



Westbourne Medical Centre Newsletter

Issue 2- 22nd November 2021



This is the second issue of the Westbourne Medical Centre (WMC) Newsletter jointly produced by WMC and the Patient Participation Group (PPG). The first issue was circulated on 23rd September 2021 to **14,284** WMC patients and was very much appreciated. However **if you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter please email your full name and date of birth to wmc.ppg1@nhs.net and ask to be taken off the distribution list.** Please also email us if you have suggestions for topics to be discussed in the Newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you! Please bear in mind that events are moving fast, and the most up-to-date information can be found on our WMC website: <https://www.westbournemedical.com/>

WMC Information & Patient Charter

We have updated the WMC Information and Patient Charter document. This contains lots of useful information and is available online here: <https://www.westbournemedical.com/index.php/about-us/patient-charter>. Paper copies are available at WMC.

Contacting WMC by phone

We are aware that some patients are having problems getting through to WMC by phone. This is partly because we are short of Patient Coordinators who answer the phones as well as staffing Reception. Being a Patient Coordinator is a challenging position. They are experiencing more and more aggressive behaviour from patients and indeed one newly recruited Patient Coordinator resigned just a few days after taking up her post. There are alternative ways to contact WMC by email patient.contact@nhs.net or by eConsult <https://westbournemedical.webgp.com/>

Some statistics – and thanks!

In October 2021 we administered **3699** COVID-19 booster vaccines across our Primary Care Network, which includes Winton and Denmark Road surgeries. We have also administered **2957** flu vaccinations. Unusually we also vaccinated some people who are not WMC patients but who were unable to be vaccinated at their own practice and joined the queue at WMC.

At a time when some local surgeries are not administering the flu vaccination or the COVID-19 booster, the members of the Patient Participation Group wish to thank Westbourne Medical Centre staff for 'going the extra mile' and achieving these results. We must add that PPG members assisted at the flu clinics and COVID-19 booster sessions by marshalling queues, identifying patients with mobility issues, and ensuring that they were fast-tracked to a vaccination point set up inside WMC.

In October this year we received **7876 phone calls** and made **7580 appointments**. Unfortunately, **156 patients did not attend** their booked appointments. Please inform us if you cannot attend an appointment so we can give it to another patient.

Blood tests

There is a national shortage of blood bottles which is affecting every healthcare service provider. We are currently only able to book urgent blood tests. However, we have a waiting list for patients' routine blood tests and once the situation changes and we receive stock, we will then be able to book patients in for appointments.

Clinical Pharmacist

As we mentioned in the September Newsletter, WMC is fortunate to have a Clinical Pharmacist, Steve Williams. Steve is a medicines expert who helps patients get the most benefit from their medicines, in particular older patients coming out of hospital and those with long-term conditions. He also works with the GPs, Clinicians and Patient Coordinators to improve the quality and safety of medicines usage at the practice, for example, the repeat prescription processes. More information can be found on this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/mtPITyV5YsE>.

Ordering prescriptions

Patients sometimes get confused about how to order prescriptions, so we have outlined relevant information below.

Patients on medication do not generally need to see their GP for a repeat prescription.

Except for insulin, contraception, strong opiate painkillers, inhalers and anticonvulsants, the doctors have stated that no harm will come to you if you miss a prescription for 24 hours and we ask that you allow us **24 hours to process an urgent prescription request**, as overhasty prescribing can contribute to mistakes.

Prescription requests cannot be taken over the telephone. This is our practice policy to safeguard patients from errors in prescribing.

If patients are keeping medication they no longer need or that have gone past their sell-by date, they should return the medication to a pharmacy.

All medications will be prescribed by their **generic name** as opposed to the brand name unless there is a specific indication. Generic medications contain the same active ingredients as the branded versions.

Repeat Prescriptions

We aim to process **repeat prescriptions within 3 working days** from when we receive them. They will then be ready to be collected from the surgery or your nominated pharmacy. Please take responsibility for ordering your prescriptions allowing for weekends/holidays etc. Routine repeat prescriptions can be ordered using the following options:

- Online using online services (SystemOnline / Airmid App) or the NHS App
- Using the ticked re-order form
- Through your normal Pharmacy

Non-repeat prescriptions

You may have had items issued before, but they have not been added to your repeat list for regular prescribing. These medications will need to be checked and authorised by a GP or clinical pharmacist. Consequently, this process takes longer, and the prescription will be issued within **5 working days** if it is approved.

Non-repeat prescriptions can be ordered via the NHS app, SystmOnline, Airmid app or at the front desk by completing a Non-repeat prescription form or by filling in the online form available on our website <https://www.westbournemedical.com/index.php/prescriptions/non-repeat-prescription>

Prescriptions on Hospital Advice

Hospital Doctors may advise that you should start a new medication or change a dosage. If the medication is urgent, the hospital Doctor should give you a 2-week supply or a prescription to obtain the medication from the hospital pharmacy. For non-urgent changes where you are not given a prescription in the hospital, your GP must wait for written confirmation from the hospital regarding the medication change. Please be aware that it can often take **up to 4 weeks** for hospital letters to reach your GP.

Nominated pharmacy

If you have nominated a pharmacy, all your prescriptions will go to that pharmacy by default unless you request otherwise. If you would like to change your nominated pharmacy you can do this by informing a new pharmacy, updating it via online services or informing WMC.

Using WMC Online Services

SystmOnline and the Airmid App allow you to manage your healthcare online at any time, at home, on your computer, smartphone or tablet, even when the surgery is closed. Over **8900 (45.9%)** of our patients have already signed up.

SystmOnline and Airmid enable you to:

- Order repeat prescriptions
- View your Summary Care Record
- Access your Detailed Coded Record, including test results
- Manage your data sharing preferences
- Change your nominated pharmacy
- Book or cancel appointments (This function is currently disabled due to the pandemic.)

By asking more patients to use SystmOnline or Airmid, we hope to enable you to be more in control of your health and well-being. As more patients use online services this will free up our phone lines so that if you do urgently need to speak to someone we can be there to help. We hope this will ensure a more convenient, accessible and efficient management of your healthcare.

To register, collect a form from Reception or download one from our website:

https://www.westbournemedical.com/images/SystemOnline_FORM_08.01.2020.pdf. When you have completed the form please return it in person along with photographic ID to one of our Patient Coordinators.

More information is available on our website:

<https://www.westbournemedical.com/index.php/services/online-services>

Many of the services listed above are also available on the **NHS App**: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>

Welcome to new staff

- Katharine Wade- Advanced Nurse Practitioner
- Kim Watson – Pharmacy Technician
- Katie and Julia - Patient Coordinators
- Pawel - IT Support
- David – Accounts Assistant

We are still actively recruiting Patient Coordinators to boost our team. More information is available on Indeed: <https://uk.indeed.com/>

Patient Participation Group

This Newsletter has been put together by Westbourne Medical Centre staff and the Patient Participation Group (PPG). The main aim of the PPG is to encourage effective communication between Westbourne Medical Centre and its patients. Any patient of WMC can request to join either the 'virtual' group (which communicates mainly through social media) or the PPG Committee which, in normal times meets every couple of months but which is currently conducting meetings via Zoom.

There is more information on the WMC website here:

<https://www.westbournemedical.com/index.php/your-wmc>

We have also just started a WMC PPG Facebook page, which we aim to use to get feedback from patients about WMC services and to disseminate information, such as these Newsletters. The link for the Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/136999118569687>

For more information or to join the PPG please email wmc.ppg1@nhs.net or contact the surgery by phone (01202 752550).

You might also be interested in the WMC Facebook page, which regularly provides information about WMC services:

<https://www.facebook.com/WestbourneMedicalCentre>

We also have a Twitter account: @WMC_GP

We welcome any feedback on the services of Westbourne Medical Centre. Please also inform us of any additional information you would like to be included in the next Newsletter by emailing wmc.ppg1@nhs.net