

Annandale Medical Centre

The Elms, High Street, Potters Bar, Herts,
EN6 5DA

Patients Group
Newsletter



March 2023

Welcome to this Newsletter produced by the Annandale Medical Centre Patients Group. This is the first issue and we will be providing regular updates.

What is the Patients Group?

Covid severely restricted the functioning of the Patients Group, but we are now up and running again with renewed vigour and under the joint leadership of Vivien Arey and Harvey Ward.

The Patients Group is an active group of volunteer patients who work in partnership with the practice to represent the wider patient population by:

- strengthening the relationship between patients and the practice
- acting as an 'agents of change' to the practice, providing a sounding-board
- making suggestions prompted by patients' everyday life experiences and to be an advocate for patients' preferences
- offering practical help to support the practice's services
- engaging in wider NHS forums, such as Potters Bar Primary Care, and wider consultative NHS committees which include the Potters Bar area
- encouraging patient self-help and mutual support initiatives

The Patients Group is co-ordinated through a Committee. The committee meets 4 times a year and includes a GP, the Practice Manager and Operations Assistant.

Health Webinars

Annandale has joined in with other PPGs in Hertfordshire to offer a series of instructional health webinars covering a wide range of health topics. Our initial experience is that these are valuable, offering a deeper insight into different medical conditions and increasing Patient knowledge.

Full details of future events will be made available on the Annandale Surgery PPG [website](#) which will include information on how to access the webinars. Upcoming topics include:

February 23	Varicose Veins	March 14	Women's Health – Breasts
April 12	Why am I Breathless?	May 9	Heart and Blood Pressure
June 6	Dermatology	July 11	HRT and the Menopause

Health Walks Programme Jan to April 2023

Hertfordshire County Council offers more than 75 friendly group walks led by trained volunteers. All the walks are free and are graded between 20-30 minutes (First Steps) and up to 90 minutes (Grade 4) unless otherwise stated, while Grade 4+ progression walks can last up to 2 hours. The timetable is [here](#).

People interested in joining us can [register online](#) or, if they prefer, can turn up 10-15 minutes before their first walk to complete a New Walker Form.

For more information, please call 01992 555888, **9-11.30am and 2-3pm** Monday-Friday, or email healthwalks.cms@hertfordshire.gov.uk.



Primary Care Network

Potters Bar Primary Care Network (PCN) is a collaborative network of the 3 Potters Bar GP Surgeries.

Primary Care Networks were set up in July 2019 in the NHS Long Term Plan to include supporting the complex challenges facing Primary Care; to better facilitate models of population health; and to assist NHS transformation into Integrated Care Systems.

All 3 practices have representatives on a PCN Board who meet monthly to discuss existing and upcoming issues.

What has been achieved so far?

- Creation of a vibrant and active network
- Introducing new members to the Primary Care team of Potters Bar
- Promote work streams for Early Detection of Cancer
- Integrate systems for Learning Disabilities care
- Optimise healthcare for those in residential facilities
- Assisting safe systems of care during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Facilitating & supporting the Covid-19 Vaccination programme

What are the long term ambitions of the PCN?

- Maximise progress on existing work streams
- Further recruitment to support Primary Care
- Enable projects to improve the Early Detection of Cancer
- Reduce Health Inequalities in our region
- Work with NHS England on national healthcare priorities
- Ensure local NHS transformation is structured to work for patients
- Work with local health partners to optimise the health economy of Potters Bar

National Mental Health Support & Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust (HPFT IAPT)

If you are aged 18 or over, you can access NHS talking therapies services for anxiety and depression. A GP can refer you, or you can refer yourself directly without a referral.

NHS talking therapies services offer:

- talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), counselling, other therapies, and guided self-help
- help for common mental health problems, like anxiety and depression.

We have recently been made aware of an excellent website for Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust available via <https://www.hpft-iapt.nhs.uk/resources-and-self-help>

Of particular interest is the section on Resources and Self-help where you can find self-help videos with top tips and support from our therapists which are available 24/7. A library of self-help guides that complement the treatment provided and aid your recovery journey is also available. If you would like additional support, you can also join one of their free live and interactive introductory and specialist webinars that cover a range of topics.

- There is also a detailed list of information-based websites full of useful information about mental health problems and a range of different support options that are tailored to meet a variety of different needs.
- If after using the self-help materials you find that you would like further guidance and support, you can make a self-referral. Detailed help to meet individual needs and requirements.
- Please note HPFT IAPT is not responsible for the content of external information.

Soni Prasad the Practice Manager

Soni Prasad was appointed by Annandale as the Practice Manager (PM) in March 2022. She has been working as a PM for over 27 years. The experience she has gained over the years working in Haringey and Harrow has given insight of the challenges faced in Primary care with the demographics and changes in the NHS.

Soni's vision for Annandale is focused on the quality of care to the patients. With the support of the admin staff, the 6 Doctors use the multi-disciplinary teams that are available in primary care. These teams consist of a pharmacist, a paramedic, a mental health worker and a social prescriber.

Soni recognises that there have been frustrations with the telephone system and getting through to the surgery is often extremely difficult. This is a national problem, with all the GP Practices having a high volume of calls. A new system has now been installed at Annandale which allows the monitoring of all calls and has the facility to add a message when appointments for the day are full. Soni is in the process of updating the website.

All patients have the right to see a GP but it may be more appropriate for another qualified member of staff to help them with their medical needs. For this reason, the surgery is requesting information from the patient before allocating appointments. The system of booking some appointments online will soon be reintroduced and available via the NHS App. As part of Annandale's involvement with the other local practices in the Primary Care Network and Herts Health, appointments are being provided in the evenings and over the weekends.

Get In Touch

We would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions for future newsletters. Please email your suggestions to Annandale.ppg1@nhs.net

By emailing this address you should be aware that you are contacting fellow patients who are PPG volunteers.

Please do not use this email address for any personal medical questions as we are not qualified or authorised to deal with such enquiries. Any such questions received will not be acknowledged or passed to the surgery, where all such communications should be addressed.
