

# PATIENT NEWS

*The newsletter of Western Road  
Patient Participation Group (PPG)  
Spring 2025*



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At the last meeting of the PPG an update on a number of issues was given.

## Vaccinations

COVID vaccinations were offered for those over 75 and those immunocompromised, which was 50% of those eligible. Others booked with local service ie high street pharmacies.

## Nurses and Staff

A new Practice Nurse, Farzana Miah, starts work this week- she looks forward to meeting you! Sue, the Practice Secretary, is leaving after 10 years, and has been a vital cog in the smooth running of the practice. A new lady, Jill, has been recruited and has GP Secretary experience.

## accurx - Total triage system

The original survey as to how patients felt about the new system was carried out online, members of the PPG suggested they carry out a face-to-face survey with patients in the practice. The survey was carried out for a full week and a short questionnaire was used. It was pleasing that about 90% of patients had no trouble completing the form and felt they understood the process after the submission of the form. Being in the surgery, we were able to also find out how those not wishing or able to use the online form felt. The majority were pleased with the service although some were not aware that the receptionist was completing the form for them and that they were in the same system. One or two did not like having to wait before being given an appointment, feeling it was a delaying tactic. The majority of patients received their message regarding appointments etc. between 1 and 2 hours after submission. A common comment was that the online form saved sitting in a phone cue.

## Cardiovascular

It was raised that urgent referrals to the cardiovascular service could be in excess of 12 months. Obviously, the emergency service is still excellent. There is the stress on both the patients and clinicians to try and prevent an urgent situation becoming an emergency.

The control of one's **blood pressure** is a way to reduce the risk of cardio and other problems. To control it, **one actually has to know what it is**, the GPs and nurses monitor those under their care. There are, however, many who do not have to consult a doctor because of no obvious health problems. **MAY** is being treated as the **Measure/Month** to get your blood pressure read and if necessary, take the appropriate action. It is recommended that over 40s should take this seriously, free blood tests are available at pharmacies.

## **Dementia**

With the aging population dementia is becoming more common and impacting more patients, families and friends. **Dementia Action Week is May 19<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>**. In Billericay an information morning is organised each year by the **Billericay Dementia Friendly Community** (previously known as Dementia Action Alliance). BDFC is a group of organisations, businesses and services (and some individuals) in and around Billericay who want to work together to try to support people living with dementia and their families/friends/carers. The group is supported by the Essex Inclusive Dementia Communities team with links into the Alzheimer's Society.

This year 's event is on **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at the Chantry Centre from 10 am – 1 pm**. Everyone is welcome for a cup of coffee, a biscuit and a chat. The group welcome the public to provide information and advice based on their own speciality or service.

## **Charities**

It was brought to our attention that many of the larger health related charities do not give financial support to the local/area branches and the local teams rely on funding they find themselves. If you just want to make a donation to a cause that is not a problem but if looking to support the local group, it may be worth checking this out.

Remember if you want to drop us a line use [western.roadsurgeryppg@nhs.net](mailto:western.roadsurgeryppg@nhs.net)