



HEATH LANE MEDICAL CENTRE SUMMER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Heath Lane Medical Centre's quarterly newsletter! As always, we aim to keep you up to date with news and advice from both within and outside of the practice.



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<https://www.instagram.com/heathlanemc/>

Dr Jim Cherry

Rest in peace

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Dr Jim Cherry, who died unexpectedly on 15th April 2026.

Jim worked throughout the Chester and Shropshire area for over 20 years as both a locum and salaried GP and will be remembered by many across local practices and the wider community.

He leaves behind his daughter, son and daughter in law, and his granddaughter Sophia, who was born just two days after his passing.

Our thoughts and deepest condolences are with Jim's family and friends at this very difficult time.



Dr Chris Fryar has retired


After working at Heath Lane Medical Centre for over thirty years!

I joined the practice in 1994 when it was Tarvin Road Medical Centre. The partners at that time were Drs Henry Bodsworth, Allan Pullin, Frances Evans-Jones and Tim Saunders. By the 1990s the practice had outgrown the small, purpose-built surgery building on Tarvin Road (currently the Storrar Vets Practice). There were only three doctors' consulting rooms and, on certain days, the GPs had to share rooms by doing consecutive morning surgeries! In 1995 we moved to the brand new building on Heath Lane where each doctor had the luxury of working from their own room.

I became a partner when Dr Allan Pullin retired in October 1995. Shortly afterwards, Dr Wanda Hargreaves joined the partnership following the retirement of Dr Bodsworth. More changes meant that for the majority of my career I worked in partnership with Dr Tim Saunders, until the final phase with Drs Susan Wall and Zoe Thompson-Shaw.

During the three decades of my career, primary care medicine evolved significantly. It increased in complexity with more focus on preventative medicine and, as a result, the team expanded well beyond the days of a few GPs working with a practice nurse or two.

When I started my general practice training in 1989, we recorded our notes in paper Lloyd-George folders, and even repeat prescriptions had to be hand-written by the reception team in preparation for signing! The introduction of computers and their development has transformed the work we do, allowing us to provide much more comprehensive care for our patients.

A portrait of Dr Chris Fryar, a middle-aged man with short brown hair, wearing a grey suit jacket over a light pink shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a solid teal color.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my career as a doctor but the years in primary care have been by far the most satisfying and fulfilling. It has been an absolute privilege. I have worked with the most incredible teams of people, with everyone playing their part to ensure we have strived to provide the very best care for those who have placed their trust in us as patients.

I would like to thank my colleagues for all their help and support and you all for the many good wishes I have received on my retirement.

Dr Chris Fryar

Patient Feedback

We always welcome feedback from our patients, here are a few comments we have received over the past few months:

- “A brilliant GP, who we are so grateful to for all support, advice and care for our family over the last 2 decades”
- “Lots of parking, easy to get an appointment and really friendly staff.”
- “The staff at Heath Lane are lovely and they'll always try their best to help, whatever the issue.”
- “Fantastic service. Called for an appointment Tuesday; appointment Thursday. Thorough examination and my concerns addressed in full and with patience and kindness.”
- “My first use of the new Enhanced Hours service worked perfectly when our elderly neighbour needed medical attention late on Monday afternoon. My wife rang the practice, sent a photo of the problem and received a call back within the hour. Appropriate medication prescribed and collected from pharmacy next morning.”
- “I have been with this surgery since I moved to Chester. They have always been great to deal with. The ladies on the reception desk are lovely and are always able to get an appointment within just a few days!”

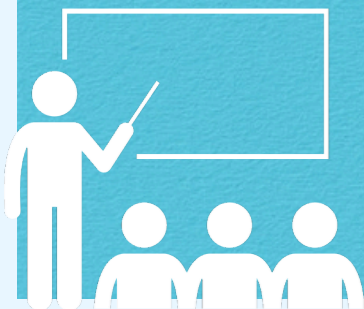


Staff Training Dates 2026

- Wednesday 10th June
- Thursday 9th July
- Wednesday 9th September

The surgery will be closed for staff training on these days from 1pm, we will reopen at 8am the following day.

NHS 111 will be available to assist you while we are closed.



Missed Appointments

Please remember if you cannot attend your appointment to contact us to cancel it ASAP. Your appointment could be offered to another patient who urgently needs help.

Between March and May there were **106** missed appointments 17 hours of appointments lost across the whole clinical team.

Here is how our practice has been supporting patients

From March to May :

- Number of appointments booked - 4,533
- Number of new registrations - 110
- Number of prescriptions issued - 4,045
- Number of referrals done - 589
- Number of blood test requested - 1,732



Did you know that we have a Facebook and Instagram page?
You can click on the icon to be taken through to our page!
We share lots of useful information and practice updates on our pages as well as on our website.



Travel Health & Holiday Medication Advice

If you are planning a summer holiday, it is important to prepare for your healthcare needs before travelling. Every year, GP practices receive a high number of urgent prescription requests from patients travelling at short notice, which can place additional pressure on GP services.

We kindly ask patients to check their medication in advance and request repeat prescriptions early.

Before travelling, remember to:

- Pack enough medication for the duration of your trip
- Keep medicines in their original labelled packaging
- Carry medication in your hand luggage if flying
- Check whether you need a doctor's letter for certain medications
- Ensure you have suitable travel insurance

If you are travelling abroad, it may also be worth checking whether any travel vaccinations or health precautions are recommended for your destination. Some vaccinations require several weeks to become effective, so early planning is essential.

For more advice on travel vaccination please visit:
<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/travel-vaccinations/>

Alcohol Awareness Week

During the summer months, social events, holidays, and gatherings can often lead to increased alcohol consumption. While many people drink responsibly, regularly drinking above the recommended limits can affect both physical and mental health.

Drinking too much alcohol can increase the risk of:

- High blood pressure
- Liver disease
- Poor sleep
- Anxiety and low mood
- Weight gain
- Accidents and injuries

Small changes can make a big difference, such as:

- Having alcohol-free days each week
- Alternating alcoholic drinks with water
- Choosing smaller portions
- Drinking more mindfully in social situations

If you are concerned about your alcohol intake or would like support, please speak to a healthcare professional. Help and advice is available.



Using NHS Services Wisely This Summer

GP practices and NHS services often experience increased demand during the summer months. Choosing the right healthcare service can help you receive appropriate treatment more quickly and ensure emergency services remain available for those who need them most.

Many common conditions can be treated without needing a GP appointment. Community pharmacists are highly trained healthcare professionals and can provide advice and treatment for minor illnesses such as:






- Sore throats
- Coughs and colds
- Minor skin conditions
- Earache
- Infected insect bites
- Minor aches and pains
- Sinusitis

NHS 111 is also available 24 hours a day for urgent medical advice when you are unsure what to do.

Please remember:

- GP appointments are best for ongoing, complex, or non-urgent medical issues
- Accident & Emergency departments should only be used for serious or life-threatening emergencies

By using NHS services appropriately, patients can help reduce waiting times and improve access for everyone in the community.

Self-care	Pharmacy	GP	Minor Injuries	A&E/999
Hangover. Cough. Sore throat. Grazes. Small cuts.	Diarrhoea. Earache. Painful cough. Sticky eye. Teething. Rashes.	Arthritis. Asthma. Back pain. Vomiting. Stomach ache.	Cuts. Sprains. Strain. Bruises. Itchy rash. Minor burns.	Severe bleeding. Breathing difficulties. Severe chest pain. Loss of consciousness.
				
<p>Self-care is the best choice to treat minor illnesses and injuries.</p> <p>A large range of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply with over-the-counter medicines and plenty of rest.</p>	<p>Pharmacists advise and treat a range of symptoms. This can avoid unnecessary trips to your GP or A&E department, and save time.</p> <p>No appointment is needed and most pharmacies have private consulting areas.</p>	<p>GPs and nurses have an excellent understanding of general health issues and can deal with a whole range of health problems.</p>	<p>Minor Injuries Units, Walk-in Centres and Urgent Care Centres provide non-urgent services for a range of conditions.</p> <p>They are usually led by nurses and an appointment is not necessary.</p>	<p>A&E or 999 are best used in an emergency for serious or life-threatening situations.</p>

Staying Active During Summer

Summer is an excellent opportunity to stay active and enjoy outdoor activities. Regular movement and exercise can improve both physical and mental wellbeing, increase energy levels, and help maintain independence as we get older.

Activities do not need to be intense to provide health benefits. Simple activities such as:

- Walking
- Gardening
- Light cycling
- Swimming
- Gentle stretching
- Outdoor social activities

For older adults in particular, staying active can help improve balance, reduce the risk of falls, and maintain muscle strength. Even small amounts of regular activity can make a significant difference.

When exercising outdoors, remember to:

- Wear comfortable clothing and supportive footwear
- Take regular breaks when needed
- Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest parts of the day
- Drink fluids regularly
- Listen to your body and avoid overexertion

If you have a long-term health condition and are unsure which activities are suitable for you, please speak to a healthcare professional for advice.

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/>



GP Out of Hours moving site

From Monday 18 May 2026, Upton Lea Integrated Hub, a £5.3m refurbished site on the Countess of Chester Health Park, will become the new home for GP Out of Hours support.

It will also be the new home for a number of other services provided by Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust from the end of May including:

- All-age 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line
- Adult and Children and Young People Mental Health Crisis teams
- West Cheshire Community Mental Health and Home Treatment teams
- Cardiac Rehabilitation service
- Out of Hours Community Nursing

For GP Out of Hours support, patients should continue to seek urgent support from NHS 111. Calls to 111 are free, as long as the mobile phone is in credit. NHS 111 can also be [accessed online](#). The service may be able to resolve the problem, or they may pass a call to the GP Out of Hours Service.

The new address for the location will be:

Upton Lea Integrated Hub
Countess of Chester Health Park
Liverpool Road, Chester
CH2 1BQ

Whilst patient parking is available on site, this can be in high demand at peak times. Please allow additional travel time or alternatively make best use of drop off zones and public transport where possible.

A park and ride service is also available:

- Service PR3 runs between Upton (Zoo) Park and Ride and the Countess of Chester Health Park, with a special discounted ticket price of £1.50* for hospital passengers:
- Operating hours: Monday to Saturday: every 15-20 minutes, last bus at 7 PM
- Sundays & public holidays: every 15 minutes, last bus at 5:30 PM
- No service on: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day.

For more details for public transport in Cheshire West, please visit:
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/public-transport/bus-timetables-route-maps>

Managing Long-Term Conditions During Warmer Weather

Warmer temperatures can sometimes affect people living with long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or respiratory illnesses.

It is important to continue managing your condition carefully during the summer months and not to overlook symptoms simply because you are feeling more active or travelling more frequently.

Patients with asthma or breathing conditions may notice changes due to humidity, pollen, or air quality. Those with diabetes should monitor blood sugar levels carefully, especially during changes in routine, increased activity, or travel.

Helpful reminders include:

- Continue taking medications exactly as prescribed
- Attend any scheduled reviews or monitoring appointments
- Carry inhalers or essential medication when away from home
- Keep medications stored correctly, particularly during hot weather
- Seek medical advice if symptoms worsen

If you have concerns about managing your condition over the summer, please contact the practice for advice and support.

For more information please visit: <https://healthieryou.org.uk/>



HEALTHIER YOU

NHS LONG TERM CONDITIONS PREVENTION PROGRAMME



Sun Awareness

Sun Awareness Week is an annual public health campaign aimed at educating people about the risks of excessive sun exposure and promoting sun-safe behaviours. The goal is to reduce the incidence of skin cancer, including melanoma, by encouraging protective measures.

Key Messages

1. Protect Your Skin

- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30.
- Wear protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses.
- Seek shade, especially between 11 am and 3 pm, when the sun is strongest.

2. Avoid Tanning Beds

- Artificial UV light can increase the risk of skin cancer.

3. Check Your Skin Regularly

- Look for new moles, changes in existing moles, or unusual skin spots.
- Early detection greatly improves treatment outcomes.

Target Audience

Everyone, but particularly children and young adults, who are more susceptible to long-term sun damage.

Importance

- Skin cancer rates have been rising, making awareness and prevention vital.
- Educating the public about safe sun practices can reduce long-term health risks.

Further Information

For tips on sun safety and skin checks, visit the NHS website:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/skin-cancer



Enjoy the sun safely

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- Cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses
- Take extra care with children
- Use at least factor 30 sunscreen.

NHS App

The NHS App allows you to access a range of NHS services, you must be aged 13 or over and registered with a GP surgery in England to be able to register.

The NHS App enables people to:

- Order repeat prescriptions and set or change their nominated pharmacy
- Book and manage some appointments, including hospital appointments
- View your GP health record to see information like your allergies and medicines
- Register your organ donation decision
- Choose how the NHS uses your data
- View your NHS number
- Get health information and advice

For more information please visit: nhs.uk/nhs-app

Download the app here:



Members of our Patient Participation Group will be running some drop-in sessions over the coming months to help patients get set up with using the NHS App. Keep an eye out on social media for upcoming session information.

A graphic advertisement for the NHS App. It features a hand holding a smartphone with the NHS logo on the screen. The background is dark blue with various medical icons like a stethoscope, pills, and a heart. The NHS logo is in the top right corner.

**Download the NHS App
and take control of your
healthcare**

Register now for quick, convenient
access to your health and care records.

NHS Screening



You might feel well, but screening can identify risks you can't see. It's offered at different ages to help keep you healthy throughout life.

Are you a carer?

Do you have a carer or are you someone that cares for a spouse, family member or friend?

There are many unpaid carers in our community who have not been identified, usually because they do not see their role as 'a carer' and are therefore not aware of the services and support available to them.

If you have someone that cares for you or you are a carer, please ask our reception team for a Carers' information leaflet.



"We need your feedback"

The NHS Friends and Family Test



Your feedback will help us learn more about what you think of your experience at our surgery, what you like and what you think we could improve on.

Ultimately, you are helping us make changes to ensure we can offer the best possible care.

You can find our 'Friends and Family Test' by clicking [here](#).

Military Veteran's (Ex- Armed Forces)

Heath Lane Medical Centre is an accredited Veteran Friendly GP practice. We are proud to support our Armed Forces community. If you are a veteran patient, please let us know that you have served so that we can make sure that we understand your health needs.

The Veteran Friendly Practices accreditation scheme is run by the Royal College of General Practitioners in partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvements.



**Armed Forces veteran
friendly accredited
GP practice**