

# St Martins Practice LISTENER

Spring 2020



CATCH IT.



BIN IT.



KILL IT.

NHS

## Happy Birthday !

Do you have a Long Term Condition? If so, you will know that we ask you to come in every year for a review (twice a year if you have diabetes, or are a child with asthma). Other long term conditions are: hypertension (high blood pressure), asthma, lung disease, heart disease. These reviews are important so you keep control of your condition, stay as healthy and well, and we are able to prescribe you medication which is effective.

From April 2020\*\* we are improving how we manage these reviews. In future you will be invited in the month of your birthday (called a Birthday Month Review). And if you have more than one condition, they will all be reviewed at the one visit. (Before, some patients came in several times for different review appointments).

**\*\*Birthday Month Reviews are taking place by phone or video only during the pandemic. These reviews are important to maintain your wellbeing so please make yourself available.**

We are changing how we send invitations. We will no longer send letters, but instead will telephone you book the appointment. We will send a text beforehand so you know your review is due. If you have told us that you prefer not to get texts, then we will still telephone you to book the appointment. If you would prefer in future to continue to receive your invitation in a letter then please let us know. All affected patients will get a final letter, explaining the improvements in more detail.

**What should I do?** Just wait to receive your text / telephone call invitation and we will talk you through it. If the length of time between your last review & your next birthday month is over 15 months –then in 2020 you will have a one-off “step up review” which is not in your birthday month, and then your Birthday Month Reviews will start in 2021.

## Covid-19 the NHS is still here to look after you

We have been touched & heartened by the kind & supportive messages we have received in past weeks. Thank-you: it's made a difference to us.

**We remain open, working only by phone & video.** If you are unwell or notice any changes to your body, please contact us. Unexplained symptoms can sometimes be an early sign of cancer or underlying health condition.

Call us on 0113 22 11 888, especially for:

- Concerns regarding ongoing conditions
- Ear discharge / pain
- Rashes
- Stomach ache
- Any cancer symptoms: such as breast lump, changes in bowel habit, blood in your pee or poo, unexplained weight loss, changing moles, or a cough for 3 weeks)

The small number of people needing a physical exam will be asked to come in under new arrangements to keep everyone safe, including being given a face mask.

Call 999 for life-threatening emergencies & you'll be treated in a safe, low risk environment. Do not leave anything to chance, your NHS is here for you.

### Keeping healthy at home

We can all get out daily for a walk, run or bike ride: we encourage you to do this if you can. Or, there is lots you can do at home to be healthy: <https://active.leeds.gov.uk/healthyathome/>

### Doing Good Leeds

For support with anything from money to food, Doing Good Leeds will connect you to local services. You can reach them on 0113 3781877 or [doinggoodleeds.org.uk/](https://doinggoodleeds.org.uk/). Doing Good Leeds has also developed a Good Neighbour Pack, for people supporting neighbours & communities through Covid19, to be confident & safe.

### Mindwell

Many of us are feeling anxious and worried at the moment. Mindwell, the mental health website for people in Leeds, has lots of resources that can help [www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/](https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/)



#### Patient Group news

This issue we hear from Gilda Peterson, a member of our Patient Group.

I was prompted to start attending the Patient Group when Government plans to boost outsourcing of health services in 2012 jolted me into realising that the survival of the NHS as I knew it was under threat.

I was lucky to be born just before the NHS was set up in July 1948 & everyone became entitled to free health care. We had rosehip syrup to compensate for rationing & free milk at school.

Since I retired I have campaigned with *Keep Our NHS Public & Reclaim Social Care* to press for a national Social Care Service along NHS lines. I volunteered until lockdown in A&E at LGI.

My heart goes out to NHS hospital staff now giving their all to deal with unprecedented demand despite under-funding, 100,000 vacant posts & equipment shortages including PPE.

Intensive care is in the spotlight now but General Practice remains the front line of health care. It provides over 300 million consultations each year, compared to 23 million A&E visits but in the last seven years one in six GP practices have closed or merged & GPs have retired faster than they can be replaced.

I am impressed that St Martins has managed to stay afloat & ahead of the curve & firm on its principles, rooted in a sense of community service & a recognition that social factors have an important role to sustain wellbeing; having a reasonable income, decent housing, social networks, meaningful occupation etc.

It is heartening to see the Practice continuing to resist special inducements from pharmaceutical companies to buy their products & has seized the opportunity to access special funds to work for those who are most likely to suffer health inequalities do not lose out on health care.

This week I say three cheers, huge thanks & respect to all our practice staff who are keeping the wheels turning. I hope that the Patient Group will carry on supporting the practice to withstand harsh & variable political winds & continue to stick to its principles & stand up for its patients.

Gilda

#### Our Patient Participation Group

Interested to join our Group either in person when meetings resume or via email?

- Speak to Michaela Noble in Patient Support
- Complete the *Contact Us* form on the Patient Group page of the website

#### Order your repeat medication safely

Many more patients are now getting the benefits of using our online ordering system to get their repeat medication. We get good feedback about it because you log in to the clinical system and see the same list of repeat medication that we see. So it's the safest, quickest way to order: errors are the least likely to happen. We encourage all patients to order their medications online.

There is also now the new NHS App, which some patients are telling us is more user friendly and has the same functions (download from Play Store).

#### Improving your wellbeing

Lots of people are being motivated to improve their health and wellbeing because of the Covid19 pandemic, and have contacted us for advice. Below are some useful sources of information and support right now.

[One You Leeds](https://oneyouleeds.co.uk/) can help you quit smoking, move more, eat & cook well, and lose weight. They have online, video & telephone support available. <https://oneyouleeds.co.uk/>

For example for **Stopping Smoking**, One You Leeds has 1-1 & group based support available via video link or telephone; can provide Nicotine Replacement Therapy by post and they will liaise with us to provide Champix as usual.

To support **Managing Your Weight**: One You Leeds continues to deliver its 12 week group course, but now by video link. This is 6 sessions delivered over 12 weeks 1-1 with a coach, plus supporting resources sent out by post/email.

[Forward Leeds](https://www.forwardleeds.co.uk/) is the alcohol & drug service for Leeds, and can support you to manage your alcohol or drug use. During the pandemic they are still open to support you if you wish to start reducing or stopping for alcohol or drug use, they have also changed to all phone and video appointments. Reach them on 0113 887 2477 or <https://www.forwardleeds.co.uk/>

#### Pharmaceutical industry in healthcare

St Martins has always had a policy of not working with, or accepting hospitality from, pharmaceutical companies.

We have recently written a position paper about this which [is available to read on our website](#) if you may be interested. Our patient group discussed it in October 2019.