



PATIENT NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025

Staff updates



We are pleased to announce a new member of staff, Michelle Balson, who joined us recently as an ANP.

"I'm a newly qualified Advanced Nurse Practitioner and am delighted to have recently joined the team. I spent many years working as a Practice Nurse, where I gained experience in diabetes care, asthma and COPD management and enjoy meeting patients and helping people to feel better about their health. I have a particular interest in women's health, especially menopause care. I have completed my MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice at the University of Plymouth, and I also hold an MSc in Psychology. I'm really enjoying settling into my new role here and everyone has been incredibly welcoming."

"Wishing all our patients a very Merry Christmas and healthy New Year! From all the practice staff..."



Flu & Covid Clinics

Another successful round of flu and covid clinics took place during October. We were able to vaccinate the following number of patients. Thank you to everyone that took part to make it a success!

- **FLU**
- Over 65s - Vaccinated: 2487 (Eligible: 3164)
- Under 65s - Vaccinated: 713 (Eligible: 1558)
- **COVID**
- Vaccinated: 1484 (Eligible: 2032)



Practice news

Blood pressure machines

Please note that the surgery is no longer able to lend blood pressure machines—apologies for the inconvenience this may cause. Devices can be purchased from most pharmacies or online.

Who can get vaccinated this winter? NHS Somerset			
	Covid-19	Flu	RSV
75 years and over	✓	✓	✓*
65 years and over	✗	✓	✗
Children age 2-3 and school age	✗	✓	✗
Immunosuppressed (age 6 months +)	✓	✓	✗
Pregnant women	✗	✓	✓

*if you're aged 75 to 79 or if you turned 80 years old after 1 September 2024

Message from the Volunteer & Engagement officer BNSSG

As part of our commitment to communities in North Somerset and from our Local Advisory Group, we identified that we needed to look deeper at additional services within GP surgeries and if any changes have had an impact on the local community. After initial desktop research we have developed a survey for residents of N. Somerset to complete that will help highlight certain areas.

We are asking for your help to circulate the survey to as many residents, groups and organisations you know of to get the best possible results. Here is the link to the survey:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/GPSurveyNS/>



Other News

Continuity of Care

Our practice is working to improve continuity of care, but what does that mean for you?

At this practice, we believe you will get the most effective care if you have a strong relationship with your Doctor or Nurse. Seeing the same person when you attend is one way of strengthening that relationship and we are working hard to make sure that is possible.

Why are we doing this?

Over the past few years, there has been lots of publicity about how important it is to see your doctor quickly, but there is also lots of evidence that seeing the same person is just as important as seeing someone rapidly.



What sort of evidence?

If you see the same person, or small team of people, over a number of appointments then the levels of trust between you both are likely to grow. Studies have shown that increased trust leads to a better experience because patients are:

- more satisfied and more likely to have a good relationship with their GP
- less likely to have to go to A&E or be admitted to hospital
- more likely to follow the advice they are given and take positive steps to look after their own health
- more likely to receive good quality of care
- will not need to go to hospital so often

Are there any disadvantages?

It may be that sometimes we will ask you to wait a little bit longer for an appointment so that we can make sure you see 'your' doctor (or nurse). If you have an urgent problem, we will always make sure that you are seen as quickly as we can.



Building trust with your doctor

Our practice is working hard to improve continuity of care so you receive the best service possible



Focus on Referrals -Weight management

We receive many enquiries to refer to the Tier 3 Weight management clinic, namely Oviva. There are strict criteria that needs to be met before we can consider submitting a referral and some of these are noted below. If your BMI is less than 50 you will also need to provide at least 2 years of recent engagement with a Tier 2 provider, i.e Slimming World, Weight Watchers or North Somerset Council's Better Health programme – we would not be able to refer without this information.

- BMI of over 35 **with** co-morbidities (established cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, obstructive sleep apnoea, NASH or idiopathic intracranial hypertension) **and** patient has actively/persistently engaged with losing weight over the last 2 years with a structured tier 2 or equivalent programme.
- BMI of over 40 without co-morbidities **and**

What is Jess's Rule?

Jess's Rule is a primary care initiative to encourage GPs teams to rethink a diagnosis.

Jess's story -Jessica Brady passed away due to cancer in December 2020 at the age of 27. In the 5 months leading up to her death, Jess had 20 consultations with her GP practice, and her cancer had not been diagnosed.

Jess was then admitted to hospital with stage 4 adenocarcinoma and passed shortly afterwards. Since then, Jess's family have campaigned for primary care staff to elevate a patient's case for review after their third appointment with their practice about a condition or symptom.

How Jess's Rule will benefit patients

Under Jess's Rule, listening carefully to the patient's concerns and taking note of each symptom remain crucial, recognising that patients are experts about what feels normal for their body. Joint decision-making between the clinician and patient remains key in this process.

It is asking for GP teams to rethink the accuracy of their diagnosis, really listening to the patient and taking note of each symptom or concern. This may mean seeing a patient face-to-face and conducting a physical examination if previous consultations have been remote.

Jess's Rule encourages consistency of care but prompts GP teams to consult with one another to jointly reconsider any red flags that have been missed that could point to another diagnosis, and to challenge any assumptions that may have been made based on a patient's age or demographic.

patient has actively/persistently engaged with losing weight over the last 2 years with a structured tier 2 or equivalent programme.

- BMI of over 50 – no evidence needed.

There are other factors that need to be considered, for example, mental health issues, no history of an eating disorder, substance misuse, not pregnant and a willingness to a long term commitment in making lifestyle changes. If you feel you meet the above criteria, then please submit an askmygp query.

Jess's Rule
Three times // Time to rethink

Jess's Rule

Three strikes and we rethink

If a patient presents three times with the same symptoms or concerns, particularly if symptoms unexpectedly persist, escalate, or remain unexplained, it's time to rethink.

- Reflect:** Think back on what the patient has said and consider what has changed or been missed. Offer ongoing continuity of care with follow-up. If previous consultations have been remote, see the patient face-to-face and conduct a physical examination.
- Review:** Where underlying uncertainty exists, consider seeking a view from a peer and review any red flags that may suggest another diagnosis, regardless of the patient's age or demographic.
- Rethink:** If appropriate, refer onwards for further tests or for specialist input.





Community

Take Control of Your Health: Navigating Festive Temptations and Diabetes Prevention



Join **Living Well Taking Control** for a free webinar raising awareness about managing festive temptations and preventing type 2 diabetes. We'll share valuable insights and practical tips to help you enjoy the season while keeping your health on track!

We'll cover:

- ✓ How festive eating, drinking and lifestyle choices affect your health
- ✓ Practical ways to stay healthy this season
- ✓ How to achieve balanced nutrition and stay hydrated
- ✓ Simple ways to add more movement to your day
- ✓ Tips for managing stress effectively
- ✓ Strategies for improving sleep quality



Tues 16 Dec
12:00-12:40pm

<https://managing-festive-temptations-and-diabetes-prevention.eventbrite.com>

HEALTHIER YOU
NHS DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAMME



Are you a Parent or Carer of a child aged 6-12 years?

Does your child have a diagnosis of ADHD and are they experiencing sleep problems?

The University Hospital of Southampton and Southampton Clinical Trials Unit are running a study. The study aims to test whether a new website **Sleep Buddy**, which has been designed by medics and psychologists, improves sleep problems in children aged 6-12 years with an ADHD diagnosis.

You can take part if...

- ✓ Your child is aged 6-12 years.
- ✓ Your child has a diagnosis of ADHD (including ADD).
- ✓ You have noticed that your child is experiencing problems falling asleep.
- ✓ You can read and understand English without assistance.

How do I find out more?
Visit the **study website** by scanning the QR Code, or follow this link https://www.trial-deck.com/trial/sleepbuddy?reg_code=8QEzucRmu

You can also **contact the study researcher** by calling **0330 1334 689** or emailing sleepbuddysupport@soton.ac.uk

University Hospital of Southampton NHS Foundation Trust | NIHR | NHS | Sleep Buddy Flyer **RBDN South-West Central (GP Poster)** | Version 1.08 Dec 2024 | IRAS ID: 349971 | REC reference: 25/W5/0007

Dementia Support Group in Winscombe

Join our **FREE**, friendly group for people living with dementia and their carers. Sessions include activities that support memory & wellbeing, plus info and guidance.

All are welcome, whether you have a dementia diagnosis, or are worried about your memory. Carers are invited to come alone, or bring those they care for. Refreshments provided - we'd love to see you there!

Winscombe Community Centre, Sandford Rd, BS25 1JA

Friday 24th October, 10am-12pm
Friday 21st November, 10am-12pm
Friday 19th December, 10am-12pm

Contact us if you have any questions:
info@aliveactivities.org or 07861 385 543

aliveactivities.org | 07861 385 543 | Pop:Chantry 1132708

MENTAL FITNESS FOR MEN.

What is mental fitness?
Well it's not sudoku for a start. It's like physical fitness, but for your mind.

And one way you improve it, is to talk about your worries.

It's what Talk Club is based on. From peer to peer talking groups, to Talk & Move and Talk Club Therapy.

We're on a mission, to help every man over 18 look after his mental health. Because a mentally fit man is good for everyone.

Join us! TalkClub.org | @TalkClubCharity
Registered Charity Number 1080888 | Talk Club is a talking community for men 50+

Time to Talk Pre-Diagnosis and Carer Support Chats

A new monthly support space for carers and those with early memory concerns

What we're offering:
An informal, friendly and confidential one-to-one chat with a Dementia Adviser. Whether you're supporting someone or experiencing memory concerns yourself - this is your time, your space.

Where?
Tamar Court, Trenleigh Drive, Worle, Weston-Super-Mare BS22 6BU

When?
🗓️ First Tuesday of every month, 1pm to 3pm
Individual timeslots of 30-40 minutes

What you can expect:

- A friendly face and someone who'll listen
- Tailored tips, information and guidance
- Helpful Alzheimer's Society factsheets
- A confidential, safe space to offload

If you're already registered with Alzheimer's Society, this is a brand-new, extra layer of support just for you.

Interested in booking a slot?
We'd love to hear from you.


📧 maisie.lax@alzheimers.org.uk | ☎️ 07598 065556

Together we are help & hope for everyone living with dementia





NHS
North Bristol
NHS Trust



Are you a Bristol, North Somerset or South Gloucestershire resident affected by cancer?

Cancer may have affected you, or someone that you care for.

Our team are looking for more patient and carer partners with lived experience of cancer to join us. Our patient and carer partners hold us accountable, enhance the patient experience & show us what better looks like.

Together, we work to improve hospital cancer services.

For more information
Email: cancerPCS@nbt.nhs.uk

Feeling unwell and don't know where to go?

-  **Self-care at home**
Visit NHS.uk to check your symptoms and find out how to treat minor illnesses at home.
-  **Ask your pharmacist**
Pharmacists will advise you on medicines and help with common problems like coughs, colds, rashes and allergies.
-  **Speak to your GP**
For health concerns that won't go away.
-  **Contact NHS 111**
When you're not sure what to do and it's not life-threatening, visit 111.nhs.uk or call 111.
-  **Minor Injury Units**
For injuries that need urgent attention, but are not life-threatening, such as cuts, sprains and minor burns.
-  **A&E**
For life-threatening illness and injury.

Patient feedback:

Thank you to all our patients who took the time to provide some feedback.

- *A very helpful consultation and good response time.*
- *Thank you for speedy reply.*
- *Very quick and helpful service as usual*



Do more with the NHS App!

-  Order repeat prescriptions
-  Book appointments
-  View your records

And much more...

NHS

Join your **Patient Participation Group**

PPGs represent patients and provide feedback on GP practices, helping to drive change



Join the Patient Participation Group

The local Patient Participation Group meet quarterly with the aim to provide a link between patients and the staff at the Surgery. If you would like to be involved in any way, please submit your interest by email for the attention of the Practice Manager -

bnssg.winscombebanwellsurgery@nhs.net

Winscombe Practice Hillyfields Way, Winscombe, BS25 1AF – Tel: 01934 842211
Opening hours: Monday — Friday 08:00 — 18:30

Banwell practice Westfield Road, Banwell, BS29 6AD
Opening hours: Mon - Fri 0830 –1730 (Thurs closed from 1300)

Email: bnssg.winscombebanwellsurgery@nhs.net
Website: www.winscombebanwellsurgery.nhs.uk