



# Much Birch Surgery

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[www.muchbirchsurgery.co.uk](http://www.muchbirchsurgery.co.uk)

# Newsletter

# July 2023

# Contacting Much Birch Surgery

## By telephone

01981 540310, phonelines are open from 8am to 6pm  
(6.30pm for urgent queries)

## In Person

At the surgery

## Online

Via your NHS App or the homepage of our website  
[www.muchbirchsurgery.co.uk](http://www.muchbirchsurgery.co.uk)

Click on the below link.

We will answer your query by text or email.



**If your query is urgent please always telephone**

## Working with The Herefordshire GP Federation

As many of you will already know, there have been many changes at the practice. In the last year the surgery has gone from five GP partners to two.

Dr Downing retired in April 2022. Dr Johnson chose to leave the partnership and become a salaried member of staff in October 2022 and Dr Howe left the practice in March 2023. Dr Baxter remains a salaried GP at the surgery.

You will be aware that GP recruitment, particularly into partnerships, is increasingly difficult and despite our best efforts we have been unable to attract any new partners. Therefore, the current workload previously shared across 5 partners has fallen to us. With management and clinical resource challenges, we have been working with our GP Federation, Taurus Healthcare Ltd, to see how they could help us ensure the future resilience of Much Birch. The Federation was formed in 2012 by all the practices on Herefordshire (who are all shareholders) to provide such support and also deliver general practice services on behalf of surgeries too, for example our evening and weekend hubs on Thursdays and Saturdays.

They have provided some strategic management advice as well as workshops reviewing our clinical modelling and delivery, focusing on better access to our services and enhancing patient experience. They will shortly be providing two new clinicians starting in the coming months, namely a new Advanced Nurse Practitioner and GP starting in October, plus a new virtual Pharmacist service, whilst we continue to seek a permanent role based at the practice.

We are committed to ensuring Much Birch Surgery remains a thriving Primary Care Practice and that it retains its current ethos and position in the community. We are very lucky to have a wonderful staff team who go above and beyond to ensure patients are at the heart of the practice, and for this we are very grateful.

With best wishes

Dr Avril Seftel & Dr Dominic Horne

## Mobile phones

A really positive development is the use of text messaging as a means of communication at the surgery. Please update us if you have a new mobile phone number as we do use it as one of our main sources of communication. If you do not wish to receive text communication, please opt out by speaking to a member of the Reception team.



## NHS App



Many of you will have already signed up to the NHS App to download your covid passports for travel. Did you know you can order your medications and view upcoming appointments using this same app? And soon you will also be able to view your medical record from here. Lots of patients still use the *Patient Access* website or app to order their medications but what many don't realise is the NHS now has it's own dedicated app for this. Because it is NHS it avoids the ads as well as providing some really useful healthcare information at your fingertips. You don't need anything from us to sign up, simply go to [www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/) to download the app on your mobile phone.

Ask us if you need help!

## Patient Access to Medical Records

From 31 October 2023 all patients will be given online access to their prospective medical record. Patients will be able to see their consultations, medical information, blood results , order medication and more, using the NHS App. You might already have the NHS App from having a covid vaccination passport previously, but otherwise you can download the NHS App and register online.

See [www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/)

# Dispensary

**The Dispensary is open for collections and queries 09:00 - 17:00 Monday to Friday.**

For the summer months, due to rising temperatures, we have relocated the collection point to inside the building, within the Dispensary. The times for collection remain the same, **9am—5pm** but please walk through the surgery to the dispensary at the rear of building. Please knock on the dispensary door and someone will be with you as soon as possible. To follow current guidelines and legislation the door must remain closed and we will have a trained member of staff on hand to help you collect your medication. Please be patient and respectful to our staff.

## Repeat Prescriptions

Patients on long-term medication can order prescriptions in the following way:

- In person—post your prescription slip in the box provided outside the main entrance
- Online—via the NHS App or other online provider such as Patient Access

We require **5 working days' notice** to dispense medication. Please bear this in mind when ordering. Repeat prescription requests received after 1pm will not be processed until the next working day. Please also remember to take weekends and bank holidays into account when ordering medications.

As of 1st April 2023, the new **HRT prescription payment certificate (PCC)** is now available and costs £19.30 per year. This can be used against a list of eligible HRT items, including patches, tablets and topical preparations. The HRT PCC can be used as many times as needed over 12 months. Telephone advice and order line 0845 850 0030.

# Travel

If you are going travelling and need travel/vaccinations advice please make sure you complete and return one of our Travel Questionnaires, at least 6 weeks prior to your holiday. You can find the questionnaire on our website or pick one up from the surgery.



## Herefordshire Remote Health (HRH)

When ringing the surgery with an urgent query that needs same day advice, you may be offered a telephone call with one of our HRH (Herefordshire Remote Health) team.



HRH is a team of GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Physicians Associates who operate between practices across Herefordshire, providing telephone appointment support in daytime hours.

They are highly skilled, knowledgeable and experienced and very much part of our surgery's team. All HRH practitioners have access to your full patient record. They can send prescriptions to our dispensary or any community pharmacy, as appropriate.

If, during your phone consultation with the HRH clinician, it is decided that you do need a face to face appointment, this appointment will be here at the surgery as usual.

We have been using this service since the Autumn and have had very positive feedback from patients.

## Enhanced Access (EA)

Taurus Healthcare's Enhanced Access service offers weekend and evening appointments at eight hubs across Herefordshire. Much Birch Surgery has been used as one of these hubs since September 2022, and currently hosts the service on alternate Thursday evenings and one Saturday each month.

The hubs are run by a rota of Herefordshire's GPs. The Enhanced Access team have full access to your medical records, for continuity of care.

All EA appointments are available by contacting the surgery as normal.

# Care Navigation

When you contact the surgery our Receptionists may ask you a little about your medical issue so they can navigate you to the most appropriate person or organisation:

## **Advanced Nurse Practitioners**

We have a number of Advanced Nurse Practitioners who support the Practice with both urgent and routine patient care. Our fully qualified ANPs are independent prescribers and can deal with a plethora of medical issues and are under the constant support and supervision of our GPs.

## **Paramedics**

Another part of the urgent clinical team at Much Birch Surgery are our Paramedics. They deal with many of our same day urgent issues as well as visiting housebound patients for urgent care.

## **Practice Nurse and Healthcare Assistants Team**

Our extremely experienced nursing team offer specialist care in chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma and COPD as well as offering wound care, childhood health and vaccinations, delivery of injections, taking of bloods and advice on travel and immunisations.

## **Pharmacist**

We have a clinical pharmacist, Dena Hazrati. Dena will telephone patients to review their medications and make sure patients are informed and educated on their use of medications.

## **Physiotherapist**

If you have bone, muscle or joint pain you can see a specialist physio at Much Birch Surgery, instead of the GP. 97% of patients using this service would recommend it to their friends and family (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*).

Lucy Head is our Physiotherapist and has enhanced skills which can help patients with musculoskeletal issues such as back, neck and joint pain by:

- \* Assessing and diagnosing issues
- \* Giving expert advice on how best to manage their issue
- \* Referring them onto specialist services, if necessary

Please speak to a member of our Reception team to request a First Contact Physio Appointment.

## Health & Wellbeing Team:

**A Social Prescriber** advises and helps enable access to non-medical support available in the local community.

**Health & wellbeing coaches** focus on improving health related issues by setting personal, achievable goals. They work alongside other healthcare professionals in your surgery to identify what motivates you and to find a way to help you make choices that improve your lifestyle. They are a non-judgmental person who can spend time with you to talk about something that has been impacting your health and wellbeing. Please ask Reception for more information.

## Primary Eyecare Service

The NHS offers an EyeCare Service via a number of local opticians. If you have an eye problem they are the best team for you to contact. They offer same day advice and appointments. You can self refer to the NHS Primary Care Eyecare Service (no charge) by calling one of the following opticians:

BBR Optometry, Hereford, 01432 265030

Vision Express, Hereford, 01432 342433

Boots Opticians, Hereford, 01432 352860

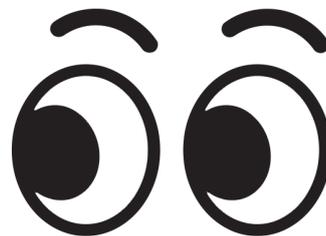
Specsavers Opticians, Hereford, 01432 353464

Specsavers Opticians, Ross-on-Wye, 01989 564460

Scotts Opticians, Ross-on-Wye, 01989 567244

Ashton & Daniels, Ross-on-Wye, 01989 562173

(The above are providers based in Hereford and Ross, there are other providers further afield also, these can be found at [www.primaryeyecare.co.uk](http://www.primaryeyecare.co.uk))



## Sexual Health 4 Herefordshire

A free and confidential sexual health service from an easily accessible clinic in Hereford that provides advice on all types of contraception and STI testing .

We offer contraceptive implants but not COILS/IUCDs .

These are available Sexual Health 4 Herefordshire:

01432 483693 or [www.sexualhealthservices4herefordshire.co.uk](http://www.sexualhealthservices4herefordshire.co.uk)



Sexual Health Services  
4 Herefordshire

**Community Pharmacists** are available at any local pharmacy and can provide advice and treatment for many minor ailments such as:

Acute sore throat

Conjunctivitis

Coughs, colds and nasal congestion

Cradle cap

Dandruff

Diarrhoea (adults)

Dry eyes / sore tired eyes

Earwax

Excessive sweating

Haemorrhoids

Head lice

Indigestion and heartburn

Infant colic

Infrequent cold sores of the lip

Infrequent constipation

Infrequent migraine

Insect bites and stings

Mild acne

Minor burns and scalds

Mild cystitis

Mild dry skin

Mild irritant dermatitis

Mild to moderate hay fever

Minor pain, discomfort and fever (e.g. aches and sprains, headache, period pain, back pain)

Mouth ulcers

Nappy rash

Oral thrush

Prevention of tooth decay

Ringworm / athletes foot

Sunburn

Sun protection

Teething / mild toothache

Threadworms

Travel sickness

Warts and verrucae

## Advice & Referral Team, Social Care

For initial contacts, help and support in accessing adult social care and to arrange care and carer assessments (including equipment for the home) and financial assessments, contact the Advice and Referral Team: telephone 01432 260101 Email: [ASCAdviceandReferralTeam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ASCAdviceandReferralTeam@herefordshire.gov.uk)



To enquire about an upcoming hospital appointment, please call the Hereford Referral Management Centre on 01432 383100 between 9-5, Mon-Fri. Please choose option 6 and ask for the relevant department.

## Patient experience team Wye Valley Trust

The patient experience team at County Hospital can help sort out problems and queries on your behalf, regarding the hospital. They can be contacted Mon-Thurs 8.30am-5pm and Fri 8.30am-4.30pm by calling 01432 372986 or by email [pals@wvt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@wvt.nhs.uk)

## Bladder and Bowel Team

For incontinence issues, you can refer yourself to the Bladder and Bowel team, by calling: 01432 378933 The team are based at Gaol Street Clinic, Hereford.



## Pregnancy Services

If you are newly pregnant, you can self-refer to Hereford Community Midwife Team by completing the online form using the following: <https://www.badgernotes.net/SelfReferral/CareLocation/Step2> Newly pregnant patients are advised to take folic acid which you can get from any community pharmacy.

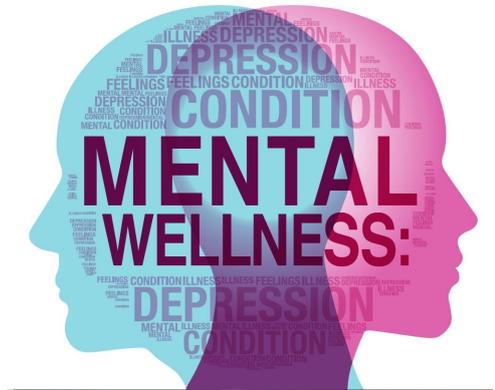
## Healthy Minds

Herefordshire Healthy Minds support people who are experiencing difficulties such as stress, anxiety, low mood and depression. You can self-refer by completing the online self-referral form using link below, or call 01432 220 507 between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

<https://www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk>

## QWELL

Click the below link for free, safe and anonymous online mental wellbeing support for adults across the UK. Qwell <https://www.qwell.io/>



**We Are Farming Minds** is a charity that has been set up to offer mental health support within the local farming community. Helpline: 0808 802 0070 Text: 07786203130 [www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk](http://www.wearefarmingminds.co.uk)

## Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Below is a link to the Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services website, that has useful information for support: <https://camhs.hacw.nhs.uk/home>

## Kooth- Online Wellbeing Service

Kooth is a FREE, anonymous, confidential, safe, online wellbeing service offering information and forums for children and young people aged 11-25 years old. Access 365 days a year to counselors who are available from: 12 noon-10pm Monday to Friday 6pm-10pm Saturday and Sunday. You can log on through mobile, laptop and tablets. <https://www.kooth.com/>

## Drugs & Alcohol Addiction Support

Contact Turning Point for alcohol and drug addiction advice and support, for patients and their families. Call 0300 555 0747 or visit <https://www.turning-point.co.uk/services/herefordshire>

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