

Getting the best for you and your Grove GP practice staff

Common sense is hard to find at the best of times, so when you see it, read it or hear it – hold onto it because you will never know when you will need it.

Allow us to say a big thank you to Dr Ruth Lawes for her common sense and her letter to each of us.

Her words are simple.

“We are here for you if and when you need us. Please don’t take us for granted, and before you make an appointment ask yourself the question - Do I really need to see my doctor?” if you do – fine that’s why we are here.

Dr Lawes says it much better, so read her letter and remember her common sense.

The Grove Medical Team

Dear Patient,

The staff at The Grove Medical Centre are working extremely hard to provide the best level of care we can for you. We want to be able to provide appointments that you do not have to wait weeks for and continuity of care from your named GP or nurse. We have a fantastic team that make the surgery a great place to work, and we appreciate how well we are supported by our patients and patient group.

General practice across the country is under huge strain. In an ideal world we would simply employ more staff to meet the demand for appointments that we have. Sadly, as with every other practice, we do not have the financial resources to be able to do this. We can only afford to provide the level of service that we are funded for.

We are very worried about the current situation within General Practice across the country and would like your help to try and manage our current demand for appointments within the resources we have.

Please try and self-manage minor illnesses. The information produced by the Royal College of General Practitioners below should help you with this.

Please take advantage of alternative NHS services that you may be signposted toward such as our helpful local pharmacists.

Please cancel appointments that are no longer required so that they can be offered to someone else.

Please ensure you attend for your health checks when asked and follow the advice given to you by your health professional. Remember your health is our interest but your responsibility.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. We will continue

to do our best to support our patients and value the support and consideration you can provide.

Dr Ruth Lawes

On behalf of all members of your medical team at the Grove Medical Centre



Dr Ruth Lawes

The Grove Pharmacy – Dr Liz Long



Dr Liz Long

The Grove Medical Centre is based on a wide range of qualified professional clinical services, led by a comprehensive team of GPs, who decide the best treatments for you supported by extensive internal and external clinical services, including, out-patient hospital, and surgical treatments.

To meet patient expectations your current GP services have been developed and expanded in recent years. Today, Grove staff include an Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Practice pharmacists, supporting Pharmacy Technicians, Frailty Nurses, Mental Health Care workers, who working alongside the Doctors and Nursing team at the practice. Each are integral part of your health team and work with your doctor.

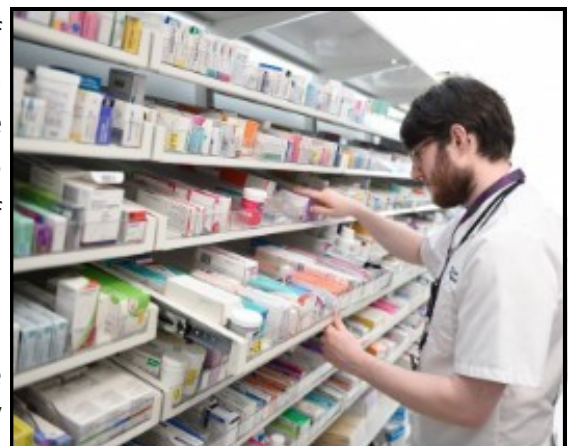
The triage system allows the GPs to get the patient booked with the most appropriate Health care professional for the main presenting problem. Some examples; telephone call from a Pharmacist about medication problems, and appointment with the nursing team for wound care, blood tests and other procedures, a phone call or face to face appointment with a mental health care worker, a visit from a frailty nurse, and appointment with a Pharmacist to improve blood pressure or cholesterol control.

The Primary Care Network Pharmacy team consists of 3 pharmacists and 3 pharmacy technicians. They are pivotal in ensuring safe and consistent prescribing at the practice; making sure the medication changes from a hospital stay are updated to the GP record, checking with patients after hospital discharge that they understand their medicines and discussing any new symptoms or side effects, having consultations with patients to review complex medication regimes, manage blood pressure and cholesterol, managing the medications for osteoporosis. They do all this whilst in the background managing local and national directives for safe and cost-effective prescribing within the NHS.

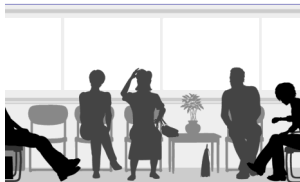
Essentially, with the increasing workload in primary care, we need the resource this diverse team gives us to ensure safe, timely, appropriate care for all our patients and their myriad of health needs.

Away from the GP surgery, the new Pharmacy First care pathway is a positive step to promote the skills of pharmacists at your local chemist to deal with straightforward short-lived illnesses such as urine infections, sinus infections, coughs and colds. This helps free up capacity within the GP practice to focus on the care of patients with long term conditions, complex medical illnesses, and diagnose preventative medicine solutions

Whatever your health problem maybe, you can be assured we at the Grove are prepared to find the correct/appropriate clinical solution for you and your family.



IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT PLEASE PHONE THE SURGERY TO CANCEL



A View from the Waiting Room

When to call the doctor



When to call the doctor? ... a dilemma we surely have all faced at some time. Often there seems to be a fine line between being sensible, waiting and seeing ... and deciding to get help. We have no doubt about phoning for serious problems, and most people act at once, but what about that huge mass of concerns that lie in between? At what point have we suffered enough? We hesitate, uncertain, as most of us really don't want to bother our busy GP's .

To start booking your appointment with your doctor, and you have access to the internet, open the Grove Medical Practice website and click on the patient triage square.

The form is brief, and will ask you the following questions:

What your query is about

How long have you had symptoms

What action you would like

Your preference for when and who you would like to deal with the problem.

Every day the Grove clinical team review and assess the urgency of your symptoms, alongside your medical history before contacting you. You will be offered an appointment, a telephone consultation, or a prescription for collection.

This ensures your doctor, or staff member, understands the reason for your request and medical history before you talk.

You can be assured, if you need to see or speak to a member of our clinical team quickly, and based on the information you have given, it will be dealt with the same day or if its late in the day, potentially the following morning,

Alternatively you can make an appointment by phone, 01935 810900

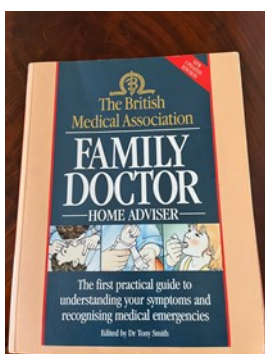
If your request is not urgent but you wish to make an appointment, the practice team will offer you an appointment within 7 working days. Alternatively, routine appointments can be booked up to 8 weeks in advance.

(If you are thoughtful enough to be fretting about it you are almost certainly not a time waster, at least that is the comforting thought I hang on to.)

There are several self-help pages on the website with many links

<https://www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk/self-help-centre> You will find the we site is full of a wealth of information for families <https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/>

I have found it very helpful, when unsure of symptoms, to consult my 'Family Doctor' book, which is a guide to understanding our symptoms and recognising medical emergencies.



It works as a flow chart and so easy to use. The book has been endorsed by the British Medical Association and I have used it many times especially when our children were little.

Joan Cooper (Patient), The Grove Medical Centre

accuRx Patient Triage
 You can contact us about a medical, administrative issue by clicking below.

Answer a few short questions and we will get back to you within 2 working days.

Please do not use this online form for urgent requests.

Get Started

PATIENT TRIAGE

Click here to contact your doctor online using Patient Triage

IF YOU CAN'T MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT PLEASE PHONE THE SURGERY TO CANCEL

Assessing frailty in older people

According to the latest population figures for Sherborne, 30% of the 10,500 population is over 65. (Source: UK Office for National Statistics – 2021). Joint patient numbers for, the Grove, the Apples and Yetminster Surgeries are slightly over 23000. This includes the area surrounding Sherborne. The over 65 population figure is close to 7,600. The total number of Grove patients over 65 is in the region of 4100

Dr Matt Phelan of the Grove Medical Centre in Sherborne helps coordinate the Frailty services for Sherborne Area Primary Care Network. In a recent interview for the Grove patient's newsletter, made the following observations. "Frailty is a great word which aptly describes a range of different health conditions applicable to the elderly. As we grow older our bodies change, our immune system weakens and its ability to protect us reduces and therefore our vulnerability increases.



Dr Matthew Phelan

"This is a very simple message, the older we become, frailty is an inevitable part of our healthcare journey. The reality in the NHS today is there are gaps in the system. Another reality is our patient community is getting older. This increases the demand for mental – physical health treatments, including managing medications.

"30% of our Sherborne community, 7,600 of 23,000 patients, fall into this category of healthcare needs, each with specific demands. In short, there are too many to ignore which is why we have established dedicated teams, to serve The Grove, Apples and Yetminster surgeries in the Sherborne Area Primary Care Network. Each team member brings different and specific clinical disciplines including, GP frailty nurses, community matrons, and pharmacy services, These dedicated teams provide multi -co-morbidity care across the practices, including nursing and residential home patients. The main focus is to improve access to pre-emptive medical care, respite care and community special care, and to look out for the most vulnerable frail and isolated patients in our community.

"A key objective is to provide increased pre-emptive care as this allows the frailty medical team to identify serious health issues before they happen. Each patient has an individual care plan. Experience shows the frailty team run programmes deliver positive results, with success based on numbers diagnosed in the broader community. One example of the achievements is our ability to identify the more vulnerable patients, those requiring both palliative and acute care, by offering greater focus we are able to streamline both nursing and medical care.

BE AWARE,

"Together with my colleagues across North Dorset ask you to be aware of and look out for common frailty conditions including - dementia, loss of hearing and eyesight, Brittle bone disease (osteoporosis), chronic breathing problems (COPD, and of course the major issues around heart disease, stroke or cancers Also be aware of these symptoms as well, loss of conversation, ability to focus, inability to walk short distances or without aids.

"Our two Acute Care Community Matrons have worked for many years in our PCN. However, the programme was expanded in October 2022 when the PCN employed a specific Frailty Nurse. Since then we have recruited another specialist nurse In September 2023 and have introduced significant improvements enabling us to identify our most frail patients in the community. The two Frailty Team Nurses have joined up with the two existing Community Matrons, who are dedicated to more acute care of our frail patients, our Palliative Care Team, District Nurses, GPs and community HealthCare assistants. Whilst providing community-based care they also provide help and support in delivering care to patients in Nursing and Residential homes. Since then, the programme has been subject to peer review and adopted across the 3 GP surgeries in the Sherborne Area Primary Care Network.

Sherborne Health Fair ~ Exceeds Expectations

More than 150 patients from Sherborne's 3 GP practices attended the recent Sherborne Health Fair at the Digby Hall in May organised by the Sherborne Primary Care Network.

Sarah Webster, Operational Manager – Sherborne Primary Care Network, commented.

"Each of the practices were delighted with the number of people who attended, there were more than 150 patients who visited the fair, alongside 42 professional and voluntary organisations. One of the fun parts of the day was enjoying the armchair exercises and armchair yoga"

"People were offered blood pressure checks and I am pleased to say 80 or so participated and very few had signs of hypertension, which proves the Sunday Times story that Sherborne is a great place to live. The key message for everyone reading this article – please remember to get your blood pressure checked regularly."

Several people took up the offer of help to sign up to the NHS App and other online healthcare services.

Roger Marsh, Chair of the Grove Patient Participation Group (PPG) said, *"The Grove PPG had a very successful day in meeting and talking to patients, also making/renewing several connections with various health related organisations"*.



Do you live in the Sherborne area, own a car, and want to be a Sherborne Good Neighbour?

If so, we want you!

Sherborne Good Neighbours is a local volunteer group whose members drive registered patients of the Apples and the Grove surgeries to their medical appointments. To become a volunteer visit www.sherbornegoodneighbours.org or phone Mike Hatch on 01935 815806.

The First in our Series of Health Talks — Diabetes

The Grove Medical Centre's Patient Participation Group, has been instrumental in planning a series of Health Talks in Sherborne. The first of these aimed at 'Preventing Diabetes' took place at the Sherborne Sports Centre on the 15 th. May.

The event was well attended, with the first presentation by Roxanne Botha from 'Living Well Taking Control', about making lifestyle changes to improve our general health. The saying 'prevention is better than cure' certainly applies to Diabetes, and following the guidelines will help to achieve a healthier you.

Next was Brad Jones from 'Active Dorset' who highlighted the important connection with being active. Brad gave us all simple measures to include more-general movement in our daily lives.

To conclude, one of our local councillors Jon Andrews, gave a very personal account of his journey with Diabetes, and asked us all to heed the advice and take care of our health.

Further talks are being planned this year, including 'Weight Management', 'Hypertension', 'Lowering your Cancer Risk' and 'Sleep'.



Sherborne Primary Care Network ~ Health Talk

GROVE PATIENT INFORMATION

NHS QUICKER SERVICES FINDER APP



NHS Quicker is a smart phone app, created to help you locate a wide range of NHS services and other healthcare services including local pharmacies and opticians.

Go to <https://nhsquicker.co.uk/app/> and download the app. Once you have added your postcode, and you will be offered numerous NHS services including "local

urgent care & emergency services", showing current waiting times and distances from your post-code. Times will vary depending on where you are and services you need. Remember published timings are subject to change.

Send any comments regarding the newsletter to: grovesherborneppg@gmail.com

SHERBORNE MILITARY VETERANS SUPPORT GROUP

In February 2020 the Grove Medical Centre attained accreditation as a Veteran Friendly GP Practice from the Royal College of General Practitioners. To be awarded accreditation the practice must commit to specific requirements that include identifying and coding patients who have served in the armed forces, have a clinical lead for veterans within the surgery who must stay up to date with the latest training, and finally the practice must have a Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating of 'good' or higher. Your Patient Participation Group (PPG) at the Grove initially supported the practice and its patients who were veterans by producing a directory for Military Veterans and Families Health, details of which can be found at: <https://www.thegrovemedcentre.co.uk/armed-forces-care>



Furthermore, the Grove PPG initiated a Military Veterans Support Group for those veterans, along with their families, who are patients of the three practices within the Sherborne Area Primary Care Network. The support group, which was set up in September 2021, meets monthly and has around one hundred members.

With the help of our social prescribers the group has flourished, not only does it help those veterans with special needs, but it also has speakers at its meetings on a variety of specialist support organisations including Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA); Blind Veterans UK; and a demonstration by Service Dogs UK who provide Veterans from the Armed Forces and Emergency Services suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) the benefit of specially trained assistance dogs.

Roger Marsh, Chairman of the Grove PPG, and one of the founders of the group stressed the importance of the group and its regular meetings.

"We have to recognise a career in the army, navy, air force, or any of the services is different to civilian employment. For a start it is more structured, so the shift to a non-military lifestyle has its own set of challenges."

More recently, the group received a presentation from Janine Whitley (Veterans Clinical Advisor at Help for Heroes). The information provided by Help for Heroes along with their knowledge and experience will now allow us to better identify and respond to the health issues of those who may need our help.



In a recent publication Help for Heroes ask the right questions to which they offer sensible answers, here are a few examples.

HELP WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE JOURNEY

Are you often in pain?

Do you find it difficult to get the help you need from hospitals and doctors?

We can support and guide you on your healthcare journey, to help you get the answers you need.

A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Are you finding it difficult getting a good night's sleep? Do you wake up feeling really tired?

We can look at what might be causing problems with your sleep and help you get a good night's rest.

Do you find it difficult getting enough exercise? Do you want to have a healthy diet and lifestyle, but are not sure where to start? Do you want support to drink less alcohol?

We can help with all those things, so you can take back control of your health.

Continued

JOIN OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP – THE GROVE PPG – ONLINE INFORMATION

Sherborne Military Veterans Support Group (Contd.)

IN GOOD COMPANY

If you sometimes feel lonely or isolated and would like to talk to someone who understands, we can help.

Do you want to take part in sport again?

We can give you the chance to get involved in a wide range of sports and outdoor activities, whatever your ability is.

We also help veterans and families stay connected through social activities, online get-togethers, hobby and interest groups and face-to-face drop-ins.

Sometimes just a coffee and a chat with people who 'really get' it can make all the difference.

We know how good it can be for veterans and their loved ones to spend time with others who have been through similar experiences. At our events you can meet other veterans and families near you.

British Army veteran Steve has post-traumatic disorder and chronic widespread pain.

He said: "It's so important to ask for help if you think you might need it. It's the best thing I've ever done.

"There was a time when I saw asking for help as a sign of weakness and failure. I was a bit old school like that, like I should just 'man up'.

"But I realise now I can't do it all on my own. And that's fine because I don't have to.

"Help for Heroes has helped me in many ways, including helping me repair family relationships, applying for benefits and the War Pension, getting adaptations made to my bathroom so I can use it properly, reducing my alcohol dependency, getting a good night's sleep, meeting other veterans and taking part in activities. It has been brilliant.

"If I hadn't asked for help, I probably wouldn't be here now."



PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

Life after the Armed Forces can be tough – we get that, and we can help.

Some people might need support for a short period of time to find their confidence and get back on their feet. Others might need life-long support.

If you served in or worked alongside the UK Armed Forces, or you're a relative of a veteran, we are here for you.

The support that could change your life is just one click away.

See: <https://www.thegrovedcentre.co.uk/armed-forces-care>

Send any comments regarding the newsletter to: grovesherborneppg@gmail.com



How can I manage my common infection?

A leaflet for adults aged 16 years and over

1. What are the symptoms of a common infection?

A Eyes

- Sticky eyes

B Ears, nose and throat

- Pain or soreness
- Runny nose
- Swollen tonsils

C Chest

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Green or yellow mucus

D Gut

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea

E Skin

- Infected blisters
- Redness or swelling around a wound
- Athlete's foot (an itchy rash between the toes)

F Genital and urinary

- Pain on passing urine
- Passing urine more often at night
- Cloudy urine
- Discharge
- Pain in lower tummy

2. What if I think I have coronavirus (Covid-19)?

If you think you may have COVID-19 then please visit <http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> or <http://www.nhs.uk> for the latest guidance and information.

TARGET is operated by the UK Health Security Agency. Developed in collaboration with professional medical bodies.

Version 1.1: Nov 2020
Revision: Nov 2023

5. Will my infection need antibiotics to get better?

- Your **body can normally fight off** common infections on its own.
- You do not usually need antibiotics, unless symptoms of a **bacterial** infection (such as a urine infection) are severe – a healthcare professional can advise you on this.
- Taking antibiotics when you do not need to puts you and your family at risk.
- Follow your **healthcare professional's advice on antibiotics**.



Find out more about antibiotics at www.antibioticguardian.com

6. How can I stop my infection from spreading?

If you need to cough or sneeze:

Catch it



with a tissue (or your inner elbow)

Bin it



throw away used tissues

Kill it



by cleaning your hands

Clean hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitiser:

- ✔ before preparing and eating food
- ✔ after touching pets or animals
- ✔ after using the toilet
- ✔ when leaving and arriving home



Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands.

If possible, **keep your distance from others** (2 meters or 6 feet), especially vulnerable people in your household.

Do not share items that come into contact with your mouth, such as eating utensils and toothbrushes.



Keep yourself and your family up to date with vaccinations. Always get winter vaccines (such as flu) if you are eligible.

Visit or call a **pharmacy** for further advice on common infections

3. How can I treat a common infection?



Get plenty of rest until you feel better.



Take pain relief if you need to (make sure you follow the instructions).



Drink plenty of fluids (6 to 8 drinks, or 2 litres) so that you pass pale-coloured urine regularly.



For **coughs**, try honey and cough medicines. For **sore throats**, try medicated lozenges and pain relief.



Soothe **eye infections** with a clean warm or cold damp flannel.



For an **outer ear infection**, apply local heat (such as a warm flannel).

4. How long could my infection last?

Cough	Sore throat or earache	Common cold	Norovirus (winter vomiting)	Sinus infection
21 days	7 to 8 days	14 days	2 to 3 days	14 to 21 days

Contact your GP if your symptoms are getting worse or if you are not better by the times above.

7. What symptoms of serious illness should I look out for?



Severe headache and vomiting



Ongoing **fever or chills** (temperature above 38°C or less than 36°C)



Problems **swallowing**
Turning blue around the mouth



Coughing **blood**



Breathing faster or slower than usual



Kidney pain in your back just under your ribs



Chest pain or tightness
New **very fast or slow pulse**



Visible **blood** in urine
Severe pain on passing urine, or passing more urine at night
Cloudy urine not improving in 1 to 2 days with fluid

If you have the symptoms above, contact your GP urgently or use the following services for your region.

<p>NHS England</p> <p>CALL 111 when it's less urgent than 999 www.111.nhs.uk</p>	<p>NHS Direct Wales</p> <p>0845 46 47 Galw (EGYD) Cymru www.111.wales.nhs.uk</p>	<p>NHS Scotland</p> <p>24 CALL 111 www.nhs24.scot</p>	<p>Republic of Ireland</p> <p>HSC Public Health Agency Project supported by the PHA Contact your GP practice</p>
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These services can provide a confidential interpreter if you need one.

Sepsis is a life-threatening reaction to an infection. Possible signs are:

- slurred speech, confusion or drowsiness
- extreme shivering
- passing no urine in a day
- severe breathlessness
- it feels like you're going to die, and
- skin blotchy or discoloured.

Ways to contact us:

You can book an appointment by:

Opening Times

Monday	08:00 - 18:30
Tuesday	08:00 - 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 - 18:30
Thursday	08:00 - 18:30
Friday	08:00 - 18:30
Weekend	closed

Calling the practice to speak to a Patient Services Adviser between 08:00 and 18:30 Monday to Friday.

Online booking is available for routine appointments with your GP using the **NHS App** or your current online login. If you don't have a login or have forgotten your login details, then please speak to the patient services team.

Using the '**Accurx**' service for advice, administration queries or to have an online conversation with your GP.

If you need to contact a doctor outside these hours then you should ring the Out of Hours Service on 111, unless it is a medical emergency then dial 999.

Dispensary is open for prescription collections between 08:30 - 18:30.

If you want to order repeat medication by telephone please ONLY call between 08:30 - 12:00 daily.

You can also order by dropping the paper slip into the box in the foyer at The Grove Medical Centre.

Alternatively, repeat prescriptions can be ordered 24 hours a day by using the **NHS App**, **SystemOnline** or **Accurx**.

The Practice Team

Dr Aimee Barnes

Dr Lucius Covell

Dr Sally Dangerfield

Dr Aimee Hobbs

Dr Ruth Lawes

Dr Liz Long

Dr Rebecca Lye

Dr Charlie Middle

Dr Matt Phelan

Dr Ruth Spedding

Dr Jonathan Tham

Dr Adam Wood

Mrs Lisa Considine (Advanced Nurse Practitioner)

Mrs Alex Kimber (Managing Partner)

Mrs Debbie Ryalls (Operations Manager)

Do we have your correct details?

You can update you details (including email address and mobile phone number) on the Grove Medical Centre website

<https://www.thegrovemedcentre.co.uk/>



Your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Interested in finding out how your GP practice works and about the health services it delivers? Your practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) could be for you. See: <https://nhsdorset.nhs.uk/voice/ppg/>