the PA National Exam run by the Royal College of Physicians. PAs work under the supervision of GPs. GPs have a medical degree & a minimum of 5 years postgraduate training.



Mrs Peres Sutherland has worked as a PA at Northfields Surgery since 2023. Working alongside the GPs, she can ask their advice as needed. Mrs Sutherland also works sessions in hospital urgent care centres, seeing a wide variety of cases. PAs are expected to introduce themselves to patients as Physician Associates.

Background: PAs were first formally introduced in the UK in 2003. They were called 'Physician Assistants' up to 2014 when the name of 'Physician Associates' was introduced. Many doctors would like to see the name 'Physician Assistant' brought back to avoid confusing patients. The Faculty of Physician Associates at the Royal College of Physicians maintains a voluntary register of PAs, who are currently not regulated. From December 2024, the General Medical Council (GMC) will regulate PAs as well as medical doctors to help ensure that PAs can work safely and be held to account if serious concerns are raised. The GMC will also advise on the scope of practice for PAs.

What do Physician Associates do? PAs are trained to perform the following duties:

- take patients' medical histories
- carry out physical examinations
- see patients with long-term conditions
- see patients with undiagnosed symptoms and formulate diagnoses
- develop and deliver appropriate treatment and management plans
- request and interpret diagnostic studies
- provide patients with health promotion and disease prevention advice.

Continued on page 2



North West London

Autumn Booster Campaign

Covid & Adult Flu Vaccinations

Also offering
Free Health conversations

Available to those who are:

- Aged 65 years and over
- Aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group
- Frontline NHS and social care workers, and those working in care homes for older people
- The flu vaccine criteria are the same as above and also available to the main carer of an elderly or disabled person, carers in receipt of carer's allowance, and close contacts of immunocompromised individuals

Free Health Conversations:
(Available to those who are 18 and over)


- Blood glucose checks
- Blood pressure checks
- Immunisations signposting
- BMI (Body Mass Index) checks
- Smoking and Alcohol conversations
- General health and well-being conversations


Vaccinations for flu and Covid are available from:
Pharmacies:

- Northfield
- Bramley
- Mattock Lane

Ealing Vaccination Centre:
CP House
97-107 Uxbridge Road.


Northfields Surgery offers flu, but not Covid, vaccinations.

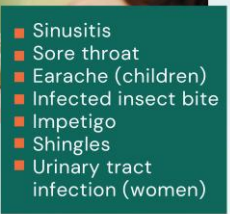
To Book your vaccines please scan this QR code:




Providing NHS services

Most pharmacies can help you with **seven common conditions** without needing a GP appointment





- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache (children)
- Infected insect bite
- Impetigo
- Shingles
- Urinary tract infection (women)



Ask your pharmacy for more information about this free* NHS service

Visit your Pharmacy First!

*NHS prescription charge rules apply where a medicine is supplied

Physician Associates (PAs) Continued from page 1

What do Physician Associates *not* do? A GP needs to approve & sign for any prescription or request for X-rays the PA recommends.

Who decides which patients see a Physician Associate? At Northfields Surgery, all requests to see a GP or other member of the team (submitted via eConsult, a telephone call or in person) are always reviewed by one of the fully qualified GPs, who decides which available staff member, including the PA, is best suited to deal with each case. If you would like to speak to a particular staff member, state this in your request &, if they are available, & have the expertise needed to deal with the problem described, they will be assigned to your case.

Second opinions? If you feel the need for a second opinion, please complete an eConsult form or ask Reception and the practice will arrange for this.

Hospitals also have Associate roles including Anaesthetist Associates and Surgery Associates who, like PAs in General Practice, have a first degree in a science subject & two years of postgraduate training for the role.

Who's Who at Northfields Surgery

It should always be clear to patients who they are seeing in a consultation. Staff members have badges with their name & role, or they may display a label on their desk. If it is unclear who you are consulting, please ask for their name &/or role. Details of staff members & their qualifications are listed on the Northfields Surgery website: <https://www.northfieldssurgery.nhs.uk/practice-information/meet-the-team>.

**If you smoke,
and would like
to quit,
there is help
at hand.**



0208 354 8889 wlm-trhls@nhs.net

NHS
Ealing Community Partners

Ealing Smokefree Service

You are 4 times more likely to quit with support. Take the first step today!
Visit www.westlondon.nhs.uk/ealing-smokefree-service or scan the QR code >



Feedback will be welcome on this Newsletter & on the previous (Spring) Newsletter as will be **suggestions for what you would like to see included in future Newsletters.**

Please visit, <https://www.northfieldssurgery.nhs.uk/practice-information/patient-participation-forum/> click on 'Contact the Patient Group', & fill out the form. Those unable to use the website may leave their details or a letter with Reception addressed to the Patient Participation Group Chair, who will contact you.

This Newsletter was produced by Patient Participation Group (PPG) members & the Practice Manager & reviewed by the GP Partners before finalising & approval by all parties for distribution to patients & carers. We look forward to your feedback. We thank Dr Anjaly Mirchandani, who teaches and examines PAs in training, for her contributions to the article on PAs, & Mrs Peres Sutherland for reviewing a draft.