



# AMERSHAM HEALTH CENTRE

## BULLETIN WINTER 2022

Welcome to the Winter Bulletin, the new name for the Newsletter.

In June, we moved back to the health centre after successfully completing all the maintenance work on our water supply. We would like to thank all our staff and patients for the continued support whilst we worked in some challenging conditions. It is good to be back!

### **KEEPING YOUR SURGERY SAFE:**

Throughout the pandemic, we have strived to make the surgery as safe as possible for all our patients and staff.

We are mindful that restrictions have relaxed but it is imperative we continue to operate in a safe working environment and reduce the risk of spreading COVID amongst us.

It is now personal preference to wear a face covering when visiting the surgery, although you will see most of the clinical staff will continue to do so as the risk to our surgery if GPs, clinicians or other team members test positive for COVID may result in a reduction of appointments and add extra pressure to our support team.

We do continue to ask the following:

- Do not come to the surgery if you have any covid symptoms
- Do not come to the surgery if you are waiting for results from a covid test
- Please do not request a face-to-face appointment if you have any covid symptoms, you will be offered a telephone consultation.

### **Notes for our patients when visiting the surgery:**

The front desk is now fully operationally for any queries you may have. We have 2 check-in screens to save you queuing at the desk. You can check in for both GP and nurse appointments. If you have an appointment with the nurse, check in on screen then make your way to the nurses waiting area.

Please do not come to the desk to book on the day appointments. There are several options available which are detailed overleaf for booking if you are unable to call in the morning.

**Prescriptions** – We are unable to accept paper requests out of reception working hours. Use the *Amersham Health Centre* website or email [prescriptions.ahc@nhs.net](mailto:prescriptions.ahc@nhs.net).

**Registrations** – Completed forms to be sent to [ahc.registration@nhs.net](mailto:ahc.registration@nhs.net) or to be given to reception within the time frames noted on the front of the form.

**Toilets** – There are male and female and disabled toilet facilities available on site.

### **Face to Face or Telephone Appointments**

We have been offering the choice of face-to-face or telephone appointments, depending on your requirements. Obviously, some conditions would be best served with a face-to-face appointment. You will be asked at the time of booking which appointment type you would prefer.

The on-line bookings are all face-to-face, but you can contact the patient liaison team to change this if you prefer.

## Flu Vaccines

Our flu vaccine programme this year successfully delivered around 2,800 vaccines to those eligible. We would like to thank all those team members and volunteers who helped deliver an efficient service.

## Covid Vaccines

We are not offering the autumn covid booster, however you can book via the NHS website or by calling 119.

## Travel Vaccine Process

If you are travelling abroad and would like to see your vaccination history, you can view all these details via the NHS App. You may then be able to research if you would require additional vaccinations before completing the Assessment Form.

Travel Health Pro provides country information including vaccine recommendations. You can find this via the link below:

**<https://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/>**

If after reviewing the vaccine recommendations you believe you require travel vaccines, the following process should be followed:

A Travel Vaccine Assessment Form should wherever possible be completed **6 weeks** before travel. We will always do our best to provide this service, however, if you have booked a last-minute trip and we are unable to offer an appointment, anyone can attend a travel clinic.

A form is required **per person** for each traveller. This includes children under 18.

You will find the Travel Assessment Form on our website under Travel Vaccinations.

Please email to **[admin.ahc@nhs.net](mailto:admin.ahc@nhs.net)**.

The form can also be accessed via AskFirst. The form will be processed within 10 working days.

The nurse will then be in contact via text message to discuss your requirements and if necessary, organise an appointment for you to come in to the surgery for the relevant vaccine.

## Options for booking Appointments

We empathise how frustrating it can be for our patients telephoning reception to book an appointment with one of our clinicians. As you can appreciate, we are experiencing an increased number of calls every day and our team work extremely hard to assist.

There are a number of alternative routes to book an appointment which may be of benefit. These are:

**AskFirst App** - this is a **simple online** solution linked to our surgery. It provides a symptom checker, self-care advice and if appropriate, books you an appointment directly with the surgery. You can download this from the App Store on your device.

**Patient Access** – if you are signed up to our on-line system Patient Access (forms available on our website – over 16 year olds only) you can book an on-line appointment on the day or in advance.

**Pre-bookable** – if you have a non-urgent issue and would like to speak to a clinician, you can make an appointment in advance.

## Telephoning for an Appointment

For those who are unable to utilise the options provided previously:

**Telephone System:** We open the lines at **8.30am** which are answered in turn by the reception staff. Please pick from the following:

**Option 1** for appointments. You will be offered the most appropriate appointment with a GP or Nurse. This will either be a face-to-face appointment, telephone call or video call. Our telephone lines are extremely busy in the morning, if your call is not appointment related please call back after 11am.

**Option 2** is for Prescribing and Results. The results line is open from 10am – 5pm. We are sending all prescriptions electronically to a pharmacy.

**Option 3** is for the Secretaries. Please be aware that the secretaries are unable to book any appointments so please do not use this option.

#### **Email Policy:**

Emails to the surgery may not be seen on the same day by your doctor. Please do not use this mail box for the following:

**Medical Problems:** Please do not use the email for any type of medical consultation. **Results:** If your query is relating to a recent test, please call the surgery on **01494 434 344** and select option 2. If your test was requested by a hospital doctor please contact them.

**Appointments:** We do not accept requests for appointments via email.

**Prescriptions:** Please do not send any prescription request via the admin email. If you are requesting a prescription please do so via our website **amershamhealthcentre.co.uk** and follow the instructions on the prescription tab. We do not take prescription requests over the phone. **Visits:** All visits should be requested by calling **01494 434 344** and select option 3.

**Deaf and hard of hearing patients** who have difficulty using the phone and rely on email for contact should register with the surgery that you are hard of hearing via [admin.ahc@nhs.net](mailto:admin.ahc@nhs.net). Your medical records will be updated. They may thereafter access the surgery by this email address for routine issues including appointment requests or general queries, remembering to include in your subject heading / content that you are hard of hearing.

#### **General Appointments / Information:**

**Sunrise Clinic:** The clinic runs on a Tuesday morning, 7.20 – 8.30am. This clinic is for blood tests only which are booked in advance.

**Evening pre bookable appointments:** These are available on a Wednesday 6.30 -7.30pm, they are available to book three days in advance.

**Nurses Appointments:** The nurses are continuing to see patients for blood tests, dressings, stitch removal, regular injections, health checks, smears and also routine child immunisations. There will be a Sunrise clinic running for the nurses on a Tuesday, appointments available 7.20-8.30am

**Annual Reviews:** Patients will be invited in for their annual reviews; including diabetes, asthma, hypertension etc. Please wait to be contacted by the surgery; we will contact you by letter or SMS.

**Welfare Support:** Please contact us if you are having any difficulties with shopping, prescriptions, transport and essential deliveries. Prescriptions can be delivered by many of the pharmacies please speak to them about this service; many of the people helping out are volunteers. There are 750,000 volunteers in the UK helping with the National Voluntary service. We can refer you to offer you the following services:

**Check in and Chat Support:** Provides short-term telephone support to individuals who are at risk of loneliness as a consequence of self-isolation.

**Community Support:** Provides collection of shopping, medication or other essential supplies for someone who is self-isolating, and delivering these supplies to their home.

**Patient Transport Support:** Provides transport for patients who are medically fit for discharge or to support patients going to NHS appointments

**NHS Transport Support:** Provides transport for equipment, supplies and/or medication between NHS services and sites. Also involves assisting pharmacies with medication delivery.

**IMED:** Available for home delivery, their number is 01727 837985 or look at the website: [www.imedpharmacy.com](http://www.imedpharmacy.com)

**Amersham Voluntary service:** A volunteer group registered with Buckinghamshire Council. They are a network of local people who are here to help. They can run errands, like basic shopping or collect prescriptions or even for a chat. They aim to respond within 24 hours.

Contact via [youramershamcoronahelp@gmail.com](mailto:youramershamcoronahelp@gmail.com) or 01494 702149.

### **Social Prescribing Service – Referring**

The Social Prescribing Service connects patients to non-medical support, such as day centres, charities or community groups, in the community to improve their wellbeing and tackle social isolation.

They can link you in to support within your local community to help you work towards a more fulfilling life.

They enable people to have more control over their lives, develop skills and give their time to others, through involvement in community groups.

Patients can now refer themselves to a social prescriber or health and wellbeing coach. They can give free help if your health is affected by loneliness, your weight or diet, addiction, your housing, debt, stress, or other things. Please see overleaf for a leaflet providing useful information.

The website is <https://www.midchilternpcn.nhs.uk>

**Ear syringing services:** We do not offer this service at the surgery. Below is a list of alternative providers:

Aston Hearing Services, Old Amersham: 01494 733840

Chalfont Hearing, Little Chalfont: 01494 765144

Boots Hearing Care: 0345 270 0999. Based in Alyesbury

**Pharmacies:** Please utilise your local pharmacy who are able to provide over the counter solutions for many symptoms including, coughs and colds, verrucas, eye infections, thrush, hay fever, diarrhea, constipation, mouth ulcers, head lice: You can purchase all treatments from your local pharmacy and some medications are available at supermarkets. Please try these over the counter treatments before contacting the surgery.

### **Staff Updates:**

Rhianna has joined our nursing team who looks forward to assisting you. Dr Ball and Dr Nikpour are now on maternity leave and we all wish them the best for their new arrivals.

### **Meeting the Team:**

This quarter we would like to introduce the nursing team.

#### **Nursing Team:**

Our friendly nurse team consists of 4 Nurses, 1 Health Care assistant and 1 Assistant practitioner.

Nurse Clare Pitcher is our respiratory nurse and looks after our Asthma, Copd patients as well as all our treatment room duties, dressings, hypertension, chronic heart disease checks, travel consultation, adult immunisations etc.

Nurse Claire Turpin looks after our diabetic patients, as well as providing adult and child immunisations, travel consultations, dressings and much more.

Nurse Denise Parslow is our Lead Nurse, she can prescribe and provides expertise in minor illness, treatment room, contraception, menopause/hrt consultations, coil removals etc.

Zainab Mirza is our Assistant practitioner, she undertakes phlebotomy, dopplers, ECG's, dressings, NHS Health Checks and assists with coil fitting with our doctors.

Jane Dersley is our Healthcare Assistant and provides NHS Health Checks and Phlebotomy, ECG's and assists with coil fitting with our doctors.

We are always on hand to help and assist the rest of the clinical and reception team with queries and emergencies within the surgery.

**If you need a GP in a medical emergency when the surgery is closed, please call 01494 434344 for details of how to contact Buckinghamshire Urgent Care, the out of hours emergency service.**

If you need medical information or advice, please call

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Mid Chilterns PCN comprises of Amersham Health Centre, Rectory Meadow Surgery, Hughenden Valley Surgery, Prospect House & The John Hampden Surgery

## Social Prescribing Service

**Connecting you to local services to improve your physical and mental wellbeing**



### What is Social Prescribing?

**Do you need support with housing, debt, employment, lifestyle, managing your mental health, loneliness etc?**

**Social prescribing can link you in to support within your local community to help you to work towards a more fulfilling life.**

**"Social prescribing can help you to get the support you need, when you need it"**

**You can self refer to this free service by emailing the social prescriber link worker team by email :-**

**[mid-chiltern.socialprescribers@nhs.net](mailto:mid-chiltern.socialprescribers@nhs.net)**

**or alternatively ask you GP Surgery to refer you.**