

Welcome to our updated newsletter about making the best use of local health services

This newsletter has been produced in partnership with the Practice's [Patient Participation Group](#). It provides details about sources of information, advice and support on health issues.

Our GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners and Primary Care Paramedic all assess, diagnose, treat and manage illness. Our Clinical Team also includes a Physician Associate who works under the supervision of one of the GP Partners. We also have GP Registrars working with us - they are fully qualified doctors who have worked in hospitals for several years and are now training to be GPs under the supervision of one of the GP Partners here in Swanage. **You may be offered an appointment with any member of our Clinical Team, depending on the nature of your health problem.**

Swanage Medical Practice, like General Practices across the country, is experiencing significant pressure at the moment. We want to ensure you get the help you need as quickly as possible and that our resources are used effectively.

What you can do to help

- Keep yourself well (see more below)
- Consider whether you have a minor condition you can manage yourself (see Self Care below)
- Consider referring yourself to one of the free local services that does not require a referral from a GP or other healthcare professional (see more below)
- Consider whether another NHS service would better meet your needs - more information and advice on how to use the right service, at the right time, can be found on the [Stay Well Dorset Website](#).

If your child is unwell

- Go to the [Healthier Together Website](#), where you will find advice on what serious 'red-flag' signs to look out for, where to seek help if required, what you should do to keep your child comfortable and how long symptoms are likely to last.

Keeping well

There's lots you can do to help keep yourself fit and healthy.

[LiveWell Dorset](#) provides free coaching, support and advice to help you **move more, manage your weight, stop smoking or drink less alcohol**. Call **0800 840 1628** or visit the [LiveWell Dorset website](#).

Checking your blood pressure could also help save your life - for more information go to the [Stay Well Dorset website](#).

It's also important to make sure you are up to date with all the **vaccinations** you are eligible for - more information can also be found on the [Stay Well Dorset website](#).

Self Care

There are many minor conditions you can treat yourself by using over-the-counter medicines from your local pharmacy or supermarket - without needing to see a doctor or nurse.

Prescriptions for medicines that are available over the counter to treat 35 minor conditions are no longer generally available in Dorset - including for coughs, colds, mild hayfever, and indigestion. For more information, go to [HelpYourNHS on the NHS Dorset Website](#).

The Pharmacists at your local Community Pharmacy can offer help and clinical advice to manage minor health concerns - and, if your symptoms suggest it's more serious, they will ensure you get the care you need.

For more advice on how to manage specific conditions, visit the [NHS website](#).

Services you can refer yourself to without needing to see a GP first

Click the links below for further information

Pharmacy First

[Pharmacy First](#) enables your local pharmacy to treat the following conditions with prescription-only medicines, without the need to visit your GP:

- Sinusitis (patients aged 12 years and over)
- Sore throat (patients aged 5+)
- Earache (patients aged 1-17 years)
- Infected insect bite (patients aged 1+)
- Impetigo (patients aged 18+)
- Shingles (patients aged 18 years+)
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections (women aged 16-64 years).

You can either walk into the pharmacy or contact them virtually. For more information, watch this [Pharmacy First Animation](#).

Physiotherapy

Advice on how to manage aches and pains in your joints, muscles and bones can be found on the [Musculoskeletal Matters Website](#). You can also refer yourself to a physiotherapist by using the [Self-Referral Form](#) on their website.

You can also ask to see a [First Contact Physiotherapist](#) at the Surgery for musculoskeletal conditions without needing to see a doctor first.

Contraception and Sexual Health Services

[Sexual Health Dorset](#) provides a wide range of free and confidential contraception and sexual health service for people of all ages in Dorset. Call [0300 303 1948](#) to make an appointment or for further advice.

[Free Emergency Contraception](#) is also available from many Community Pharmacies in Dorset, including Boots in Swanage.

Many Community Pharmacies also now offer the [Oral Contraceptive Pill without a prescription](#), Including Well Pharmacy in Swanage.

Maternity Services

[Maternity Matters Dorset](#) provides information about maternity options and services in Dorset. If you've recently found out you're pregnant, you can refer yourself to the service by following the links in their website.

Support for Parents

[ParentLine](#) is a confidential text messaging service for parents and carers of children aged 0-5 in Dorset. Text [07312 277162](#) for confidential advice and support from a member of the Health Visiting Team about your child's health and development. The service runs 9:00am-5:00pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

[ParentLine 5-19](#) is a confidential text messaging service for parents and carers of children and young people aged 5-19 in Dorset. Text [07312 263131](#) for confidential advice and support from a member of the School Nursing Team about your child's health and development.

[The Family Hub website](#) also has lots of information to support Parents.

Mental Health Services

[Access Mental Health](#) offers a range of services to help people who are struggling to cope or feel they are nearing a breakdown.

You don't need to be referred by your GP - just reach out for help when you need it by phoning [Connection](#) on [0800 652 0190](#) or [NHS 111](#) for free (available for people of all ages) or by visiting one of the [Community Front Rooms](#) for face-to-face help (available for anyone aged 18+).

[Steps2Wellbeing](#) offers therapy services to support adults aged 18+ with common mental wellbeing problems, like depression and anxiety.

You can refer yourself to the service by following the self-referral link on their website or by phoning [0800 484 0500](#).

[Dorset Youth's Mental Health Hub](#) provides information about all the services available in Dorset to help children and young people aged under 18 experiencing problems with their mental health, including information about how to access help in an emergency.

[The CAMHS Gateway](#) acts as the "Front Door" to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Dorset. Young people aged 16-18 years can refer themselves to the service by completing the [CAMHS Self-Referral Form](#).