



Benfleet PCN

Primary Care Network

thekhanpractice.nhs.uk/benfleet-primary-care-network-pcn

November 2024 Newsletter

Benfleet **NHS** Primary Care Network is a collaboration of seven GP practices serving approximately 48,000 patients, from the Benfleet, Hadleigh and Thundersley areas in Essex.

Our PCN also includes:

Pharmacies, Community health services, Mental health services, Adult social care, Voluntary organisations, and our surgeries Patient Participation Group's.



Mid and South Essex

breathe easier this winter

Keep warm
to help your
lungs

midandsouthessex.ics.nhs.uk/health/winter/

#BreatheEasy



PCN Update

October was incredibly busy due to a surge of appointments for the PCN team as well as undertaking the Covid/Flu vaccination programme for care home and housebound patients.

Our PCN Manager was extremely proud of the team, especially with the Flu vaccination project being completed with over 900 patients successfully vaccinated in just 5 weeks! We are also pleased to report that the COVID vaccination programme is going equally well, serviced by the EPUT team.

Recruitment

- A new **GP** has now been recruited by the PCN and started on 14 Oct. She does 3 sessions per week and is working across 5 of our 7 surgeries.
- We are delighted to advise that a **Dietician** joined our PCN team in early November and will be working across all our Benfleet surgeries.
- **Women's Health Hub** – Our PCN are currently advertising for a Nurse who has experience in fitting coils and implants. If you know of anyone suitable for the role, please contact benfleetpcn@nhs.net

ICB Funding Grant

The ICB are providing an opportunity for our PCN to apply for a funding grant which we plan to use the funds to organise a **Well-Being** event which will focus on either Diabetes and/or CVD (Cardiovascular Disease). We will provide an update next month if we are successful in our bid with more details being published in early 2025.

PCN Website

Our PCN team are currently working with a new provider to create a refreshed PCN-PPG Benfleet website

As soon as the new site is up and running (hopefully by the end of this December), we will announce it in our newsletter, as well as your local surgeries publishing the link on their pages too. If you have any ideas or suggestions of articles or items to include, let us know via email to benfleetpcn@nhs.net

Election of PCN-PPG officers

The annual nominations for the **Chair**, **Deputy Chair**, and a new position of **Minute Taker** for our PCN-PPG took place in October with all PPG members voting. The members unanimously re-elected Susan Bailey and John Hall (Chair and Deputy Chair respectively) with Cheryl Kirby being the only nominee for Minute taker.

The full list of your PCN-PPG members for 2024/2025 are:

Susan Baillie	Chair	High Road Surgery
John Hall	Deputy Chair	Dr Khan & Partners, Rushbottom Lane Surgery
Cheryl Kirby	Minute Taker	St Georges Medical Practice, Rushbottom Lane Surgery
Terry Clarke	Member	Dr Khan & Partners, Rushbottom Lane Surgery
Freddy West	Member	Hart Road Surgery, Thundersley
Joe Cooke	Member	Hart Road Surgery, Thundersley
Joanna Masterson	Member	High Road Surgery
Rachel Clark	Member	The Hollies Surgery, Hadleigh
Tom Harrison	Member	The Hollies Surgery, Hadleigh

Children's Health Matters

Your essential winter health kit for home

Having a well-stocked medicine cupboard feel like a lifesaver during the winter months, especially when common illnesses like colds, flu, and stomach bugs are more prevalent.

For fever and pain relief

- Paracetamol or Ibuprofen: Suitable for both adults and children. **Always follow the dosage guidelines**

For coughs and colds

- Cough Syrup: for dry and chesty coughs.
- Nasal Drops: to relieve a blocked nose.

For stomach bugs

- Rehydration salts: essential when dealing with symptoms of diarrhoea.

For allergies and asthma

- Antihistamines: to treat minor allergic reactions.
- Inhalers: always have a spare in case of loss or if one runs out.

Other items to consider

- Plasters: in various sizes for minor cuts and grazes.
- Antiseptic cream: to treat minor burns, cuts, or bites.
- Fragrance free, hypoallergenic moisturiser: to treat dry skin that can be caused by dry indoor air.
- Thermometer: to monitor body temperature accurately.



Always have age-appropriate medications, such as child-specific cough syrups or pain relievers - [see advice from the Department of Health and Social Care on drug safety](#). If your child has a chronic condition like asthma, ensure that you have an adequate supply of the necessary medications.

Store all medicines in a cool, dry place out of reach of children. You should periodically check the expiry dates and replace as necessary.

Before administering any new medication to your child, consult with a community pharmacist or healthcare professional, especially if they're already on other forms of medication.

Having these essentials on hand will help you navigate through minor health issues during the winter.

**Carers
First**

Carers Support Hub “Drop In” sessions

**By carers
for carers**

**Thundersley Methodist Church, Kennington Avenue,
The first Wednesday each month 9.30-11.00**

Carers First works with over 39,000 unpaid carers. Directly with, and for carers, providing personalised information and tailored support in the way that suits them, helping them find balance, and making it easier for them to continue living their lives to the fullest.

Any of our lives can be turned upside down as a result of ill health, disability or frailty of a member of our family or a friend.

Carers First understand that caring can be hard, but believe getting the right help shouldn't be. That's why, Carers First work with both carers and external partners, such as local councils, to deliver support services to carers across local communities.

Many people do not classify themselves as a carer as they are a partner, married, friend, neighbour, or family member so they do not realise the support and benefits they could be entitled to.


Carers First representative for Castle Point, Stephen Sedge, encourages clients to apply for a Wellbeing Grant and also check to see if they are eligible for pension credit so they can get the winter fuel money. He does the same with Attendance Allowance as many do not claim when they are entitled to.

There is lots of helpful information on their website www.carersfirst.org.uk Such as, planning for emergency situations so that the cared-for will not get overlooked, i.e., if the carer is hospitalised or for some unexplained reason is unable get to them.



get  better

For patients who suffer with joint pain of any kind, there is a new app called getUbetter The App can help you build your own personalised programme for beneficial exercises. You can either get a referral from your GP or you can self-refer yourself by finding the link on your surgery website or click on the link below.

Our PCN has previously advertised information about this but there was a very poor take up, which is why we will be supplying surgeries with new posters to promote the App again and to make more patients aware of the benefits of using get  better

So why not download the App and see if you can benefit positively by using it?

How do I download and use getUbetter?

1. Follow the link to access your local health service www.getubetter.com
2. With the same email address, create an account on the App.
3. Follow the instructions on the app, get your recovery plan and get **YOU** better!

General Practice needs your help. Every practice across England is struggling.

GPs value their patients. We know that most patients value us too, especially when they need us regularly. You know we can deal with most of your health problems, keep you out of hospital, and have your best interests at heart.

GPs want the same things that you do. We believe nobody should struggle to see their family doctor.

Your GP is an expert in general medical practice – trained over 10 years to deal with complex problems, spot serious symptoms, and decide when you need specialist help at the hospital. But did you know that your practice receives just £107.57 per year for each patient, whatever their health needs. That's less than the cost of an annual TV licence.

It's just 30p a day for every patient registered with us That's less than the cost of an apple.

The BMA believe general practice deserves a bigger slice of NHS funding so we can train and hire more GPs, deliver the services you require and make it easier for you and your loved ones to get appointments to see your GP and practice team.

How can you support your family doctor?

1 Talk to election candidates

When local or general elections are due, the BMA encourage you to ask any of the election candidates who you come across, regardless of which party they stand for, what they will do to support our general practices. What positive changes will they influence to get back an effective appointment system, more GPs in our surgeries and any other health issues that you feel they should address.

2 Join the surgery's Patient Participation Group

Your practice has an active patient participation group (PPG), which you can join to support the practice and influence the way they deliver local services.

To join the PPG at your surgery, just email your name and surgery name to:

BenfleetPCN@nhs.net

Patients can receive PPG correspondence, take part in discussions and attend regular meetings with the surgery.

General Practice needs your support.

To read more about how the BMA is fighting to improve general practise and recruit more GPs across England, please visit <https://www.bma.org.uk/our-campaigns/gp-campaigns/patients/gps-are-on-your-side>

Hybrid closed loop technology for patients with Type 1 diabetes

The NHS is planning to gradually offer hybrid closed loop (HCL) technology to eligible people with type 1 diabetes over the next five years, following national guidelines, with an aspiration to move faster where possible.

In mid and south Essex, this technology has been available for some priority patients, based on individual needs, for several years. Plans are being developed to make this technology more widely accessible, and details on how it will be rolled out to broader groups of eligible people are still being finalised.



Hybrid closed-loop systems are the next step in the evolution of diabetes technology as it links Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) with insulin pump technology. However, given clinical capacity constraints in the NHS, and ongoing workforce specialist training requirements, the introduction needs a phased implementation over a 5-year period.

Currently, hybrid closed loop systems will only be considered in very specific cases, such as when someone has disabling low blood sugar, even when using both an insulin pump and a CGM. By prioritising the implementation of hybrid closed loop technology on the basis of clinical need and cost effectiveness in the interim, we believe we will be in a better position to manage the wider implementation, developing our capacity and workforce in readiness for the increased demand. This will enable us to ensure equitable access to technology and appropriate care for our population.

What is currently available in mid and south Essex?

Standalone insulin pump therapy (CSII) is available for people with type 1 diabetes aged 12 and over if they:

- Experience severe low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia) with daily injections, or
- Have high blood sugar (HbA1c levels of 8.5% or more) despite trying to manage their diabetes well with daily injection.
- They must also have completed an NHS-approved diabetes education course, like [DAFNE](#)

TOGETHER



Your surgery needs YOU!
Join your surgery's **Patient Participation Group**

**With both staff and patients pulling together,
we can create a health care that works for us all**

You too can be a part of this
Just email your name and surgery name to: - BenfleetPCN@nhs.net

