

# OSWALD MEDICAL CENTRE

## WELLNESS MAGAZINE

ISSUE NUMBER 2, OCTOBER 2024

**WELCOME** to issue number 2 of our quarterly patient magazine. As you'll know we are well into our flu clinics and lots of work has been happening to get this underway. This year, we were asked to vaccinate pregnant ladies and children age 2 and 3 from 1<sup>st</sup> September and all other patients from 3<sup>rd</sup> October. This slight change is to ensure that patients are offered comprehensive protection in line with the flu season in the UK.

Lots more has been happening in the surgery which we love to tell you about so put your feet up and take 5 minutes to read our latest wellness magazine!



Oswald Medical Centre would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to our newest volunteers and PPG members! Without your help and support we would not have been able to offer the children's flu fighters parties, the Saturday flu clinics (raising money for Parkinson's UK) and address areas of improvement. We've also celebrated our successes with you so it's great to have you on board! A special mention to **Imogen, Tom, Carole** and **Michael**.



### DR SHARMA'S COLUMN

Welcome to edition 2 of the Wellness Magazine. As you know I write a regular column for patients sharing insights from my work as a GP in the surgery and hopefully providing some hints and tips for patients along the way.

My highlight for this edition is the new RSV vaccination which you may have read about, seen in the news, or even had your invite to book from the surgery.

The respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine is a free vaccine that protects against the infectious disease that causes respiratory illnesses.

In the UK, the RSV vaccine is available to:

- Adults who turn 75 on or after September 1, 2024, up to age 79
- Women who are at least 28 weeks pregnant on September 1, 2024

The vaccine helps your body build immunity to RSV, so you can fight off infections more easily.

The vaccine can reduce respiratory infections in adults by over 85%. It's likely that you'll have a milder RSV infection that doesn't last as long if you do get it after being vaccinated.

All vaccines are tested for safety, quality, and effectiveness before they're used. Their safety is also monitored while they're in use.

RSV is a common virus that causes coughs and colds, and most people get it several times in their life. While it usually gets better on its own, it can cause serious illnesses in some people, especially babies and older adults.

**So, my advice to patients (as with all vaccinations) is when you get your invitation or if you think you are eligible, call us and book your appointment. It's safe, effective and free (and you might just save yourself from a few nasty bugs!).**

# Want to help save the NHS £££ money? It's easier than you think!

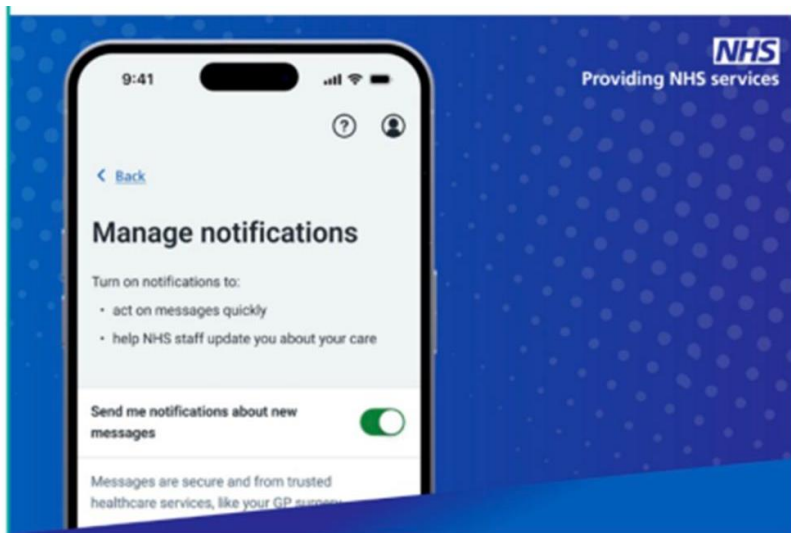
As you know we are always looking at ways to keep in touch with patients but each contact usually has a cost attached to it. Our surgery pays for text messages we send to you (up to 8.8p each) and postal letters cost approximately £1 each to send second class. But... there are some FREE ways – so read on to find out how you can help us and the NHS!

## Switch on your NHS App Notifications

Text messages sent to patients can be sent via the NHS App for FREE if patients download the app and turn on their notifications. This is not the case for all apps so we'd recommend downloading the NHS app onto your smart phone, PC or table and using this. Once downloaded if you switch on notifications, text messages can be sent free of charge by the surgery. If you are struggling, please book an appointment (face to face and video consult are available) with our NHS App ambassadors for 1:1 support and tutorials.

## Let us have your e-mail address

Emails sent to patients are always free of charge and we aren't restricted by character counts, meaning our communications are more informative. Please let us have your email address (you can do this on our website) so we can start sending you emails rather than letters and texts.



Switch on your NHS App notifications to make sure you are receiving your healthcare reminders and updates.

### To enable notifications on the NHS App

- Log into the NHS App
- Go to More
- Select Account and Settings
- Select Manage Notifications
- Use the toggle to turn notifications on

This may take up to 24 hours to take effect. If you use the app on multiple devices, you'll need to allow notifications on each device.

A screenshot of the NHS website's 'Change / Update Personal Details' form. The form is titled 'Change / Update Personal Details' and includes a navigation bar with links for Home, Appointments, Prescriptions, Our Services, Surgery Information, and Health Information & Support. The form contains a dropdown menu for 'Please select the practice location most relevant to this Online Form submission', a 'Previous Details' section with a 'Full Name' field, and a section for 'Can you provide your Previous NHS or Patient Number?' with a dropdown menu and an 'NHS Number' field.

You can update your contact details at any time securely on our website  
[www.oswaldmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.oswaldmedicalcentre.co.uk)

# FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

Any patient can take our friends and family test to help us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve. September saw us with an all-time high rating **(92% of patients rated us as good or above)** so thank you to everyone who took part!

Here is what some of our patients have said....

*Brilliant staff. Need I say more  
Excellent family service.*

*As always the staff are ever so friendly and the doctors go above and beyond to help you*

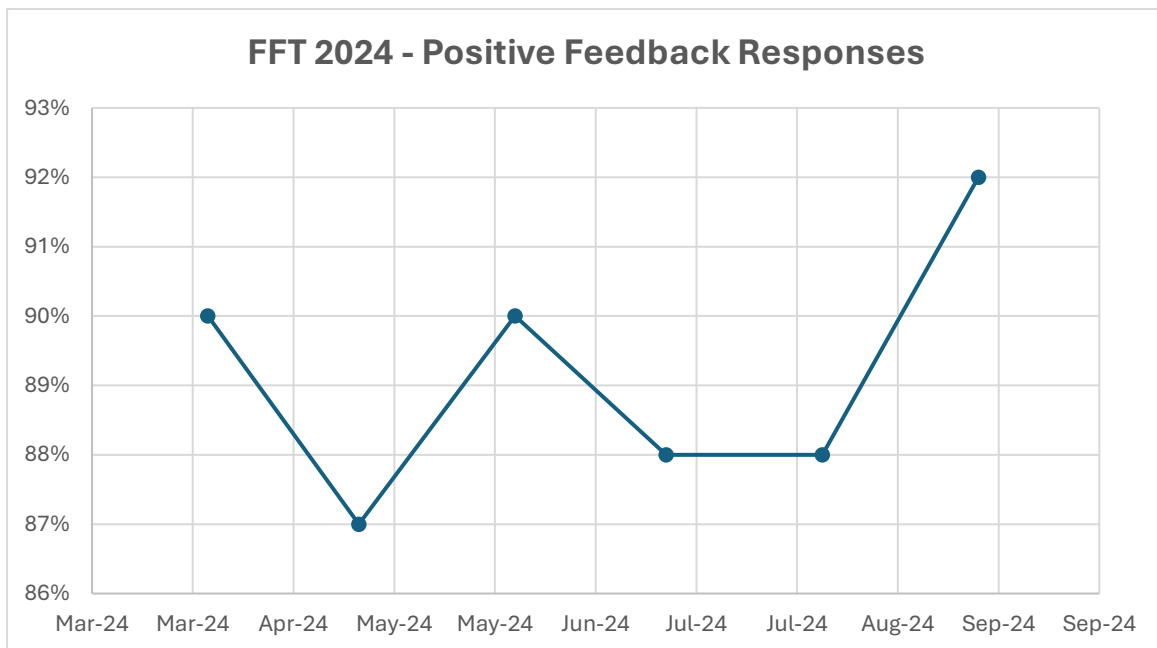
*PROMPT and pleasant service*

*The staff are very good at their job*

*Brought my 2 yr old for his nasal flu vaccine. Oh my word, I can't praise the surgery enough- they'd set up the room with balloons and goody bags so it felt really lovely for the children. Best experience I could have wished for as part of any vaccination service. Thanks so much.*

*No issues to report*

*I arrived on time for my appointment. Reception staff were polite and friendly and directed me to my appointment. I was treated with respect and dignity at my appointment and feel my issue was investigated thoroughly and I was issued with a prescription and advice of future plans.*



**Take the FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST on our website today**

# What is your Cholesterol level?

High cholesterol is when you have too much of a fatty substance called cholesterol in your blood.

It's mainly caused by eating fatty food, not exercising enough, being overweight, smoking and drinking alcohol. It can also run in families.

You can lower your cholesterol by eating healthily and getting more exercise. Some people also need to take medicine.

Too much cholesterol can block your blood vessels. It makes you more likely to have heart problems or a stroke.

High cholesterol does not usually cause symptoms. You can only find out if you have it from a blood test.

High cholesterol can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke and patients who have heart disease, history of stroke/TIA, peripheral arterial disease or kidney disease need to be especially mindful of their cholesterol to manage their risk. The great news is that there are lots of things you can do to manage your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke:

- Have your yearly blood test to check your cholesterol levels
- Take up any offer of statin therapy or lipid lowering therapy if you are eligible
- Give up or cut down smoking if you smoke
- Eat a health diet that's full of fresh fruit and vegetables and fibre rich foods and cut down on salt, fat and sugar
- Increase your activity levels

**Don't forget, we're here to help you manage your risk....**



## Had an asthma attack or COPD exacerbation?

**If you have asthma or COPD it's important to present at the surgery for your yearly review. Patients who have an asthma attack or COPD exacerbation should also book in for a review to help reduce the likelihood of a further episode.**

As children and young people return to school, there's often a spike in asthma attacks. This year, the [#AskAboutAsthma](#) campaign is focused on helping young people live their best lives—because asthma should never hold them back! Good asthma control means having no symptoms, and it's crucial to support them in managing their condition at home, school, and in the community.

Follow These 4 Essential Steps:

**Get an Asthma Action Plan:** A personalised action plan, created with a clinician, makes you four times less likely to need hospital care.

**Master Inhaler Techniques:** Proper inhaler use is key—many children don't receive the guidance they need. Let's change that!

**Schedule Regular Asthma Reviews:** An annual review and check-ins after every attack ensure the condition is managed effectively.

**Consider Air Quality:** Always discuss the impact of indoor and outdoor air pollution on asthma. Clean air means healthier lungs!

Let's work together to make sure asthma doesn't limit any child's potential.



**Online consult is a secure and convenient way to contact the practice.... It's available on our website.**

**Go on... give it a go!**

Please describe the medical problem  
For example, I have back pain

Type response here

500 characters remaining

+ Attach a photo (optional)

How long has this been going on for? Is it getting better or worse?  
For example, 2 weeks, it is getting worse

Type response here

500 characters remaining

Have you tried anything to help?  
For example, I have tried physio which helps a little

Type response here

500 characters remaining

Is there anything you are particularly worried about? (optional)  
For example, I am worried about it affecting my work

Type response here

The screenshot shows the NHS Oswald Medical Centre website. The header includes the NHS logo and navigation links: Home, Appointments, Prescriptions, Our Services, Surgery Information, and Health Information & Support. The main content area is titled 'Contact us online' and features a green banner with the NHS logo and the text 'Contact us online'. Below the banner, there is a 'Submit a new request' button and an 'Accessibility' section with a link to a form for specific needs. A mobile app interface is also visible on the right side of the banner.

# Friends of Oswald Medical Centre Patient Participation Group (PPG)



**Next Meetings:**  
**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – 2pm**  
**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – 2pm**

## Purpose of the Group

- To give patients and practice staff the opportunity to meet and discuss topics of mutual interest.
- To provide a means for patients to become more involved and make suggestions about the healthcare services they receive.
- To explore (anonymised) issues from patient complaints and patient surveys, contribute to actions plans and help monitor improvements.
- To contribute feedback to the practice on National Patient Survey results and Friends and Family Test feedback to propose developments or change.
- To support health awareness and patient education and promote responsible and appropriate use of Primary Care Services.

**If you would like to join our action group, please call us on 01254 369123 (we need to know numbers)**

**We will send you a pack of information to read before you join your first meeting. Some meetings may take place virtually, but venues will be confirmed to participants before each meeting.**

## Ways to get in touch....

ONLINE CONSULTATION is now available via our website.

Patients can use this to contact us about non-urgent matters.

See

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

For non-emergency out of hours help, use NHS 111: Call 111 or visit [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk)

For urgent matters and emergencies at any time of the day, including any threat to life or limb, chest pain, suspected stroke, breathing difficulties etc ring 999

## Contact Details

Telephone number for all branches:

01254 369123

### Accrington Branch

387-391 Blackburn Road, Accrington, BB5 1RP

### Blackburn Branch

1A Pritchard Street, Blackburn, BB2 3PF

### Oswaldtwistle Branch

274 Union Road, Oswaldtwistle, BB5 3JB

## Opening Times...

The practice branches are open from 8.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday.

We close on public and bank holidays and occasionally for staff training.

Any non-routine changes to our opening hours are communication to patients on our [Facebook page](#). Please ensure you like and follow our page.

Clinics times differ from our opening times as we also offer evening and weekend appointments.

# Late for your appointment?



**Patients arriving more than 5 minutes late for their appointment will be asked to re-book.**

**Save the stress:  
AIM TO BE EARLY!**



[Follow Us On Facebook](#)