

# BIRCHWOOD PPG NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2023

## Special Points of Interest:



### Volunteers' Week 1-7 June 2022

The NHS is supported by around 2 million volunteers every year and most NHS organisations celebrate their contribution during National Volunteers' Week.



### National Carers Week 5-11 June 2023

Raising awareness of caring by highlighting the challenges that carers face and recognise the contribution they make.



### BNF Healthy Eating Week 12-16 June 2023

Have 5 A Day; Drink plenty; Get active; and try something new.



### Men's Health Week 12-18 June 2023

Led by the Men's Health Forum to raise awareness of preventable health issues and encourage men and boys to seek professional advice for health-related problems.



### Learning Disability Week 20-26 June 2022

Raising awareness about the issues that are important to people with a learning disability and their families and carers.



### Alcohol Awareness Week 3-9 July 2023

A chance for the UK to get thinking about drinking. It's a week of awareness-raising, campaigning for change, and more.

## WHAT IS THE PPG?

### What is the function of a patient participation group?

Members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) are volunteers who work with the practice to represent patients, offering views on the services and facilities that are provided.

The PPG will work collaboratively with the practice, on behalf of the patient population, ensuring the services of the practice meet the needs and wishes of the patient group.

We want to encourage additional patients to join the group. We always welcome suggestions and ideas that contribute to the patient experience when you visit the practice.

### How to register your interest:

If you are interested in joining the PPG you can show your interest on our website by searching 'patient participation group registration' and filling in your details. We will then be in contact with more information for you.



## APPOINTMENT AVAILABILITY

We at Birchwood are continuously striving to ensure appointments are readily available and easy for patients to book be it urgent appointments or routine. To achieve this, we believe that working with our patients is fundamental to achieving this and as such feel you will share in our frustration that during the month of April, 97 appointments were booked and subsequently not attended. This amounted to a total of **1368** minutes of appointment time *lost* and approximately £4900 wasted in NHS funding. We ask patients to please inform the practice of cancellations. You can call the surgery and leave a message via option 0 to avoid joining the phone queue, cancel your appointment via the appointment confirmation text, or by using our website.

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## PRESCRIPTIONS

We have been informed by patients that many pharmacies have stopped automatically requesting repeat medications. If this is the case you can still request at your pharmacy in person or one of the following ways:

- Through the NHS or SystmOnline apps which goes directly to us.
- On our website you can choose to request medication online by going through our prescriptions and medicines centre.
- You can also come in to the surgery during our opening hours to fill in a request or we have a letter box that you can leave your requests in when we are closed. These are checked multiple times a day.

## CERVICAL SCREENING AWARENESS WEEK



### Who is invited for cervical screening?

You should be invited for cervical screening if you have a cervix. Women are usually born with a cervix. Trans men, non-binary and intersex people may also have one.

In the UK, you are automatically invited for cervical screening if you are:

- between the ages of 25 to 64
- registered as female with a GP surgery.

You may get your first invite up to 6 months before you turn 25. You can book an appointment as soon as you get the invite.

If you have symptoms, contact your GP surgery about having an examination. Cervical screening is not for people who have symptoms.

### What are the benefits of cervical screening?

You are invited for cervical screening because evidence shows that the benefits of the test outweigh any risks. Along with the HPV vaccine, cervical screening is the best way to protect against cervical cancer and prevents over 7 in 10 diagnoses. However, like any screening test, cervical screening is not perfect and there are some risks.

Cervical screening aims to identify whether you are at higher risk of developing cervical cell changes or cervical cancer. This means you can get any care or treatment you need early.

England, Scotland and Wales now use HPV primary screening, which is even better as it is based on your individual risk. This means how frequently you are invited for cervical screening is based on your last result and within a timeframe that is safe for you.

### Opting out of cervical screening

If you decide not have cervical screening, ask your GP to be taken off their invite list. If you change your mind, you can ask your GP to add you back to the list at any time.

For further info, please head to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening/>