

## **Sixpenny Handley and Chalke Valley Practice Newsletter February 2021**

As the second wave of Covid-19 begins to ease we are delighted that over 30% of our total population has received their first vaccine already. For those who had their vaccine at The Michael Herbert Hall or are housebound, you will be contacted to arrange your second vaccine within the twelve week time frame for second vaccines. The site at Wilton does not get a guaranteed delivery date that far ahead and this is why you have not been given the date for your second vaccine yet.

### **Broad Chalke Surgery**

We are working towards being able to open Broad Chalke Surgery two mornings a week for medication collection sometime soon after Easter and then increase our services and opening hours according to how the easing of Lockdown is going, following the government's laws and guidance. During the pandemic we have had staff members who have needed to self-isolate or shield and if their job is impossible to do from home their shifts have to be covered by their colleagues. We are one practice, we do not have separate staff for each site and apart from our dispensary staff we all work at both sites.

We have invested in recruiting extra staff during the second wave of the pandemic so that we are in a better position to successfully open up services at Broad Chalke. Please understand it takes time to train new staff, usually six months. Please also be aware that booking your Covid-19 vaccines requires a full time receptionist and administrator. We remain incredibly grateful to the volunteers who continue to support us and you.

We will give you warning of when you can collect medication from Broad Chalke including for those of you who order your medication monthly in advance (deferred order).

### **Online Pharmacies**

Please be aware we do not support on line pharmacies despite what they might say in their advertising material. If they contact you directly this is nothing to do with us, your GP practice, and they have not been given any information about you from us. They take essential income away from the practice that would mean that when the pandemic is over and life returns towards normal, we will have to restrict our services. For many years we have been able to support lengthy opening hours of both our sites solely due to the income generated by dispensing medication to our patients. If we lose this income then services at Sixpenny Handley and Broad Chalke that are not compulsory for us to deliver as a GP practice will have to be cut back. This would include some phlebotomy services and how many sessions per week both sites are open. Our dispensary itself could be at risk of closure. Rural GP surgeries are an important part of their communities and we will always strive to run a sustainable service.

## Wellbeing and Mental Health

We are very aware of the impact the pandemic is having on the wellbeing and mental health of everyone and we would encourage you to seek help from us if you feel depressed, anxious, or lonely and are finding life very difficult. You can also seek help from the following organisations

### [Where to get urgent help for mental health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

[www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/](http://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/where-to-get-urgent-help-for-mental-health/)

- [24/7 Support & Connect](#) / 0800 0126549: a free confidential 24/7 helpline for people. This is staffed by experienced counsellors, who will offer emotional support and can connect people to local organisations available in the local area. If English isn't people's first language, translation support is available.
- Alabare: Sanctuary (5pm-10pm 7 days a week), 01722 466 680
- Samaritans - call 116 123 or email [jo@smaritans.org](mailto:jo@smaritans.org)
- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) for men - call 0800 58 58 58 5pm to midnight
- Papyrus - for people under 35 - call 0800 068 41 41 10am-10pm Monday to Friday, 2pm-10pm weekends, 2pm-5pm bank holidays, email [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)
- Childline - for children and young people under 19 - call 0800 1111
- The Silver Line - for older people - call 0800 4 70 80 90
- The Avon and Wiltshire Partnership (who provides NHS mental health services for our population 24/7 helpline is also still available on 0800 953 1919

## Find my NHS number

[A new service](#) is now live to help find your NHS number. This service is for anyone living in England who has forgotten or does not know their NHS number. You can also use this service on behalf of someone else where the name, date of birth and registered home postcode is known. You can opt for the number to be sent to you by text, email or letter.

[www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number)