



# Practice Newsletter

Spring 2024

# Contents

Patient Participation Groups	3
Recent Starters and Leavers	4
FODS	4
Online Friends and Family Survey	5
National Patient Survey	5
Appointment Attendance / DNAs	6
PATCHS	6
Anyone Could Be A Carer	7
Scam Callers / Keeping Safe	8
Vida Telephone Statistics 2023	9
Accurx / Patient Triage ( <i>The Hollies Surgery</i> )	10
Easter Pharmacy Opening Hours	11
Livi	11
Cataract Service / YAG Laser Treatment	12-13
National Institute for Health and Care Research	14
We Are Recruiting	15
Sites	16

## **Patient Participation Groups**

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are representatives of the practice population, (including carers of registered patients) who meet with the practice and provide patient experience and feedback.

These groups generally meet with the practice team several times a year.

PPGs can play a number of roles, including:

- Advising the practice on the patient perspective – a critical friend
- Organising or assisting with health promotion events and helping to share health related messages and understanding of services
- Communicating with the wider patient population
- Carrying out research (survey) into the views of those who use the practice (and their carers)
- Influencing the practice or the wider NHS to improve commissioning
- Fundraising to improve the services provided by the practice

We have a Patient Participation Group at The Hollies, Carole Brown, Hunstanton and within King's Lynn.

You can get involved with the PPG and it is completely free, however you must be a patient or carer at the practice to be eligible.

Meetings are held on a quarterly basis, or you may wish to participate as a virtual member only and receive emails and feedback electronically.

If you wish to join one of our PPGs, then please contact the practice and express your interest and a member of the PPG committee will be in touch with you soon. The Practice is hugely grateful for the work and support these groups make.

## **Recent Starters and leavers**

### **Starters:**

Sayedur Rahman - GP

Emmanuel Ngwoke - GP Registrar

Toochukwu Asogwa - GP Registrar

Jonathan Griffiths-Reeve - Practice Nurse

Uma Gunasekaran - Now joining us as a fully qualified, salaried GP

### **Leavers:**

None

## **Friends of the Doctors Surgery (FODS)**

Friends of the Doctors Surgery are a group of volunteers who are registered at Gayton Road Health Centre and specifically fund raise and support us at the practice.

“For those of you who do not know who we are; we are a small and friendly group who raise funds for the benefit of the patients of Gayton Road Health Centre. We have a stall, for three days every month, in the waiting room of the surgery. You can find the dates on the notice board in the waiting room or ask at the stall for a list.

Unfortunately, our numbers are dwindling and desperately need more helpers. If you feel you can spare a few hours, (no matter how few) each month, please contact Jan on 01553 671621. We would also welcome any good quality bric a brac or books for sale on the stall.”

## **Vida Healthcare**

### **NHS Friends and Family Survey**

The friends and family survey is now available via an online form. You can find it by looking for our posters around the surgery or by using the link below. Alternatively there are paper copies available to fill in at reception.

<https://forms.office.com/e/Yi7QYPdTir>

### **We would really appreciate your feedback!**

Your feedback gives us a great indication of how we are doing, and of anything that we can do to improve our services for you in the future. Let us know what kind of experience you have had at the surgery today.

## **National Patient Survey**

The annual results for the national patient survey are now published online. This survey is centrally run by MORI every year, with questionnaires being sent out to a random selection of our patients. The results are discussed within the practice and with PPG members. This year's results are not as good as we would have hoped but we will be working hard to address the areas identified.

To find the practice's results use the link below and when prompted type in our name.

<https://gp-patient.co.uk/>

# Appointment Attendance

As we begin the new year we would like to remind all patients that if you are unable to attend your appointment to let us know with as much notice as possible.

Not attending appointments not only costs the NHS money, but it also stops patients who would have been able to attend at your appointment time from being able to be seen.

From the 1st January to the 29th February this year alone, we have already had 1549 appointments that were not attended. This accounts for 10.11% of all appointments offered, and is estimated to have cost the NHS over £23,200.

## **Online Consultation (PATCHS)**

Our online consultation service, PATCHS seems to be growing in popularity, we now have well over 3000 patients using it on a regular basis. However, there are many more of you that haven't signed up yet. If you haven't signed up yet, then please have a look and see if it appeals to you and can save you time and effort when trying to contact us.

*This will apply to all sites except The Hollies Surgery for more information see article further in this newsletter.*

## **What is the appeal of PATCHS to patients?**

- Register from home
- Quick and easy to use - just answer a few simple questions to get started
- Avoid long waits for a GP appointment
- Access PATCHS via our website, any time of day

You can sign up and make use of PATCHS by visiting the following:

<https://patchs.ai/practice/vidahealthcare>

# Do you look after someone who is ill, frail, disabled or has a mental illness?

We are interested in identifying carers, especially those who may be caring without help or support. Carers are often "hidden", looking after a family member or helping a friend or neighbour with day-to-day tasks and may not identify themselves as a carer.

Caring for someone is an important and valuable role, which is often a 24-hour job that can be very demanding and isolating.

Anyone Could Be



A Carer

As a carer, you are entitled to have your needs assessed by Adult Care Services. A carers assessment is a chance to talk about your needs and ways you could receive help. It also looks at the needs of the person you care for. There is no charge for an assessment.

If you think this could apply to you or someone you know, please ask at reception.

# Scam Callers

Please be aware that there is a scam call circulating currently where the person declares they are giving you some test results and then asks for your personal information. If you have not undergone any tests recently then clearly you will not be expecting test results. If you are unsure about a phone call please hang up and call us on your usual surgeries number.

## Tips for Keeping Safe

### **Telephone Calls**

If you receive a call from anyone that you are not expecting and they begin to ask you for your details, ask the person where they are calling from and tell them that you will call them back. Hang up the phone and search for the person/company's details to verify that the person calling is legitimate.

### **Passwords**

Any passwords you create should be kept secure. Ensure that they are not easy to guess and are unique.

A good example of a password is one that is; Over 12 characters in length, contains both upper and lower case letters, contains numbers and contains special characters.

### **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)**

Many places when creating accounts now offer a multi factor authentication service to help improve the security of your accounts.

This could be by sending an additional email with a code, code by SMS message or by using an authenticator app. Enabling MFA on your accounts deters people stealing your information as it provides an additional layer of security besides a standard username and password to access the account.

### **Phishing**

Phishing is a process where someone sends out an official looking email, text or link in the hopes that you don't notice it is a scam. These phishing attempts can often be targeted attacks and may contain some of your details already. Always verify if the email address/phone number/link is legitimate before giving out any personal information.

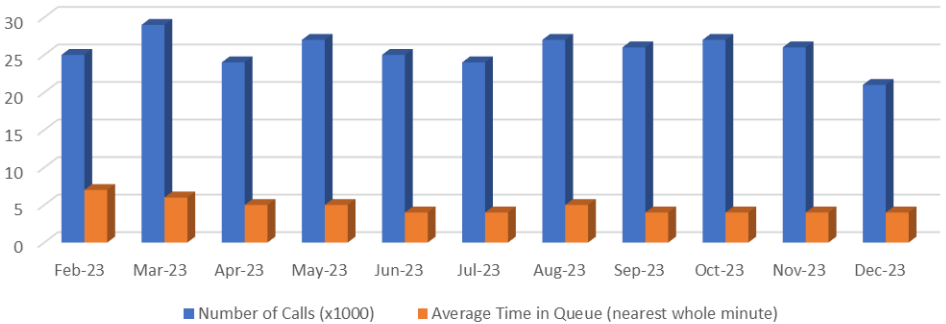


# Vida Healthcare Telephone Call Statistics 2023

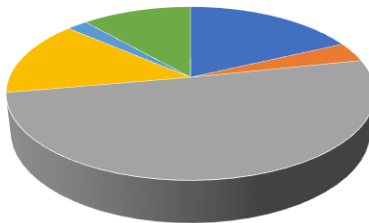
In 2023 we had been analysing our telephone calls to improve the service we offer you. We thought it might be interesting for you if we highlighted some of the key observations we discovered.

Total number of calls handled by Vida in 2023:	<b>over 600,000</b>
Average time in the queue:	<b>just under 5 minutes</b>
Calls answered without queueing:	<b>70%</b>
Average call duration:	<b>just over 2 minutes</b>
Calls that lasted under 5 mins:	<b>89%</b>

Monthly Call Statistics 2023



Annual call numbers split across Vida sites 2023



- Carole Brown Health Centre
- Fairstead Surgery
- Gayton Road Health Centre
- Hunstanton Medical Practice
- St. Augustine's Surgery
- The Hollies



## The Hollies - Online Consultations

The Hollies Surgery are now using Accurx/Patient Triage.

Patient Triage can be used to submit medical queries and administration requests to The Hollies for yourself or on behalf of someone you care for.

Patient Triage can be accessed directly or via the NHS App.

Please note that Patient Triage should never be used in an emergency. If your medical query is urgent then contact '111' or for a medical emergency contact, '999'

*Patient Triage will only be available to patients at The Hollies Surgery. All other sites should continue to use PATCHs. See our website for more details.*



To submit a request via Accurx (The Hollies Surgery patients only) first head to our website [www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.vidahealthcare.nhs.uk) and select the 'Accurx—The Hollies' button below the search bar in the top right of the web page.

When selecting the link you will be able to see the name and address of your practice (The Hollies Surgery) and information on what to do if your query is a medical emergency.

Below this information are three choices to select from based on the nature of your query;

- Admin Query
- Medical Request
- Online Advice

Simply select the type of request you wish to submit and fill in the accompanying form, remembering to select whether the request is for yourself or for someone you care for before finally pressing submit to send your request to your GP practice.

# NHS Prescription Charges

**From 1 May 2024 the NHS prescription charge is changing to £9.90 per item.**

Some items may have more than one charge, e.g. elastic hosiery; a member of the pharmacy team will explain if that is the case.

If you need multiple prescription items or are prescribed certain HRT medicines, a Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) could save you money. For more information visit: [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc)

Certain patient groups are entitled to free NHS prescriptions and certain items (e.g. contraceptives) are free-of-charge on the NHS. To check if you're eligible for free NHS prescriptions, visit: [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts)

## Prescription Prepayment Certificates

If you regularly pay for NHS prescriptions, you can save money by paying for them in advance. A standard PPC lets you get as many NHS prescriptions as you need at a set price for 3 or 12 months.

PPC Type	Suitable if you pay charges for	Prices from 1 May 2024
3-month standard PPC	4 or more items in three months	£32.05
12-month standard PPC	12 or more items in a year	£114.50

## Hormone Replacement Therapy Prescription Prepayment Certificates (PPCs)

The cost of the HRT Prescription Payment Certificate (HRT PPC) has also been increased from 1 May 2024.

PPC Type	Suitable if you pay charges for	Price from 1 May 2024
12-month HRT PPC	More than two eligible HRT medicines in 12 months	£19.80

All types of PPC can be purchased from the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) website by visiting [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/ppc) or [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/hrt-ppc](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/hrt-ppc)

Alternatively, selected pharmacies are registered to sell PPCs

## Cataract Service & YAG Laser Treatment

We offer a Cataract Service and YAG Laser Capsulotomy from our Gayton Road site.



### ***What Are Cataracts?***

*The human eye is like a camera, with a lens system at the front and a photosensitive 'film' at the back. The normal function of the lens is to focus light so that you can see sharp, clear images.*

Cataracts are a gradual cloudiness of the lens (the transparent structure at the front of the eye) and can make your vision blurred or misty. Cataracts can develop in one or both eyes. Over time, the cloudiness can become denser.

In most cases, a cataract will continue to develop and surgery to remove it is the only way to restore vision.

For information on our cataract service, please visit our website or use the link below to download our cataract service leaflet:

<https://assets.practice365.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/704/2022/04/Cataract-leaflet-v3.pdf>

## ***What is YAG Laser Treatment?***

Laser treatment is necessary when after cataract surgery, months or years later your eyesight has become impaired.

This is due to the posterior capsule which is a fine membrane behind the lens of the eye has become thickened. This causes a gradual reduction in vision.

A YAG Laser Capsulotomy can be performed which will reduce glare and restore the vision to how it was after the original cataract surgery.

YAG Capsulotomy is a safe, non-invasive procedure, and serious complications are rare.

For further information on YAG Laser Capsulotomy, please visit our website or use the link below to download our YAG Laser leaflet:

<https://assets.practice365.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/704/2022/04/yag-leaflet-v.1.pdf>

## ***Referring to us?***

You can:

Ask your Optician for a referral to our service.

Self-Refer via West Norfolk Health – 01553 667420

## ***Wait times***

Our current wait times for Cataract Surgery is 8 weeks from referral to surgery.

For YAG Laser it is 6 weeks from referral to procedure.

# NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

All Vida Healthcare practices are proud to be involved in research

When attending any of our sites, you may be asked to take part in a study, or you can ask your doctor or nurse if there are any studies suitable for you to take part in.

If you would rather not receive invitations to participate in research from us, please inform the reception desk

For further information from the National Institute for Health and Care Research, please visit the website below:

[www.bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk)





## We Are Recruiting

*Vida Healthcare is one of Norfolk's largest and most successful GP Practices covering King's Lynn, Downham Market, Dersingham and Hunstanton and we need you to help us continue to provide our top-quality service to*

We have a variety of roles available, starting from £11.01 an hour.

### **Benefits include:**

- NHS Pension Scheme
- Flexible working pattern
- Fun, friendly working environment
- Work within the local area
- Structured training programmes (role dependant)

### **Apply Today!**



<https://tinyurl.com/VIDACAREER>

For enquiries or applications please email [nwicb.Vida-Recruitment@nhs.net](mailto:nwicb.Vida-Recruitment@nhs.net)

# Sites



## **Carole Brown Health Centre**

St Nicholas Court, Church Lane, Dersingham, PE31 6GZ

Weekdays 08:00-18:30

Tel 01485 500139



## **The Hollies Surgery**

Paradise Road, Downham Market, Norfolk, PE38 9JE

Weekdays 08:30-18:00

Tel 01366 310301



## **Gayton Road Health Centre**

Gayton Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4DY

Weekdays 08:00-18:30

Tel 01553 600075



## **Hunstanton Medical Practice**

Valentine Road, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5DN.

Weekdays 08:00-18:30

Tel 01485 532859

Closed from 13:00 to 14:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



## **St Augustine's Surgery**

Columbia Way, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 2LB

Weekdays 08:00-17:30

Tel 01553 769614

Closed from 13:00-14:00 every day.



## **Fairstead Surgery**

Fairstead Estate, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 4SR

Weekdays 08:00-18:30

Tel 01553 605740

Site Currently Out of Action

\*Enhanced access appointments are available evenings and Saturdays at our sites (Gayton Road Health Centre, Carole Brown Health Centre and The Hollies Surgery) or at practices in the locality.