



# An Apple A Day

Newsletter for patients registered at GP Surgeries in Hitchin and Whitwell

## HWPCN

**Hitchin & Whitwell  
Primary Care Network**

**Welcome to the spring edition of your PCN newsletter!**

We are delighted to launch our new website, which will have information about all of the services which we provide for Hitchin and Whitwell patients, as well as our monthly education programme, links to your practice websites and archived copies of all our newsletters so far.

The launch of the website coincides with our "relaunch" of our patient participation group and we'd love you to get involved!

Visit <https://hitchinandwhitwellpcn.nhs.uk/>



## PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

We've been asked, "What's the point of the PCN patient participation group (PPG)?" and this is what we think it offers:

- Access to education
- Health Champion or other volunteer
- Communication with the PCN and member practices

### Benefits to volunteers:



Improves physical and mental health



Provides a sense of purpose and teaches valuable skills



Nurture new and existing relationships



**Volunteers could be involved in...**

**Please contact [hwpcn.admin@nhs.net](mailto:hwpcn.admin@nhs.net) if you'd like to join our PCN PPG!**

# NEURODIVERSITY IN CHILDREN



On Thursday 14th March, we held an on-line education meeting on “Neurodiversity in Children”, which was presented by the local charity, Angels. At the meeting we introduced our new Neurodiversity Social Prescribers, Natalie and Jane who will be offering much-needed support for families whose children are suspected of being neurodiverse.



**Natalie Kelly**



**Jane Tyrrell**

[Click here to watch the recording](#)

## Neurodiversity Social Prescribers Offer:

- Support with referral pathways
- Help to understand the benefits of creativity, the natural environment and physical activity
- Emotional support
- Practical, helpful and non-judgemental support
- Liaison with education providers
- Central point of contact for families
- Advocating for young people and their families

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## PROSTATE CANCER EDUCATION EVENT

On 4th April 2024 the PCN will be running an online education event on Prostate Cancer from 6.30pm - 7.30pm via Microsoft Teams.

[Click here to register for the event](#)

Our aim is to have a monthly education event or PPG meeting in future and all patients will be sent information about these. A full programme will be available on the PCN website.



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## FRIENDS & FAMILY TEST FEEDBACK

Many thanks to all of you who have completed a “FFT” form after your appointment.

We really do appreciate all the positive feedback, especially when individuals are identified as having gone above and beyond! All your constructive feedback is welcomed and we do our best to improve services with this in mind.



## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE

We're sorry to say that our planned Children's Mental Health Practitioner service has not been able to be progressed. However, don't forget that young people aged 11-24 can still access GRIT.



Our adult mental health practitioner service will also come to an end in March. You can still self-refer to Talking Therapies and your practice also has access to the Enhanced Primary Care Mental Health service (EPMHS – commonly known as “GP Plus”), a multi-disciplinary mental health service that bridges the gap between care available in GP practices, and secondary care. Working closely with IAPT, EPMHS provides quick access to a range of treatments and therapies for people with mild and moderate mental health problems, helping to intervene early and prevent problems from escalating. The team also supports people as they move forward with their life following a period of support with secondary mental health services.



Are you aged between 11 – 24 years?



Do you struggle with anxiety, self-esteem, negative thoughts, or anger?



Do you have a goal you are struggling to achieve?



Connect with us at: [gritcharity.org](http://gritcharity.org)  
or contact us at: [grithello@gmail.com](mailto:grithello@gmail.com)

or follow us on facebook & instagram at: [/gritcharity](https://www.facebook.com/gritcharity)



## ADULT ADHD AND AUTISM ASSESSMENT REQUESTS



Please be aware that we are receiving a lot of requests for assessment for adult ADHD and autism. At the time of writing, the local mental health team are not accepting any more referrals for ADHD assessment.

# INSOMNIA

Are you struggling to sleep? Many sleeping tablets are addictive and we've been advised not to prescribe even some of the "safer" medications. A great option is Sleepstation.

Sleepstation is a clinically validated digital screening and support service for those experiencing sleep problems, including a full online programme of cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBTi).

The digital care pathway and person-centred approach incorporates dedicated, proactive human support and multi-disciplinary team input.



**Sleepstation**

**Sleepstation is available on the NHS in your area**

Your GP can refer you to Sleepstation, making our support free for you to access as an NHS patient. We can contact your GP directly to let them know that you'd like our help. All you need to do is complete the short form below.

The graphic features an illustration of a doctor in a white coat and tie sitting at a desk with a patient in a red sweater. To the right are three icons: a stethoscope, a speech bubble, and a heart. The background is a dark blue night sky with stars.

[Visit sleepstation.org.uk](http://sleepstation.org.uk) for more information and to request NHS access - FREE!

## CARERS' CAFÉ

Finally – you may not even realise you're a Carer when you're looking after a loved one. Being registered as a carer may give you access to health checks, vaccines, winter fuel payments and other support. Come along to our weekly Carers' Café to find out more!



**CARERS' Café**

**Calling all Carers!**

Join us for a cuppa and a chat  
Every Friday morning 10am-12pm  
St Mary's Parish Church Hall  
Church House, Churchyard, Hitchin SG5 1HP

Anyone with caring responsibilities is welcome, along with the person you support. Come and see what services are available to you.

**H&W HEALTH**  
HWPCN  
Hitchin & Whitwell  
Primary Care Network

Ranscroft Medical Centre  
Portmill Surgery  
Regal Chambers Surgery  
Whitwell Surgery

**NHS**

The graphic includes a yellow circular logo with a coffee cup, a red apple, and a heart-shaped steam rising from a coffee cup. The NHS logo is in the bottom left corner.

