



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021

<http://thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk/>

and Harpenden

PPG EXPANDED and RELAUNCHED (NOW INCLUDES HARPENDEN)



The Future of PPG (*Patient Participation Group*)

A Patient Participation Group was formed for patients of the Village Surgery, Wheathampstead over 10 years ago when the Government required a conduit between GP surgeries and their patients. From 1 April 2015, it was a requirement in the GP's contract for all practices to have a PPG.

As our PCN (Primary Care Network) includes the Village Surgery practices in both Wheathampstead and Harpenden it follows that the PPG should now be expanded to include patients from both practices.

The purpose of a PPG is to give patients and practice staff the opportunity to meet and discuss topics of mutual interest. It also provides a means for patients to become more involved and make suggestions about the healthcare services they receive.

Wheathampstead has had a very active PPG for many years. Medical talks were arranged, a Pilates group was started and 4 newsletters were created every year.

COVID-19 has halted many of the things that the PPG would have done but it now gives us the chance to re-launch as the restrictions ease.

We need your help to drive the PPG forward and in the direction that suits the needs of all patients.

If you would like to help please contact
e-mail:
chair@thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk

What can I do?

Everyone registered with the Village Surgery in Wheathampstead or Harpenden can be part of the PPG. Membership is free and you can join in, as and when you feel able.

You can give your opinions, feed in your ideas and possibly join our committee.

The committee meets 4 times per year to determine its programme of activities. During the lockdown we have used on-line tools to provide medical talks and to keep going.

As we come out of lockdown we need volunteers to build up our group and expand our sphere of activity.

We are encouraging a cross section of patients from all age groups to be involved.



COVID

The COVID vaccination booster programme will take place in the Harpenden Public Halls along with flu vaccinations. These are expected to start at the end of September assuming availability of the vaccine. Your appointment will be notified by letter or text.

GO On-line Communication

Throughout the pandemic the Village Surgery has remained open offering telephone and face-to-face appointments for those who need them. This will continue in order to maintain social distancing and infection control in line with Government guidelines. We ask that you use on-line communication whenever you can to keep the phone lines free for the vulnerable and urgent queries; however you can request a telephone or face-to-face appointment if it is essential.

Wellbeing project

Harpenden Wellbeing Hub is a partnership of the Harpenden Trust; MIND Mid Herts and the three GP practices.

The aim is to support patients who have concerns about their mental wellbeing at an early stage before they become unwell and need counselling or therapy.

There are Wellbeing volunteers to support patients, referred by their GP. They can build links with local groups and establish contacts within them. They can encourage them to consider local activities and provide a personal introduction to the wellbeing contact within the chosen group. A MIND support worker will run groups in Harpenden for local MIND users. Eg: walking, pottery, yoga and a drop-in games café. Also to undertake research to establish whether there is a specific gap or need.

WHEATHAMPSTEAD SUPPORT FOR CHAPEL GYM

The development of the Chapel Gym is progressing well and we look forward to being able to meet indoors and make use of this new facility in the village.

Indoor exercise will help improve the general health of the village. The PPG is planning to help towards the purchase of machines / equipment for the Gym.

EVEN MORE JABS!!

As already mentioned, we will soon be starting booster immunisation for COVID, as well as for regular flu and shingles.

The latest news in the media needs time to develop into practical plans and patients will be notified as soon as possible.

Booster jabs become due no sooner than 6 months after the 2nd vaccine has been administered.

The surgery sends out TEXT messages where possible, so make sure that your mobile number is up to date.

Contacts:

PPG e-mail:

chair@thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk

Webpage

<http://thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk/>