

PPG QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER No.4

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Meet the Staff

Hello from the Pharmacy Team at Midway Surgery

My name is Abby and I've been at the Midway surgery since 2019, initially only doing 2 days a week. I've enjoyed working with all the patients, doctors and wonderful staff here so, I now work 4 days a week. In addition, we have recently had a lovely new pharmacist join us, Sayyada, who is working 3 days a week.

We are responsible for undertaking medication reviews, prescribing safety and the management of long term illnesses such as Asthma, COPD, Hypertension and Diabetes to name a few.

Between us we have experience in all sectors of Pharmacy, from community Pharmacy to hospital Pharmacy. We both look forward to seeing more patients in our clinics arranged across the week.



Did you know?

Midway is an Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice. This means that our practice gives the required considerations to aspects of veterans' health needs and conditions attributed to their service. To find out more visit our website - <https://midway-surgery.co.uk/veteran-friendly-practice>

Mindful Eating for weight loss – are you mad Dr Lad?

By Dr Sam Lad

Mindfulness is a form of meditation which helps you recognise and deal with sensations and emotions. In my mind it has nothing to do with religion (yes, it is a concept taken from Buddhism but we don't need to worry about that right now!) and is a technique we can use to help directly with weight loss if weight management is a concern for you.

The concept of Mindful Eating is about the use of our full attention to experience our food, hunger and physical sensations when we eat. Why could it help with weight loss? Basically, because we really experience our food and the process of eating.



I put my hand up – I've eaten food in front the PC, during a busy work day trying to get paperwork done whilst stuffing mouthfuls of food down my gullet... Others might eat in front of the TV or, dare I say, one might be on a dinner for one date with their smart phone? The distraction this can provide often means we don't really register physically and emotionally our food. We don't even taste it for what it is. We often can eat a lot more in a short amount of time and given it takes at least 20 mins for the stomach to inform the brain that we are getting full, that's a lot of time to cram in those calories.

So what can we try to eat more mindfully and really enjoy our food? Top tips:

- Put the devices away
- Before you start sit at the table for a couple of seconds with your plate and really tune in to how hungry you are – you might be surprised with what you find!
- When eating really focus on the textures, colours, smells and even sounds of the food. Often people don't realise they missed how nice (or not depending on your cooking!) a food is, subtle flavours and feelings.
- Appreciate your food and the fact you even have food in front of you to eat
- Stop eating when you are truly full not just when the plate is empty

These are only small tips and something to try. You might find with time it helps you to work out what a real portion size for you is. Further, you might really have a different and more fulfilling eating experience, eat better and, I hope, become healthier.

If you are interested in looking into this area further try reading "The Headspace Guide to... Mindful Eating by Andy Puddicombe".

Good luck!

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Why you don't always need to see your GP – Explaining the evolution of Primary Healthcare in the NHS

The population is getting older, which in turn increases the number of people with complex chronic medical problems. This often means more people, with more medications and treatments that are needed, more referrals to hospital (who are also struggling with capacity issues) and this of course leads to a bottleneck.

We want to treat everyone safely and fairly but there are only a finite number of patients any one doctor or clinician can see in a working day before it becomes untenable and unsafe. Furthermore, GP numbers have fallen about 7% across the NHS since 2016 and it takes many years to train doctors and GPs. Therefore across the NHS both in general practice and hospitals you may have come across two major changes to allow as many patients to be seen as possible: “**new**” roles and “**triage**”.

Both of these existed well before the COVID pandemic but have come to the fore as effective ways to support increasing demand.

These roles include highly trained and experienced clinicians such as Nurse Practitioners, Paramedics, Physician Associates, Pharmacists & Physiotherapists. They specialise in their own particular area and at Midway Surgery always have the backing and support of a GP whenever they need it. They have been through rigorous training and professional development to reach the ability to practice in primary care. Outside of the surgery hospitals have more tailored services such as minor injury units, better set up to deal with falls and knocks which may require x-rays or treatment, and community pharmacists are also increasingly experienced in dealing with minor self-limiting illnesses as well as providing a number of treatments over-the-counter which you can get hold of much quicker than waiting for a GP.

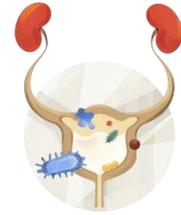
Triage is something a lot of surgeries prior to COVID used to support their day-to-day work and it has become even more important now. This involves essentially matching the patient's problem to the most appropriate person that can help with it. Our receptionists are highly trained in helping you access healthcare professionals, whatever role they have, to best treat your problem. As always a GP can be accessed for those need one even if booked with another clinician. Also, triage allows more appointments to become available, which is something we have increased year on year since COVID.

In this way we hope we can ensure we can help more patients and prioritise those who need the help the most in a safe and appropriate manner. We hope this helps you understand the systems in place both at Midway and across the NHS better and thank you for your ongoing support.

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Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

Prevention and Awareness



From East of England & East Midlands UK Health Security Agency

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) affect your urinary tract, including your bladder, urethra, or kidneys. Sometimes a urinary tract infection can develop into a severe infection that can cause you to become very ill and you may then need to go to hospital.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), formerly known as Public Health England (PHE) together with NHS England (NHSE) are running a joint campaign to raise awareness of UTI prevention, symptom recognition and treatment including advice on how and when to seek help.

This campaign will be targeted at older adults (65 years +), who are at higher risk of the impacts of urinary tract infections, and carers.

Successful management of UTIs requires a coordinated focus on prevention, early and accurate diagnosis, and appropriate treatment. If left unmanaged, UTIs can lead to severe infection, sepsis and in some cases death.

What should you do if you think you have a UTI?

If you think you might have a UTI, ensure you are drinking enough fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated. Take paracetamol up to four times a day to reduce any pain.

Who to contact?

Contact a healthcare professional if you think you might have a UTI, this could be your GP, a nurse, the community pharmacist, a walk-in centre or the NHS 111 service.

Treatment

There are different treatment options to discuss with your healthcare professional. Antibiotics should only be taken if prescribed by a healthcare professional. Always ensure antibiotics are taken as directed on the medicine label.

More information can be found on the NHS designated website –

www.nhs.uk/conditions/urinary-tract-infections-utis/

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Something to shout about



St Albans Parkrun, July

Remember our park run? Are you one of the people who joined us?

Well, turnout exceeded our expectations, and we all had a fabulous time. One of our staff came to support us and ended up running in her flipflops! That's dedication for you!

But we did not stop there! Midway surgery keeps promoting movement and physical activity within our practice. We log steps and share our achievements within our work community. In September our staff recorded over 6 million steps!!

At the bottom of the newsletter are some [pictures from our parkrun back in July](#). Remember, you can attend a parkrun whenever you want. It takes place every Saturday, it is free and open to ALL levels of fitness. You don't have to run. You can walk or even volunteer to help run the event.

To get involved visit the official parkrun website - <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/> or the St. Albans page - <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/stalbans/>

IT help sessions, September

This initiative proved a lot more popular than we expected. The small number of appointments on offer were snapped up within a few days. On the day we assisted patients in setting up the NHS App on their devices and familiarised them with the App and the eConsult service, available on our website, which is best used for non-urgent purposes such as administrative actions and queries. Feedback from patients tells us that the sessions were very helpful and that more sessions need to be offered. We will run more of these sessions soon. Look to our website and other announcements for updates. We would like to thank the Patient Participation Group members who volunteered to help us on the day. The sessions would have not been such a success without them!

Autumn has arrived



Days are getting shorter, winter is drawing near and the weather is getting colder. Risk of viral infection and exposure is getting higher. Midway is in the midst of the seasonal vaccination programme. For your protection, it is imperative that you have the Flu and/or Covid vaccine if you are eligible. Eligible patients would have been contacted by text or letter and invited to have the vaccine(s).

All in a day's work

Here are some statistics for the work we do – the figures are for the month of September 2023

Available Appointments 6,574
Booked Appointments 6,154



93.6%
Utilisation

Available Appointments 4,112
Booked Appointments 3,775



91.8%
Face to Face

Available Appointments 2,407
Booked Appointments 2,324



96.6%
Telephone

Booked Appointments 6,154
Cancellations 763



9.9%

Booked Appointments 6,154
Did not arrive 94



1.5%

New Registrations
62



Did you know?

Midway surgery operates a Blood Pressure monitor loan scheme for patients who need to monitor their blood pressure for a limited period of time.

Patients wishing to use the scheme should come to the practice to request the loan of a monitor. A cash deposit of £10 is required and will be returned to the patient when the monitor is returned.

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Midway Mastermind

Q. Which is your busiest day of the week?

A. Monday is the busiest day of the week – during July the average number of incoming calls for a Monday were 299.

Q. Which other St Albans GP surgeries do you collaborate with?

A. Midway Surgery is one of the 3 practices that work together as Alban Primary Care Network. The PCN practices work together collaboratively to provide shared staff and services equally across all 3 practices. We currently share First Contact Physios, a Mental health worker, pharmacists and a social prescriber.

Q. How many patients receive a flu vaccine each year at the surgery?

A. We have 4,737 Patients who are eligible for a flu vaccination in Autumn 2023. These are patients over 65 years old and patients aged between 18-64 years old who have an illness/condition that means if they contract flu they are at serious risk of complications due to their condition.

Q. What is the size of the Midway Surgery catchment area?

A. Doctors' surgery catchment boundary areas are usually set around post codes. Midway Surgery's catchment area is approximately 12.5 sq miles and covers the following post code areas – AL1 1, AL1 2, AL2 2, AL2 3, AL3 4,5 & 6

Q. How many patients are registered with the surgery?

A. At the time of releasing this newsletter we have 13,687 patients registered with us.

Q. Is there a limit on how many patients can be registered at Midway?

A. Not currently, we are obliged to register any new patients who live within our catchment area. We do not register any new patients who live outside of our catchment area.

Q. How many prescriptions are issued per week?

A. Our clinicians issue over 1,000 prescriptions per week. This includes new and repeat prescriptions as well as injections and vaccines.

Q. How many people call per week asking for test results?

A. We are unable to record test results requests as these are normally done on the phone or in person in the surgery.

Seasonal vaccinations

Our seasonal vaccinations programme started on the 16th September and is drawing to a close soon. There is still time though! If you are eligible, please book your flu vaccination. If you received an invitation, use the link provided. Otherwise, you can call reception to arrange.

Although clinics were set-up primarily to deliver the Flu vaccine, patients are given the option to receive the Covid booster at the same time.

We will provide more details on the scope and numbers of vaccinations in our next newsletter.



Are you finding our quarterly newsletter useful?

If you can spare a few minutes and would like to have a say, please follow the link to [complete a short survey](#) which will help us tailor future releases to our audience. Many thanks in advance from all of us at Midway.

Midway parkrun July 2023

