

**Working together to maximise
the health and wellbeing of
individuals and our community**



**Weardale
Practice**
COMMUNITY HEALTH
& WELLBEING

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Patient Newsletter December

Welcome to the December edition of The Weardale Practice Patient Newsletter.

It's been a busy year and we wanted to let you know about everything we're doing, and to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We want everyone to look after themselves and each other this winter - so if you're eligible for a flu vaccination, do please make an appointment to get one soon. It's the best way to avoid a nasty illness this festive season.

As well as keeping warm at home, dressing for the weather with plenty of layers, hats, gloves and scarves, we'd encourage you to also regularly check in on elderly relatives and neighbours. Just 5 minutes of your time to make sure they're ok and have what they need is time well spent.

If you have concerns about an elderly neighbour, you can contact Age UK on **0800 055 6112**.

Don't forget the Practice will be open across the majority of the festive season - we're only closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

For any advice or treatment during these times, please call 111, or if it is an emergency call 999.

You Said We Did

To make sure as many patients as possible were able to get their annual flu vaccinations, we have sent text message reminders to all eligible patients during October and November.

Texts and emails are a great way for us to share important news with you and send reminders about appointments and reviews. If we don't currently have your number or email address, or if you've recently changed your details, do please pop in and we'll get your record updated.



Why not sign up for our SMS text messaging service to receive appointment reminders amongst other useful services.



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News & Updates

A huge thank you to the more than 1,000 Weardale residents who took part in our recent survey, and shared their thoughts on the future of healthcare in the Dales. Our findings will be published very soon, so keep an eye on the Practice website and our Facebook page, the Weardale Gazette and elsewhere for more information.

We're excited to launch eConsult - your new online resource for self help guides and GP consultations. It's part of our ongoing innovation to bring you the best possible health and wellbeing services, and we think it'll make a really big difference to all of us.

With eConsult you can check your symptoms anytime, anywhere, and receive on the spot medical advice and treatment guidance, be it in the middle of the night or when you're out and about during the day. All you need is a computer, phone or tablet with an internet connection.

You'll be guided through a series of questions - exactly the same as your GP would ask you in

person - and you choose the replies that best match your symptoms.

One of our GPs will then review your answers, and either give you a call, suggest some treatment or refer you for a follow up appointment. And they'll get back to you by the end of the next working day too.

To find out more about all the medical and administrative services eConsult can offer you go to theweardalepractice.nhs.uk and look for the eConsult link, pick up a copy of the eConsult leaflet, or ask at reception.

Have you signed up to our online services yet? If you haven't you're missing out! The system allows you to book, amend or cancel appointments, request repeat prescriptions and access your medical records all from your phone, tablet or computer, any time, day or night.

To register for these great online services, just pop into one of the practice locations with some photo ID and we'll get you set up right away.



How We're Doing

Last month, **91%** of people who completed our Friends and Family survey said they would recommend the Weardale Practice to those close to them - thank you to everyone who took part. Your feedback is really important to us, and your suggestions will help us make positive changes in the future. **Thank you.**

Access Our Online Services

Want to book an appointment or order your repeat prescription? Online services are available for all of our patients, meaning you can access information anywhere, at anytime.

The system is easy to use, and is accessible with any computer, tablet or smartphone with an Internet connection. Please visit the practice to find out more information and get signed up.

Follow Us On Facebook

The Weardale Practice is now on Facebook! Make sure to give us a follow in order to get the latest news straight to your News Feed, including health advice, practice opening times and much more.

Find us by searching Weardale Practice.

"Good telephone follow up to arrange appointment. Welcoming, friendly staff."

"Always a prompt and helpful response which is much appreciated."



Inside The Weardale Practice

Warm Welcomes... to Trish Barron-Heavisides and Glenis Moses, both of whom joined the administration team in October. You'll see both Trish and Glenis on reception, answering the phones and around the practice helping the team make everything run smoothly.

Mark Dillon also joins The Weardale Practice as our new Emergency Care Practitioner (ECP). Mark comes to us having completed a Nursing degree at Teesside University, and is currently studying for a Masters in Advanced Practice.

The role of an ECP is rather new, and it's worth explaining how, as a key part of the GP Team, Mark will be diagnosing and treating a range of minor illnesses and injuries, including prescribing medication. ECP's were introduced to help give speedier access to health services for patients, and we hope you'll welcome Mark into this new and exciting role.

In Other News... a double well done to our Senior Nurse Manager Helen Crowther who, in addition to starting an exciting sabbatical in September as a Clinical Nurse Supervisor to NHS England, has also been shortlisted for the National General Practice Awards! Helen is nominated in two categories - 'Practice Nurse of the Year' supported by Nursing in Practice, and 'Women's Health Initiative Award'.

In October, 26 members of The Weardale Practice staff, their family and pets walked the nearly 9 miles from Rookhope to Stanhope, raising £1,350 for the wonderful Hug in a Bag charity - taking our total to £2,200. Well done everyone!

The next cause we will be raising money for is the **Teesdale and Weardale Search and Mountain Rescue**, and all proceeds from our Christmas Raffle will go to them.

We have a fantastic first prize of a handcrafted Harris tweed footstool gifted by local craftsman Stephen Parkes. Second prize is a luxury hamper, and a range of other exciting prizes can be won.

Tickets are 50p each and available from all branch sites. We'll draw the winner on 21 December. **Good luck!**

