



A31 PCN

October 2025

NEWSLETTER

Dear Patients,

As October draws to a close, there's plenty to celebrate and share from across our PCN and local practices. This month, we've reflected on Health on the High Street's first anniversary, shared ways to take care of your health — from CPR training to lifestyle changes — and highlighted important awareness campaigns like Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

You'll also get to meet Mel Watson, our PCN Finance Manager and see how her work helps keep our network running smoothly behind the scenes.

From health tips to events and support opportunities, there's something here for everyone.

In this Issue

- **Meet Mel Watson the PCN Finance Manager**
- **Free CPR and AED training**
- **Health on the High Street is turning ONE!**
- **Boundaries Surgery has a new Facebook page**
- **Have your say with our latest survey on events**
- **Damian Hinds MP joins us at HotHS**
- **Flu and Covid vaccinations update**
- **And much more.**

Meet the Team



Mel Watson is the PCN Finance Manager and one of the Practice Managers at Boundaries Surgery, she has been an integral part of the A31 PCN for over two years.

Mel manages the PCN's various income streams and oversees payroll for our growing team, ensuring that our services are fully supported and financially sustainable. Her experience as a practice manager gives her a unique perspective, allowing her to bridge the gap between individual practices and the wider PCN.

Having practice managers at the heart of PCN management is a real advantage. It means we can draw on the expertise and wisdom already present across our practices, while fostering better cohesion, collaboration, and communication across the team. Her work helps the PCN run efficiently behind the scenes, enabling clinical and support staff to focus on what matters most — providing excellent care and services for our local communities.

Upcoming Events

- **Health on the High Street 10-2 every Wednesday @ Alton Assembly Rooms**
- **CPR and AED Training 12 & 19 November @ Alton Assembly Rooms (full details below in Learn to Save a Life article)**
- **Ukrainian Social Group - 12-2 every Wednesday @ Alton Assembly Rooms**



NEWS *from the* PCN TEAM

Learn to Save a Life – Free CPR and Defibrillator Training

Last month, we shared news about a new defibrillator in Medstead – the village now has two, located at the Church Hall and the Village Hall. This achievement is partly thanks to the efforts of Ian Jurd, who received life-saving CPR last year.

Only 1 in 10 people survive an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, and quick access to CPR and defibrillators can make all the difference. You can read more about Ian's story on our website (follow the QR code).

Installing defibrillators (AEDs) is vital, but it's equally important that more people feel confident using them and performing CPR. With that in mind, several **free local training sessions** have been organised – no booking required.

Most of us will hopefully never need to use these skills, but knowing what to do could help save someone's life – just like Ian's.

CPR and Defibrillator Familiarisation Sessions:

- **Saturday 8 November, 2:00pm** – St Andrew's Church Hall, Medstead
- **Wednesday 12 November, 12:30–2:00pm** – Alton Assembly Rooms
- **Wednesday 19 November, 10:30am–12:30pm** – Alton Assembly Rooms
- **Saturday 22 November, 10:30am** – The Church of the Good Shepherd, Four Marks



Baby Loss Awareness Week

Between 9–15 October it was Baby Loss Awareness Week. Around 1 in 4 pregnancies end in miscarriage, and after 24 weeks this is considered a stillbirth. There are many reasons why this can happen, but often parents are not given a clear explanation.

It can be an incredibly difficult time when expectant parents experience the loss of their baby. Charities such as Tommy's and Sands provide vital support. Each year on 15 October, parents are invited to light a candle in memory of their child as part of The Wave of Light.

You can now also apply for Baby Loss Certificates through [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) for pregnancies lost before 24 weeks – having this officially recognised can bring comfort to some families.

Damian Hinds MP, visits HotHS

At the beginning of October, our local MP Damian Hinds visited Health on the High Street to see what it's all about. He had already met with some members of our team to discuss the benefits of Social Prescribing and the many ways it supports individuals, and was keen to meet the services who join us each Wednesday at Alton Assembly Rooms.

He shared his visit on social media and wrote about it in his regular Alton Herald column – do have a read if you're able. As well as being MP for East Hampshire, Damian Hinds has held national roles in education and employment, and is also a Dementia Friend. With services ranging from School Nurses to the employment charity Fedcap, he recognised what an unusual community asset Health on the High Street is and is keen to help promote it so that more people in Alton and the surrounding villages know about it.



NEWS *from the* PCN TEAM

Celebrating One Year of Health on the High Street

November marks one year since the very first Health on the High Street, and we'll be celebrating on 5 November! Come and join us for cake and to see what's going on or share with someone you know who you think could benefit from visiting us. Each week offers a different range of services and a list of who will be there can be found on our website www.a31pcn.co.uk/hoths or follow the QR code. In that time, we've welcomed over a thousand people on Wednesdays and helped them access support from more than 20 different services. From Health Visitors offering guidance to new parents, to Dementia Friendly Alton and the Princess Royal Trust for Carers supporting those in later life – and everything in between – we're so proud of the many ways we've been able to make life a little easier for local people.



Every week there's a coffee morning from 10am–12pm for anyone who'd like a chat or to make new friends. From 5 November, a new Ukrainian Social Group will also be meeting 12–2pm.

To help with the cost of living and especially energy bills as the colder months arrive, Citizens Advice and The Environment Centre will be offering specialised advice and guidance on 5 and 12 November.

Making a Healthy Change

October offered plenty of prompts to make a healthy change — whether you joined Stoptober, Sober October, or took steps to manage your cholesterol. If you gave it a go, we hope you're already feeling the benefits!

If you tried but found it tricky, don't be discouraged — these are difficult changes to make and it often takes several attempts. You're more likely to succeed with support, so do take a look at:

- Smokefree Hampshire – to help quit smoking
- Alcohol Change UK – for advice on reducing drinking
- Heart UK – for heart and cholesterol support

Remember, you don't have to wait until next October to start again. Pick a time that feels right for you, make small, manageable changes, and note down the positives — even little improvements can make a big difference to your health (and your wallet!).

Boundaries Surgery has a new Facebook page!

Boundaries Surgery now has a new Facebook page! Unfortunately, the team lost access to the previous one, so they've had to start afresh.

Please follow their new page for updates about the practice, as well as general health and wellbeing information. To make sure you're following the correct one, look for a blue outline around the profile picture and this wording in the description:

"Patient-focused GP Practice providing exceptional healthcare and diverse services"

You can also scan the QR code to go directly to the new page!





NEWS *from the* PCN TEAM

Flu and Covid Vaccinations – October Update

October has been a very busy month for our practice teams delivering both Flu and Covid vaccinations. Each of our practices has held large Saturday clinics, along with weekday appointments, to help as many people as possible get protected for winter.

There are still appointments available, so if you haven't had your vaccinations yet, please book in. Having the vaccines you're eligible for helps keep you and those around you healthy — and reduces pressure across the whole healthcare system, from GP practices to hospitals.

Here's what's been achieved so far across the A31 PCN:

- Boundaries held two drive-through clinics at The Church of the Good Shepherd, delivering:
 - 873 flu jabs for over-65s
 - 285 flu jabs for eligible under-65s
 - 468 Covid jabs
 - 448 people received both vaccines
- Chawton Park has vaccinated over 73% of eligible patients for Covid and 60% for flu.
- The Wilson Practice has delivered almost 4,000 flu jabs and over 1,500 Covid jabs.

That's over 8,000 flu vaccinations and 3,000 Covid vaccinations across our practices so far — a fantastic effort!

A huge thank you to all the staff and volunteers who made the Saturday clinics such a success.

If you still need your jab, just send an AccuRx message to your practice. They'll text you a booking link showing all available slots.

Have your say

We want to hear from you on the kind of events focusing on health and wellbeing topics that you would be interested in coming to and when would be best. We would like to know where you get your local information to make sure we share news and events through the correct channels to make sure as many of you can decide whether or not you want to come. This short survey which should only take a few minutes asks a few questions. Access the survey through the link below or follow the QR code to our website where you can access it and a pdf if that is easier for you to return.

<https://forms.office.com/e/4eMbdi65Lh>





NEWS *from the* PCN TEAM

Target afternoon

On 14 October, the Practice and PCN staff teams took part in essential Target training. This included an important session on Information Governance, covering topics such as confidentiality, Freedom of Information requests, and GDPR. Given the sensitive nature of our work with special category data, it's vital that all staff have a thorough understanding of these principles. We recognise that when the practices close this can cause problems for you and appreciate your understanding the small number of times this happens annually.

Breast Cancer Awareness Week

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a time to highlight the importance of early detection. Checking your breasts regularly and attending routine screening invitations can help spot changes sooner, when treatment is most effective. If you notice any new lumps, changes in shape, or unusual discharge, contact your practice. For a full list of signs and symptoms visit Breast Cancer Now at www.breastcancernow.org where you can also get more information on what to expect and how to support someone with breast cancer.

World Stroke Day

29 October marks World Stroke Day. Every day in the UK, around 240 people survive a stroke, but recovery can be long and complex, with 60% living with life-changing disabilities. Quick and effective treatment is essential to improve survival and reduce lasting effects.

Remember the signs – Face, Arms, Speech:

- Face: is it drooping?
- Arms: can they lift both?
- Speech: is it slurred?

If you spot any of these signs, it's time to call 999 immediately.


The Stroke Association offers national support, and the Alton Stroke Support Group meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 2pm, at Alton Cardiac Rehab.

Cardiac Health (formerly Cardiac Rehab)

For nearly 50 years, Alton Cardiac Rehab has supported people in Alton with specialist, medically guided exercise programmes. Working alongside local healthcare professionals, they deliver evidence-based exercise to prevent illness, aid recovery, and manage long-term conditions.

They have recently changed their name to Cardiac Health to reflect their broader focus – supporting prevention as well as recovery, and helping people with a wider range of conditions such as cancer and pulmonary disease.

Find out more about what they offer and whether it might suit you at <https://cardiachealth.org.uk>



Grief is hard.
Death can impact
all of life.

The Bereavement
Journey®
a place to talk

7 Sessions of films
and discussion
for *anyone* bereaved *anytime*

Topics include:

- Attachment, separation and loss
- The pain and responses of grief
- Anger and guilt
- Coping with others' reactions
- Delayed and suppressed grief
- Adjusting to change
- Moving forward healthily
- Faith questions – a Christian perspective (optional)

To find out more visit:
thebereavementjourney.org

Running soon:
Monday evenings
7.30pm - 9.30pm
6th Oct - 17th Nov
Alton Maltings Centre.

Suggested voluntary contribution
£20 (for the whole course).

To book your place, or to find out
more about it, email
bereavement@potr-alton.co.uk
or phone 07514280362

NEW
FOR 2025



Hampshire Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Services

HAMPSHIRE CAMHS INFORMATION & ADVICE SESSION

YOUNG PERSON'S
MENTAL HEALTH

10am - 2pm

The Arc, Jewry Street
Winchester, SO23 8SB

This is an opportunity for
parents/carers, professionals
or young people to come
and chat to our CAMHS
clinicians, ask questions,
get advice and resources.

Bookable slots available via
our website or just drop in.



2 April

7 May

4 June

2 July

6 August

3 September

1 October

5 November

3 December

hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk



WHAT'S A PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (PCN)?

WHAT IS A PCN?

A Primary Care Network is a group of GP surgeries that work closely together to provide joined up services for their patients. PCNs were created in 2019 and have been growing and developing since then. When the pandemic hit lots of PCN staff were deployed to help with projects stepped up to offer care for patients with Covid and with the roll-out of the vaccine. The government is committed to working at a PCN scale increasingly referred to as a "neighbourhood team".

WHO MAKES UP THE A31 PCN?

The A31 PCN is made up of The Wilson Practice, Chawton Park Surgery and Boundaries Surgery. We serve the patients of Alton, Four Marks and the surrounding villages. Even before the creation of PCNs we worked closely together and experience many of the same challenges owing to our shared population. We are headed up by two Clinical Directors - Dr Bethan Davis and Dr Lucie Maloney and a board made up of GPs from across all three surgeries.

WHY IS IT GOOD FOR PATIENTS?

Working closely together as a PCN enables us to offer services that might not be possible as individual surgeries. Our First Contact Physiotherapists and Social Prescribers are just two teams that we have as a PCN. We can offer patients specialist care with skilled professionals who can see patients sooner and often offer more time. We are also able to offer more appointments with greater flexibility but you might be seen at any of the three surgeries.

WHO IS ON THE PCN TEAM?

We have a broad team of skilled staff working for the PCN team:

- First Contact Physiotherapists
- Social Prescribers
- Wellbeing Advisors
- General Practice Assistants (GPAs)
- Care Coordinators
- Mental Health Professionals

The PCN and practice staff work so closely together that you might not even realise you're seeing a member of the PCN team!

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

- Health on the High Street - multiple services together for weekly drop-in sessions
- Saturdays appointments - increased Saturday provision run by staff from the PCN and practices
- Same Day Access - additional appointments with GPs for those who need to be seen on the same day

We are always looking for new ways to help improve the health, wellbeing and access of our patients and are currently working on exciting plans!

HOW TO CONTACT US

- Through your usual practice channels
- A31 PCN, Alton Health Centre, Anstey Road, Alton, GU34 2QX
- Keep up to date with our news by following us on social media Facebook: A31 Primary Care Network, Instagram: a31pcn
- Subscribe through your practice websites for newsletters
- Join your practice PPG - the PCN regularly meets with the PPG chairs to plan joint events



ALTON SPORTS CENTRE HEALTH & WELLBEING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SERVICE

Everyone Active's Health & Wellbeing Physical Activity Service supports individuals with health conditions to increase their physical activity levels through a supported exercise programme.

The 12-week programme provides professional support for people who suffer from, or who are at risk of, developing chronic health conditions. It is also suitable for those whose health & wellbeing would benefit from a more active lifestyle.

Which health conditions does the programme cover?

If you have any of the following health conditions you are eligible to join the programme:

Arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, raised BMI, depression, anxiety, stress, fibromyalgia, COPD, physical disability, muscular or skeletal injury, neurological condition, osteoporosis, chronic fatigue syndrome.

How can I join the programme?

You can be referred by a health professional such as a GP, Physiotherapist or Practice Nurse, or you can self-refer.

Please scan the QR code to the right through to the online referral form.



What are the costs of the programme?

Those in receipt of the following benefits (and whose surgery is in the A31 catchment) can access the service for free for 3 months.

- Housing Benefit
- Employment Support Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Council Tax Benefit
- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit
- Job Seekers Allowance
- Disability Allowance

For those who do not receive income support, you can access a discounted membership of £34.48/month.

What does the programme include?

- An initial 1-2-1 appointment to discuss your health goals and how you can work towards them.
- Exercise guidance, support and encouragement from a qualified fitness professional.
- Two review appointments. One at 6 weeks and a final review at 12 weeks.
- A gym induction and access to supervised gym sessions.
- Access to the full activity timetable at the sports centre.

Activities included:

- Gym based exercise
- Swimming and water-based classes such as aqua aerobics
- Group fitness classes such as yoga and Pilates.

For any further questions please email:
elizabethallotthales@everyoneactive.com

Alton Sports Centre

Chawton Park Road, Alton, GU34 1ST T | 01420 540 040



www.everyoneactive.com



@everyoneactive



@everyoneactive















@everyoneactive





Name: _____

Date: _____

Autumn Sudoku

Cut out the squares at the bottom of the page and glue them
in the correct place of the Sudoku grid.
Each kind of leaf must appear only once in each row and column.

			
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Mindful Coloring





**BAT &
CHAT!**

**SOCIAL
SESSIONS**

Drop in Table Tennis and Pickleball social club for Parkinson's members - open to their carers/partners.

Every Wednesday 12pm-1:30pm

Secure a space via the app, website or in-centre!