



# An Apple A Day

Newsletter for patients registered at GP Surgeries in  
Hitchin and Whitwell

## HWPCN

**Hitchin & Whitwell  
Primary Care Network**

**Welcome to the sixth newsletter from HWPCN!**

It's been a busy few months for your PCN!

We are delighted to welcome Dionne Notschild, our new Operations Manager. You can find out more about Dionne in Jennifer's super interview later in the newsletter!

## NEW CARERS' CAFE!



After the huge success of our coffee morning during Carers' Week, our fantastic Care Coordinators are launching a weekly Carers' Café in Hitchin!

There will be drop in meetings at St Mary's church hall in Hitchin, from 10am – 12noon on Fridays. Tea and coffee will be available and, as well as a chance to chat and meet other carers, the team will be organising a varied programme of speakers and offering support.

We also plan to incorporate "Positive Movement", a very gentle, chair-based exercise approach drawn from adaptive yoga and including mindfulness.



Our first meeting will be on **Friday 6th October 2023**  
– do drop in anytime between **10am and 12noon**.

Anyone with caring responsibilities is very welcome, along with the person that you support - please do join us!

HWPCN  
Hitchin & Whitwell  
Primary Care Network

Beneath Medical Centre  
Parsell Surgery  
Royal Chambers Surgery  
Whitwell Surgery

**Carers' Café**  
Here today!  
Pop in for a cuppa  
and a chat

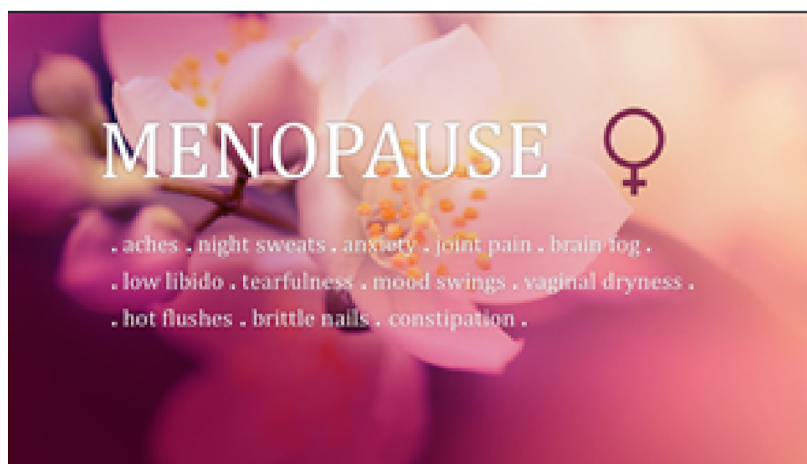
H&W HEALTH

## FULLY BOOKED PATIENT MEETING!

Our next face to face Patient Group meeting will be **Wednesday 4th October**. This meeting will be our first with a clinical focus and we are delighted that Dr Anna Mallott from Bancroft Medical Centre will be speaking on the menopause and hosting a Q&A session. We were overwhelmed with the interest in this event; it is ticket-only and was **fully booked** within hours of it being announced. Don't worry – we will re-run the meeting once we have feedback from the first session!

If you'd like to get first notice of these PCN events, please do email [hwpcn.admin@nhs.net](mailto:hwpcn.admin@nhs.net) and we'll add you to our PCN Patient Group mailing list.

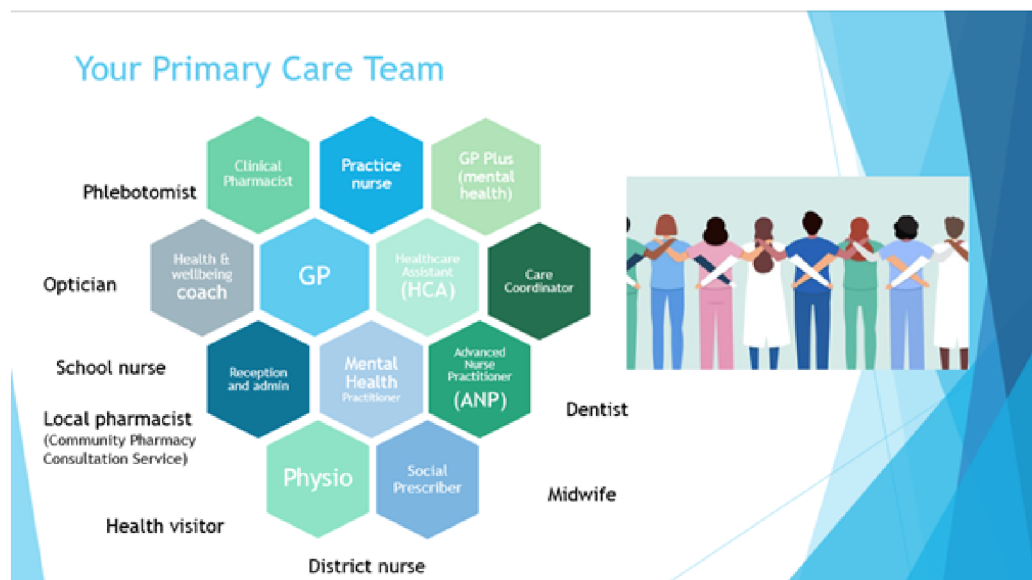
If you have ideas about other topics you'd like to see covered in Patient Group meetings, please do let us know.



## YOUR PRIMARY CARE TEAM

Primary Care offers so much more than doctors and nurses! You might be best helped by a clinical pharmacist, mental health practitioner or physiotherapist, for example.

Our reception teams are carefully trained in Care Navigation and it really helps to give them an idea of your concern when booking an appointment so that they can help make sure you see the most appropriate member of staff. Please do bear this in mind when booking an appointment.



**Mental Health Practitioners** support adults whose needs can't be supported by talking therapies but who might not need ongoing care from hospitals or mental health teams.

**Physiotherapists** can assess, diagnose & treat a range of complex muscle & joint conditions such as arthritis & back pain, without needing hospital care. They can also arrange further treatment, investigations and access to specialists if needed.

**Care Co-ordinators** help make sure that patients are connected to the right services or professionals at the right time. They can also help people manage their own needs, preparing them for upcoming appointments, monitoring their health and responding to any changes.

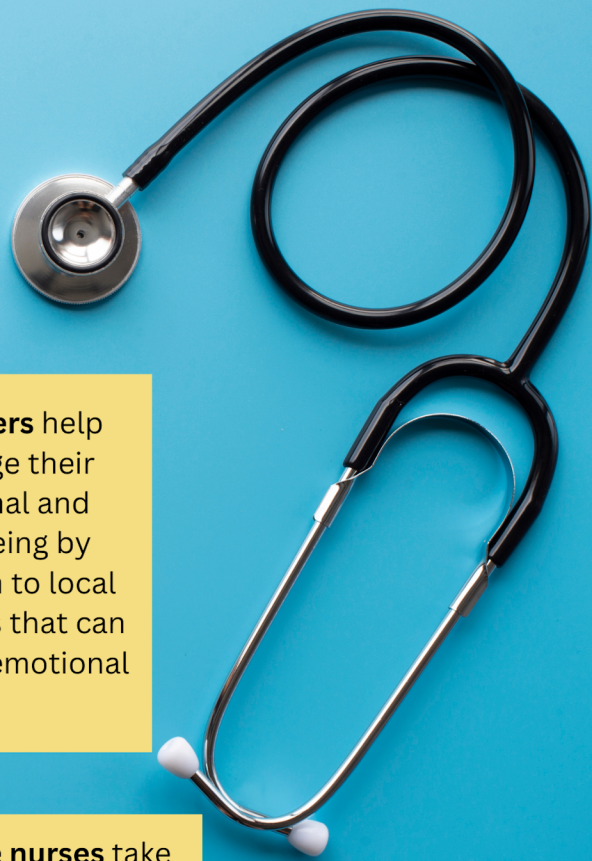
**Clinical Pharmacists** are experts in medicines, who help patients stay as well as possible by supporting those with long term conditions like asthma, diabetes & high blood pressure and people taking multiple medicines, to ensure their medication is working.

**Social Prescribers** help patients manage their social, emotional and physical wellbeing by connecting them to local groups & services that can offer practical & emotional support.

**General practice nurses** take blood samples, give vaccinations and carry out screening.

**Advanced nurse practitioners** are registered nurses who has completed extra training & qualification to be able to clinically assess, diagnose, refer & treat patients who present with undiagnosed or undifferentiated problems.

**Health & wellbeing coaches** help people manage their own health conditions by developing their knowledge, skills & confidence in dealing with the issue to prevent long term illness or it getting worse.



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## SOCIAL PRESCRIBER FOR NEURODIVERSITY

We are working with Hertfordshire Community Trust to employ a Social Prescriber for neurodiversity.

The successful candidate will be there to support families of children and young people with neurodiverse traits, such as suspected autism or ADHD, helping them to coordinate care and access support services.

We will be advertising on NHS Jobs and Indeed and hope to appoint someone soon!

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# Interview with Dionne Notschild - Primary Care Network Operations Manager



Many thanks to Jennifer Piggott for undertaking this interview.

**“If I could have written a perfect job role for me, it would have been this one”**

## **Tell us a bit about yourself**

I am 27 and I have lived in Stevenage my whole life, but I'd like to move to a village perhaps around the Henlow or Clifton area. I have been in this post since 17th July, so I am really new!

## **Why did you end up working for the NHS?**

My Gran always worked in the NHS and when I was very young, she worked in a Surgery in Stevenage. I would often join her during the day and sit in her little office. Even then I liked the atmosphere of a GP Practice. Six other members of my family have worked for the NHS, so it is a natural part of my life.

## **How did you get here?**

I left school at 17 with modest GCSE results but I knew what I wanted to do. I was not University material. I had the good fortune to see an apprenticeship in a local Surgery advertised. I jumped at it and got it! An apprenticeship was positively the right route into work for me and got me where I am now.

As an apprentice I got to know every part of the Surgery from reception to the dispensary to admin... After the apprenticeship the Surgery took me on in roles involving administration and later dispensing, when I obtained a dispensing qualification. I ended in finance which involved doing a bookkeeping course. Later, I found myself an Open University course in Business Management. It was great proving to myself that I could do a university-level course, but it was hard balancing fulltime work and study.

After 10 years, I felt I needed a further challenge and I saw this job advertised. I was attracted by the diversity of the role and the chance to be really involved in something.

## ...interview continued

### What Does Being a Patient Care Network Operations Manager Entail?

I support the PCN and help to ensure it runs smoothly. I run our enhanced access service, which is our evening and weekend appointments system. It involves lots of people including admin staff, doctors, nurses, and health care assistants from different Practices.

We also have a team of physios, and a mental health nurse who are shared between all the Practices, so I support them directly. Other jobs such as Pharmacists, Physio's, Adult Health and Wellbeing Coaches, Children & Young People Health and Wellbeing coaches, and social prescribers are employed by the PCN, for them I am there in the background if they need additional help. I like the daily variation. Last week I spent two days at a remote clinic, then a day in the office doing rotas and another day I went to a Practice to see how things are run there.

As part of the PCN team, my opinions are valued and considered before decisions are made.

### Who Do You Work With?

I have most contact with Tara (Clinical Director) and Jodie (Business Manager). I am new, so currently I am trying to meet people from the other Practices and see how each one works. I am learning lots about the way things operate in the different Practices. Everyone has been very welcoming; it is a lovely PCN.

### What Would You Like Patients to Know About?

We are running special sessions for patients like the one on the Menopause coming up shortly. I am not sure many of our patients know about the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and its role in giving feedback on patients' perspectives and needs, on what we are doing well and can do better. I want to help raise awareness of this to help the PPG grow.

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## HEALTHIER TOGETHER

The Healthier Together programme provides advice for parents, young people and pregnant women, and clinical resources to support healthcare professionals – which means that your child is likely to receive consistently high-quality care, irrespective of which healthcare professional they see.

Visit <https://www.hwehealthiertogether.nhs.uk/>



### Healthier Together

Improving the health of babies, children and young people throughout Hertfordshire and West Essex



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