

PATIENT NEWS & HEALTH UPDATE – Autumn 2026-2027

Get involved • Stay informed • Help shape your practice

PRACTICE ACCESS AND CARE NAVIGATION

At Wootton Medical Centre, our Reception Team are highly trained Care Navigators who help direct patients to the most appropriate healthcare professional for their needs. This ensures you receive timely care from the right clinician and helps keep GP appointments available for those who need them most. In many cases, another member of our healthcare team, or your local pharmacy through the **Pharmacy First service**, may be able to provide the support you need more quickly. The right care from the right professional at the right time.

- ✓ Clinical Pharmacists
- ✓ Practice Nurses
- ✓ Advanced Nurse Practitioners
- ✓ Healthcare Assistants
- ✓ Physiotherapists
- ✓ Social Prescribers
- ✓ Mental Health Practitioners

Pharmacy First - **What is the NHS Pharmacy First service?**

The Pharmacy First service is an NHS initiative that allows patients to walk into a local community pharmacy or get referred to by their GP or NHS 111.

You can get help with the following seven conditions:

- Earache (for people aged 1 to 17 years)
- Impetigo (for people aged 1 year and over)
- Infected insect bites (for people aged 1 year and over)
- Shingles (for people aged 18 years and over)
- Sinusitis (for people aged 12 years and over)
- Sore throat (for people aged 5 years and over)
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs) (for women aged 16 to 64 years)

More services provided by Pharmacy First

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first/>

Flu & RSV Vaccination Campaign

Our annual flu vaccination programme is now underway. **All eligible patients will be contacted by the practice with a booking link to book your flu/RSV appointment**

You may be eligible if you:

- Are aged 65 or over
- Have certain long-term health conditions
- Are pregnant
- Are a carer
- Live with someone at higher risk

RSV Vaccination

RSV can cause serious respiratory illness in older adults and infants. Eligible patients will be contacted to arrange vaccination appointments.

RSV - The UK's RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccination programme expanded in 2026. From September 1, eligibility includes adults aged 65 to 74 with certain clinical risk conditions, like chronic respiratory diseases or a suppressed immune system

What you need to know:

The RSV vaccine is a one-off dose rather than a yearly jab.

- You can often have it at the same appointment as your COVID-19 or flu vaccines.
- Pregnant women and older adults can book or check their eligibility through their local GP surgery.

For a full list of qualifying clinical risk groups or more detailed clinical guidelines, you can review the [GOV.UK Green Book RSV Chapter](#) or explore the complete [GOV.UK RSV vaccination programme](#) resources.

Children's Flu Vaccinations – Protecting Young Patients This Colder Season

Flu is not just a heavy cold – it can make children feel very unwell and can sometimes lead to serious complications. Children also spread flu easily to family members, including grandparents, babies and those with long-term health conditions.

Why Vaccinate?

The children's flu vaccine helps to:

- Protect your child from flu and its complications
- Reduce school absences due to illness
- Help prevent the spread of flu within families and the community
- Protect vulnerable relatives and friends

Who Can Have It?

Many children are eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination, including:

- Children aged 2 and 3 years on 31 August
- Primary school-aged children
- Some secondary school-aged children (via school vaccination programmes)
- Children with certain long-term health conditions

What Does the Vaccine Involve?

Most children receive a quick and painless nasal spray vaccine rather than an injection. The vaccine has been used safely for many years and helps provide protection throughout the flu season.

How Will My Child Be Invited?

Eligible children aged 2 and 3 years will be invited by the practice. School-aged children will usually receive their vaccination through the school immunisation team.

Help Keep Your Family Well This Autumn

By vaccinating your child, you are helping to protect not only them but also those around them during the autumn/winter months.

 If you have any questions about your child's flu vaccination, please contact the practice.

Autumn Health Checklist

- ✓ Book your flu vaccination
- ✓ Check you're up to date with RSV and other vaccinations
- ✓ Download the NHS App
- ✓ Stay active and support your mental wellbeing
- ✓ Tell us if you need reasonable adjustments
- ✓ Join our PPG and have your say

Autumn Mental Wellbeing

Shorter days can affect mood and wellbeing.

Top Tips

- ✓ Stay active
- ✓ Spend time outdoors during daylight hours
- ✓ Keep connected with family and friends
- ✓ Maintain regular sleep patterns

Managing Common Autumn Illnesses

As children return to school and temperatures fall, seasonal illnesses become more common.

Self-Care Tips

- Get plenty of rest
- Stay hydrated
- Wash hands regularly
- Keep stocked with paracetamol and basic remedies

Remember Pharmacy First

Your local pharmacy can provide advice and treatment for several common conditions without needing a GP appointment. Information about Pharmacy First services is promoted by the practice.

For more information on seasonal health:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/keep-warm-keep-well/>

♥ CARERS CORNER

🏆 Gold Carers Award Success

We are delighted to announce that **Wootton Medical Centre** has achieved the **Gold Carers Award**, recognising our commitment to identifying, supporting, and valuing unpaid carers within our community.

This achievement has been made possible through the dedication and hard work of **Alison Matthews**, our Carers Champion, who has led the practice's efforts to improve the support available to carers.

Alison has worked closely with patients, staff, and local organisations to ensure carers are recognised, recorded on our carers register, and signposted to appropriate services and support. We are extremely proud of this achievement and thank Alison for her continued commitment to helping carers access the assistance and recognition they deserve.

If you regularly support a family member, friend or neighbour, please let us know. By joining our **Carers Register**, we can help connect you with support, information and local services.

Our **Carers Champion, Alison Matthews**, is available to offer guidance and ensure you receive the help you deserve. Speak to our reception team to find out more.

📱 NHS APP

📱 **Make the Most of the NHS App** ✓ Ordering repeat prescriptions, ✓ Viewing test results, ✓ Managing appointments, ✓ Accessing messages.

Our **NHS App Champion, Sonia Chambers**, is available to help patients get started with the NHS App and make the most of its features. Sonia can provide guidance on downloading the app, verifying your identity, and accessing services such as ordering repeat prescriptions, viewing your medical record, and managing appointments.

🧠 Mental Health Support Without Seeing a GP First

Did you know you can self-refer to NHS Talking Therapies for support with anxiety, stress, low mood and depression? NHS Talking Therapies provides free, confidential support for adults experiencing:

Anxiety, Depression, Stress, Panic attacks, Health anxiety, OCD, PTSD, Phobias

For Northamptonshire residents:

📞 [Northamptonshire Talking Therapies](#)
📞 0300 999 1616 (weekdays 9am–5pm)

Urgent Mental Health Support

If you need urgent help or are experiencing a mental health crisis:

📞 **The Mental Health Number (24/7):**
0800 448 0828

📞 **NHS 111** – Select the mental health option

💬 **Shout Crisis Text Service** – Text **SHOUT** to **85258** for free, confidential support 24/7

🤝 JOIN OUR PPG

Become part of our Patient Participation Group and help shape your Practice

Our Patient Participation Group helps improve services and patient experience.

✓ Share Ideas ✓ Influence Improvement
✓ Patient Information Review ✓ Participate in Surveys

To join the PPG please email
woottonpatientgroup@gmail.com

DOMESTIC ABUSE AWARENESS

Domestic abuse can affect anyone and may include physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial abuse, as well as controlling or coercive behaviour. Wootton Medical Centre has a dedicated **Domestic Abuse Champion, Vikki Adan**, who can help patients access support and specialist services. If you are experiencing abuse, or are worried about someone you know, please speak to a member of our team in confidence – support is available.

Local Support

- **Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Service (NDAS):** 0300 012 0154 <https://www.ndas.co/>
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline (24/7):** 0808 2000 247 www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk
- **West Northamptonshire Council**
<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/personal-safety-and-community-support/domestic-abuse/help-and-support-victims-domestic-abuse>
- **Northants Police**
<https://www.northants.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/daa/domestic-abuse/support-organisations/>

In an emergency, call 999. If you cannot speak, press 55 when prompted.

COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

At Wootton Medical Centre, we welcome all feedback from our patients. Your comments help us understand what we are doing well and where we can improve our services.

Compliments

We would like to thank those patients who have taken the time to share positive feedback with our team. We regularly receive compliments about the kindness, professionalism and dedication of our clinicians, reception team and support staff. Your kind words are greatly appreciated and are shared with staff to recognise their hard work and commitment to patient care.

Complaints and Learning

We take all complaints seriously and view them as an opportunity to learn and improve. Every complaint is investigated thoroughly, and any learning points are discussed within the practice team. Where appropriate, changes are implemented to improve patient experience and the quality of care we provide.

Have Your Say

If you would like to provide feedback, suggest, or raise a concern, please speak to a member of staff, complete a feedback form via our website, or contact the Practice. Your views help us continually improve the services we provide.

DID NOT ATTEND

Every missed appointment is an appointment another patient could have used. **Please cancel appointments you no longer need.**

- ✓ NHS App
- ✓ Online
- ✓ Reception

Missed appointments for July-August: 208 = 57 hours

CONTACT US

-  Telephone: **01604 709922**
-  Website: <https://woottonmedicalcentre.co.uk/>
-  **Opening Hours:** Monday – Friday: 08:00 – 18:30
Saturday / Sunday / Bank Holidays: Closed
Practice Closure from 12.30-18.30 for Staff Training 2026:
09 September 2026
07 October 2026
11 November 2026

DO YOU NEED ANY REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS?

At Wootton Medical Centre we are committed to making healthcare accessible to everyone.

We May Be Able to Offer:

- ✓ Longer appointments
- ✓ Communication support
- ✓ Interpreter services
- ✓ Easy Read information
- ✓ Hearing and visual impairment support

WOOTTON MEDICAL CENTRE STAFF UPDATES

We are delighted to announce our new member of staff, **Dr Hansaj Padh**, to Wootton Medical Centre. He will be joining us in **November** 2026. We look forward to the skills, experience and enthusiasm he will bring to our team.

Farewell and Best Wishes to Rebecca Hinch

We would like to let everyone know that **Rebecca Hinch will be leaving Wootton Medical Centre on 3 September 2026.**

Rebecca has been a valued member of the team, and we would like to thank her for her hard work, commitment, and contribution to the practice during her time with us. We are grateful for everything she has done in supporting both our patients and colleagues.

On behalf of everyone at Wootton Medical Centre, we would like to wish Rebecca every success and happiness for the future as she moves on to her next opportunity.

Please be assured that your care at Wootton Medical Centre will continue uninterrupted, and our team remains here to support your healthcare needs. We are actively recruiting for Rebecca's replacement and will keep everyone updated on progress in due course.

Thank you, Rebecca, and best of luck from us all.

VACCINATIONS UPDATE:

MenACWY Vaccine - The MenACWY vaccine helps protect against life-threatening illnesses like meningitis and sepsis. It's offered to teenagers in school but can be given up to the age of 25 if it has been missed.

How to get the MenACWY vaccine

Teenagers are usually given the MenACWY vaccine at school when they're 13 or 14 years old (school year 9).

If you missed having the vaccine when you were at school, you can still get it up until the age of 25. Ask your GP about getting vaccinated.

College and university students

If you're under 25 and you've not had the MenACWY vaccine before, you should ideally have it at least 2 weeks before starting college or university. Ask a GP about getting vaccinated. If you've already started college or university, get the vaccine as soon as possible. Ask at the health centre on campus or [register with a GP](#) to get it.

More about vaccine safety

[Find out more about why vaccination is important and the safest way to protect yourself](#)

Look After Your Mental Wellbeing

The festive season can bring joy, but it can also feel lonely or overwhelming for some people.

- ✓ Stay connected with family and friends
- ✓ Talk to someone if you're struggling
- ✓ Take time to rest and relax
- ✓ Be kind to yourself and others

Remember Your Medication

- ✓ Order repeat prescriptions in plenty of time
- ✓ Check your medication supplies
- ✓ Keep essential medicines readily available

GP Patient Survey Campaign: Improving Access Together

We have now **launched our GP Patient Survey campaign**, highlighting the improvements we are making to help patients access our services more easily at Wootton Medical Centre. Through our *Access Made Easier* campaign, we are raising awareness of the different ways patients can contact the practice, request help, book appointments, and manage their healthcare, including through the NHS App and our online services.

If you receive a GP Patient Survey, we encourage you to take part and share your experience with us. Your feedback is invaluable and helps us understand what we are doing well, identify where we can improve, and continue delivering services that meet the needs of our patients and community. Every response makes a difference and helps shape the future of our practice.

Anima Update - The New Questionnaire Experience Is Now Live on the NHS App

We are pleased to let patients know that the updated questionnaire system is now live on the NHS App. Following a successful phased rollout, patients using the NHS App will now experience the same improved questionnaire journey as those accessing our services directly through Anima.

The new questionnaire experience has received full approval for use within the NHS App and is designed to make it easier for patients to provide the information needed for their request, helping us direct them to the most appropriate care or support.

Top Tip

The more information you provide, the more likely it is that your request can be dealt with quickly without needing a further appointment or follow-up message. Clear, complete information helps us ensure you receive the most appropriate care as efficiently as possible.

Thank you for using the NHS App and Anima to access our services.

DID YOU KNOW?

You May Not Need to Call the Practice

As part of our **Access Made Easier** campaign, we're promoting quicker and more convenient ways to access our services.

Many routine requests can be completed online, helping you avoid waiting on the telephone and allowing our team to focus phone lines on patients who need them most.

You DON'T Need to Call Us For:

Repeat Prescriptions

Order prescriptions using:

- The NHS App
- Online services
- Your nominated pharmacy

Fit Notes (Sick Notes)

Many fit note requests can be submitted without calling the surgery via:

- The NHS App
- Anima

Test Results

- Many results can be viewed through the NHS App once reviewed by a clinician.

Administrative Requests

Such as, Changes of address, updating contact details, some forms and certificates, non-urgent queries can be submitted without calling the surgery via:

- The NHS App
- Anima

Visit our website for more guidance

www.wootton.medicalcentre.co.uk

Men's Health: A Quick Health Check

✓ Know Your Numbers

Keep an eye on your blood pressure, weight, and overall health. Attend NHS Health Checks when invited.

✓ Don't Ignore Symptoms

Speak to a healthcare professional if you notice:

- ✓ Changes in your waterworks
- ✓ Persistent tiredness
- ✓ Unexplained weight loss
- ✓ New lumps or swelling
- ✓ Changes in bowel habits

✓ Look After Your Mental Health

Stress, anxiety, low mood, and loneliness can affect anyone. Talking about how you're feeling is a sign of strength, not weakness.

✓ Stay Active

Regular physical activity can improve heart health, mental wellbeing, sleep, and energy levels.

✓ Make Healthy Choices

Small changes such as stopping smoking, reducing alcohol, eating well, and getting enough sleep can make a big difference.

✓ Seek Help Early

Many health conditions are easier to treat when detected early. If you're worried about your health, don't put it off. Contact the practice for advice and support.

Remember:

Your health matters. Acting today can help you stay healthier for longer.

"Did You Know?"

- ✓ Men are less likely to visit their GP than women.
- ✓ Heart disease, diabetes, some cancers, and mental health conditions can often be managed more effectively when identified early.
- ✓ A routine health check could help you stay healthier for longer

Women's Health: A Quick Health Check

✓ Attend Your Screening Appointments

Regular screening can help detect problems early. Cervical screening is offered to eligible women aged 25 to 64, and breast screening is routinely offered from age 50. Screening can save lives through early detection

✓ Know What's Normal for You

Speak to a healthcare professional if you notice:

- ✓ Unusual bleeding
- ✓ Persistent pelvic pain
- ✓ Breast changes or lumps
- ✓ Changes in periods
- ✓ New or concerning symptoms that do not go away.

✓ Prioritise Your Mental Wellbeing

Looking after your emotional health is just as important as your physical health. Reach out for support if you are experiencing stress, anxiety, low mood, or struggling to cope.

✓ Look After Your Heart Health

Maintain a healthy lifestyle by:

- ✓ Keeping active
- ✓ Eating a balanced diet
- ✓ Managing your blood pressure
- ✓ Maintaining a healthy weight
- ✓ Not smoking.

✓ Menopause Support is Available

If you are experiencing symptoms such as hot flushes, sleep disturbance, mood changes, or brain fog, support and treatment options are available. Please contact the practice to discuss your symptoms.

✓ Don't Delay Seeking Help

Early advice and treatment can make a significant difference. If you have concerns about your health, book an appointment and speak to a member of the healthcare team.

Remember:

Your health matters. Small steps today can make a big difference to your future wellbeing.

Stoptober: Quit Smoking This October

Stoptober is the UK's annual stop smoking campaign, encouraging people to quit smoking for 28 days. Research shows that if you can stop smoking for 28 days, you are much more likely to quit for good. Stopping smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health, reducing your risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and lung disease. If you're thinking about quitting, support is available to help you succeed. For free advice, tools, and resources, visit the NHS Better Health website: <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>.

Small step. Big difference. Start your quit journey this Stoptober.  

Help Stop Autumn Bugs Spreading

Flu, coughs, colds and other winter viruses circulate more widely during the festive period.

-  Wash your hands regularly
-  Catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue
-  Stay home if you are feeling unwell where possible
-  Make sure eligible family members have had their flu vaccination

Next newsletter – Winter 2027

We Need You!

Get involved! Join the PPG • Complete surveys • Share feedback • Suggest newsletter topics