

Groombridge and Hartfield Medical Group Newsletter

Issue: 2 November 2025

Looking After Your Health This Winter

As the days grow shorter and the temperature begins to drop, this time of year is always a good reminder to look after our health, especially by staying up to date with seasonal vaccinations.

Over the past couple of months, we have been busy organising and running our flu vaccination clinics, inviting eligible patients, and holding several Saturday and evening sessions. We have also been visiting housebound patients to make sure those who can't get to the surgery are still protected.

It's been a real team effort, and we'd like to thank our patients who attended and our amazing team for their hard work throughout this busy period.

The COVID-19 winter booster programme is also underway. Eligibility has changed this year, and the vaccine is being offered to those at higher risk from serious illness, including:

- all adults aged 75 and over
- people aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed
- residents in care homes for older adults

Appointments are available at local vaccination sites and participating pharmacies. Patients can book online via the [NHS website](#), the NHS App, or by calling 119.



The colder weather can have a real impact on health, particularly for older adults and people living with long-term conditions such as heart or kidney disease, COPD, asthma, or diabetes. Being cold can raise blood pressure and increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes, and it can also make existing conditions worse.

The colder, darker months can affect mood and energy levels, Looking after your mental wellbeing is just as important as staying physically healthy. Small things like getting outdoors in daylight, keeping active, eating well, and staying in touch with friends and family can all help you feel your best through winter.

For more tips on keeping well this winter, visit the NHS Sussex website: [Stay Well This Winter - NHS Sussex](#)

Are you a Carer?



Do you look after someone who couldn't manage without your help? Whether they need support due to illness, frailty, disability, mental health challenges, or addiction, **if they rely on you, then you are a Carer.**

If you care for a relative or friend, formally or informally, we can record this on your medical records so our team is aware of your role and can provide appropriate support.

If we know you are a carer we can:

- Discuss the impact of your caring role on your mental or physical health
- Invite you for a free flu jab each year
- Provide you with general information and advice
- Refer you to organisations and services offering specialised support
- Try and offer flexible appointments to fit around your role

We've made it easier for you to let us know you're a carer. You can tell us in person, complete a [Carers Identification Form](#) on our website, or pick up a paper copy from either surgery.

The form allows you share more details about who you care for and what your caring role involves, helping us offer the right support or referrals if needed.

Do you look after someone?

Does your GP know you are a carer?



If we know you are a carer, we can support you in your caring role and help you to stay well too.

Speak to the Reception Staff today.



NHS

A Network Partner of
CARERS TRUST

care for the
carers
East Sussex

www.cfc.org.uk
T: 01323 738390
Txt: 07860 077300
info@cfc.org.uk

Carers Rights Day - 20th November 2025

Each year, Carers Rights Day brings organisations across the UK together to help carers find out how to get the help and support they are entitled to. This year's theme is "Know your rights, use your rights."



We're supporting...



care for the
carers
East Sussex

carersUK
making life better for carers

The campaign highlights key carers rights, including:

- Taking unpaid carer's leave
- Requesting flexible working
- Asking your GP to record you as a carer
- Protection from discrimination linked to your caring role
- Access to free flu jabs
- Requesting a carer's assessment from your local authority
- Being involved in hospital discharge planning for the person you care for

For more information, please visit:

[Carers UK](#) - national guidance on carers' rights and support

[Care for the Carers](#) - local advice, events, and help for carers

Practice Overview

Between July and September 2025:

Total Appointments Booked:

July: 2781

August: 2249

September: 2857



eConsults Submitted:

July: 269

August: 281

September: 292

Information and Updates

We'll be publishing our Christmas and New Year opening hours soon. Please check our website, Facebook page, and the notices in reception for the latest information.



NHS
Sussex

Keep active this winter

It can boost your mental health, reduce risk of falls and help you recover from illness more quickly.



Help us
help you stay well
this winter

NHS

Repeat prescriptions?

Thank you for only ordering what you need

If you have enough medicine at home, there's no need to order now – you can request more in future.



Stay Well



Stay Safe



Stay Green

Speak to your pharmacist if you have any questions. You're making a big difference to your health and community.

Only order what you need



We are supporting the "Only Order What You Need" campaign, encouraging patients to check what medicines they already have at home before ordering more.

What You Can Do:

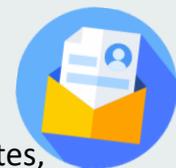
- **Check at home:** Before ordering, check what medicines you already have.
- **Only order what you need:** If you've still got enough, there's no need to order more, you can just request it next time.
- **Use the NHS App:** Manage your repeat prescriptions quickly and securely online.
- **Talk to your pharmacist or GP:** Let them know if you've stopped taking any medication or have any questions about your prescription.
- **Return unused medicines safely:** Return any unused or expired medicines back to the Dispensary or local pharmacy for safe disposal, please don't throw them in the bin.

Getting to Know Your Practice - Staff News

Updates, introductions, goodbyes and a closer look at the teams that keep the practice running.

Most patients know our doctors, nurses, dispensary and reception staff, but many others work just as hard behind the scenes to keep the practice running smoothly. This month, we're highlighting one of those essential groups: the Workflow Team.

Each day they scan, sort, update and check a constant stream of post, emails and electronic documents before sending them to the right person in the practice. These include hospital discharge summaries, consultant letters, radiology results, optician referrals, urgent care notes, medication updates, patient letters, home blood pressure readings and more. Every document is reviewed carefully, urgent items are flagged, and anything needing action is passed to the appropriate clinician. The team also update medical records with new diagnoses, screening results and procedures to keep everything accurate.



One simple thing that helps Workflow is including your full name and date of birth on any letters or readings you send. It makes matching information to the correct patient much easier. Sending files in straightforward formats like PDF or Word also helps the team add them quickly and securely to your records.



We have two Year 4 medical students with us for the next six weeks, Dr James Robertson and Dr Kate MacMahon. They'll start by sitting in with different members of our clinical team and will later carry out some of their own consultations, with a GP available to support.

Teaching is an important part of our work as a training practice, and we're grateful to our patients for supporting and welcoming future doctors.



And finally, we have two lovely celebrations to share. Beth, who joined us as a trainee dispenser has passed her course and is now officially qualified. It's a fantastic achievement and very well deserved. If you see her at the dispensary window, do pass on your congratulations, we are all incredibly proud of her.



Nicola, our practice nurse, recently attended her long-awaited graduation ceremony, one year after completing her nursing degree. It's wonderful to see her hard work recognised and celebrated properly.

If you have any feedback or ideas for future newsletter editions, or would like to be involved, please email us at:

sx1cb-esx.thenooksurgery@nhs.net

What is the difference between the *NHS App*, *SystemOnline*, *Patient*

Knows Best and *eConsult*?

Many patients ask which online system they should be using, and what each one actually does. Here's a quick guide to help you understand the differences.

If you don't use the internet or prefer not to use online services, that's absolutely fine. You can still contact the practice in the usual way for appointments, test results or prescription requests, we're always here to help.

	NHS App	SystemOnline	Patient Knows Best	eConsult
What is it?	A secure app that lets you manage your NHS health services in one place.	A web based service linked directly to our clinical system.	A personal health record used mainly by the hospitals and specialist teams.	An online form that lets you contact the practice for medical advice or admin help. You answer a few questions about the problem, and the practice will reply by the next working day (or sooner)
How to get started:	Download the app on your smartphone, or go to nhs.uk and search 'NHS App'	Contact the practice for login details, (you may be asked to show ID) then use the SystemOnline website.	Use the link sent by your hospital team, then sign in via the Patient Knows Best website or the NHS app using the same login as the NHS App.	Go to our practice website. No setup needed, just fill in a form when needed.
What it can do for you:	Order repeat prescriptions, book and manage appointments, see your GP record and test results, receive messages from the practice, book COVID-19 vaccinations, use NHS 111 online and self-help tools, and view hospital letters or referrals.	Order repeat prescriptions, book and manage appointments, see your GP record and test results, and check or update your contact details.	See your hospital letters, records and test results, view your hospital appointments and appointment letters, and access shared care plans from your hospital or specialist teams.	Send medical or admin requests to the practice, request sick notes, upload photos if needed, ask questions about your health or medication, and get self-care advice.