



## Preston Park Surgery WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024

*Wishing you all a Merry XMAS  
& A Happy Healthy New Year!!!!*



### Introduction

#### **Welcome to Our Winter Newsletter!**

As 2024 draws to a close, we want to take a moment to thank you for being part of our community here at Preston Park Surgery. This year has been one of growth, collaboration, and care, and we're delighted to continue serving you as we step into the winter months. In this edition, we'll be sharing updates on our services, tips for staying healthy during the colder season, and important reminders for the year ahead. Winter is a time when staying on top of your health is more important than ever, and we're here to support you with advice, flu vaccination clinics, and more. We also focus on the results of the last GP Patient Survey with a comparison on how we compare with other surgeries plus overview the results of the Friends & Family Test. Finally we look at the different roles that surgery staff play in patient care and in this issue you can read about the "Day in the life of a Receptionist".

From all of us at the surgery, we wish you a warm, safe, and joyful winter. Whether it's managing seasonal illnesses or planning for your long-term health, we're always here for you.

**Warm wishes,  
The Preston Park Surgery Team**

### New Starters

In addition to the new GPs who joined last year, I am thrilled to share that we've expanded our team to better support you! Over the past few months, we've welcomed new receptionists, nurses, healthcare assistants and phlebotomists to the surgery. Their skills and dedication will help us provide you with even more efficient and compassionate care.

### Festive Opening Times

The practice will be closed for the bank holidays over the festive period.

**Please check you have enough medication to last you whilst we are closed and order any prescriptions in plenty of time.**

24th December (XMAS Eve) - 8.30am—6.00pm

25th December ( XMAS Day) - **CLOSED**

26th December (BOXING Day) - **CLOSED**

27th December 8.30am—6.00pm

30th December 8.30am—6.00pm

31st December (New Years Eve)- 8.30am-6.00pm

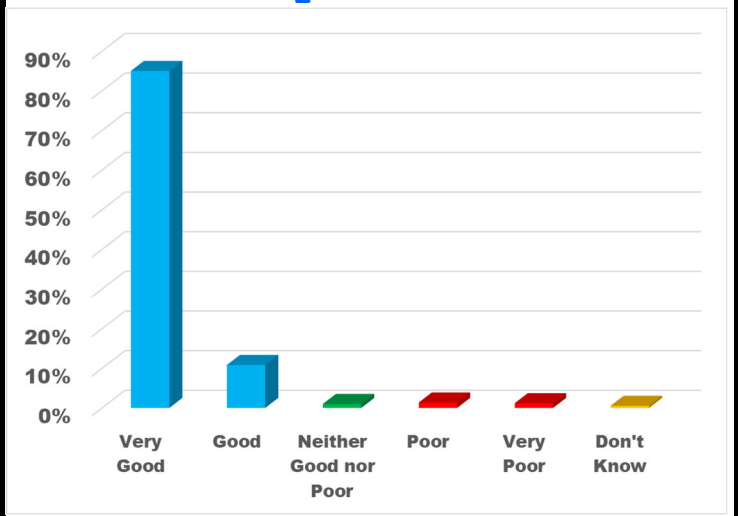
1st January (New Year's Day) - **CLOSED**

### Friends & Family Test Results

#### **Results to End of November 2024**

**Q. Overall, how was your experience of our service?**

**96% of patients said  
Good & Very Good**



# PRESTON PARK SURGERY—What's happening

At Preston Park Surgery, we're committed to improving the patient experience and ensuring that healthcare services are accessible, efficient, and user-friendly. As part of this commitment, we've recently implemented several exciting changes, including a new phone system, online registration options, and participation in the innovative Pharmacy First scheme. Here's a closer look at what's new.

## ***New Phone System***



We understand how frustrating it can be to experience long wait times or dropped calls when contacting the surgery. That's why we've introduced a new, state-of-the-art phone system. This upgrade is designed to streamline call handling, ensuring that patients can get through to the right department quickly and efficiently.

### **Key features include:**

Improved call queue management, so you'll know your position in the queue.

Callback functionality, allowing you to request a return call rather than waiting on hold.

Dedicated lines for urgent issues, helping us prioritize emergencies.

This new system aims to reduce patient frustration and improve communication with our team, ensuring your questions and concerns are addressed promptly.

## ***Register Online with Ease***

Preston Park Surgery is now making it easier than ever to register with us. We've introduced an online registration system that allows new patients to sign up without the need to visit the surgery in person.

You don't need proof or address or immigration status, ID or an NH number to fill out the form. This step aligns with our goal to make healthcare more accessible, especially for those with busy schedules or mobility challenges.

**Scan here  
to register**



## ***Pharmacy First Scheme***

As part of our efforts to improve patient care, Preston Park Surgery is now participating in the Pharmacy First scheme. This initiative allows patients to seek treatment for minor illnesses directly from their local pharmacy without needing a GP appointment.

**Visit your Pharmacy First!! Visit your Pharmacy First!!**

## Pharmacy First cont.....

Pharmacists are highly trained healthcare professionals who can provide expert advice supply NHS medicines where clinically appropriate (including some prescription-only medicines under Patient Group Directions), to treat 7 common health conditions such as:

Sinusitis, Sore Throat, Earache, Infected Insect Bites, impetigo, shingles, uncomplicated Urinary tract infections in women.

Don't wait for minor health concerns to get worse – think pharmacy first and get seen by your local pharmacy team. For more information, visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/how-pharmacies-can-help/>

**NHS**

Providing NHS services

Most pharmacies can help you  
with **seven common conditions**  
without needing a GP appointment

- **Sinusitis**  
(adults and children aged 12 years and over)
- **Sore throat**  
(adults and children aged 5 years and over)
- **Earache**  
(children and young adults aged 1 year to 17 years)
- **Infected insect bite**  
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Impetigo**  
(adults and children aged 1 year and over)
- **Shingles**  
(adults aged 18 years and over)
- **Urinary tract infection**  
(women, aged 16 to 64 years)



Ask your pharmacy for more  
information about this  
free\* NHS service

Visit your  
**Pharmacy First!**

\*NHS prescription charge rules apply where a medicine is supplied



## The Heart of Preston Park Surgery: A Day in the Life of Our Reception Team

Our Practice Manager often says, *“The Reception Team are the heart of the Surgery,”* and how right he is!!!

Working on reception is a fulfilling and dynamic job, giving us the chance to meet and support people from all walks of life. This Christmas, we want to take a moment to highlight the incredible work our reception team does and to thank all our patients for making this role so worthwhile.

There is never a dull day at Preston Park Surgery. From our GPs and admin staff to each of our patients, everyone plays their part in keeping things running smoothly. Our reception team is the first point of contact for most patients—a role that is both a pleasure and a great responsibility. Whether it's booking appointments, sending reminders, chasing up referrals, or handling unique patient queries, every day brings new challenges and opportunities to help.

### A Day in the Life

Our day starts bright and early at 8:00 am, when we arrive and prepare for the day ahead. By 8:30 am, the doors open and the phones are live. The receptionist on the front desk is the first point of contact welcoming patients, checking them in for appointments, and managing in-person queries whilst the back office team are busy handling calls coming in nonstop. We work hard to answer all calls as quickly as possible—making appointments, handling prescription queries, and routing hospital or referral enquiries to the secretaries. Once the morning rush settles, one of us begins processing the prescriptions—on average, around 350 per day.

The upgrade of our telephone system has enabled us to provide a call-back facility which has been a huge success with our patients. This feature allows patients to request a call-back instead of waiting on hold, saving time and the frustration of queuing. Patients love the convenience, and it has made our phone lines more efficient, ensuring everyone gets the support they need in a timely manner.

As the morning progresses, the reception area buzzes with activity. Patients continue arriving for their appointments, some anxious or unwell, requiring the receptionist's compassionate listening skills.

Emergencies can arise at any moment. A distressed patient may walk in without an appointment, or a doctor may need urgent information for a referral. We remain calm and efficient under pressure, ensuring the practice runs smoothly.

The afternoon often mirrors the morning in terms of pace, with the addition of end-of-day preparations. Patients might need to reschedule appointments, clarify test results, raise queries about referrals and completing outstanding tasks. We handle these interactions tactfully while ensuring they don't delay the day's closing procedures.

### Expect the Unexpected

Being a receptionist at Preston Park surgery means no two days are ever the same. Our mantra is, *“Expect the unexpected.”* From power cuts to unusual patient requests, we've learned to stay adaptable. Our Reception Manager recalls a power outage earlier this year when we had no power for a couple of hours but thanks to patience, improvisation, and teamwork, we were back online in time for the afternoon calls.

Of course, not every challenge is so dramatic—sometimes, it's simply delivering the doctors' drinks. Coordinating six different teas and coffees in the 30 seconds between appointments might deserve its own qualification!

### Why We Love What We Do

Across the board, our team agrees that the most rewarding part of the job is seeing our work make a difference. Whether it's delivering good news, helping a patient access treatment, or simply receiving a heartfelt thank-you, these moments make it all worthwhile.

Your support and kindness never goes unnoticed—and neither do the chocolates and cards that arrive every Christmas. From all of us in the reception team, thank you for the lovely gifts and well wishes. We're grateful to work in a community where patients make our job so fulfilling.

Reception work is very challenging but working at Preston Park Surgery is really enjoyable.

**From everyone at Preston Park Surgery reception, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas!**



# Vaccinations: What You Need to Know

## **Stay Vaccinated: Protect Your Health This Season**

As we move through the colder months, staying healthy becomes more challenging. With flu season in full swing and other illnesses like respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), shingles, and pneumococcal disease posing risks, vaccinations remain one of the most effective ways to protect yourself and those around you.

At Preston Park Surgery, we encourage all our patients to prioritise their health by staying up to date with recommended vaccinations. Here's why these vaccines matter and who should consider getting them:

### **Flu Vaccine**

Influenza (flu) is more than just a bad cold—it can lead to serious complications like pneumonia, especially for older adults, young children, and those with chronic health conditions. The flu vaccine is updated annually to target the most common strains, providing essential protection.

#### **Who should have the flu vaccine?**

Everyone aged 6 months and older, especially those over 65, pregnant women, and individuals

### **RSV Vaccine**

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common virus that can cause severe respiratory infections, particularly in infants, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems. The RSV vaccine helps protect against RSV, a common virus that can make babies and older adults seriously ill.

#### **Who should have the RSV vaccine?**

- People aged 75 to 79
- Pregnant women (from 28 weeks onwards) to help protect your baby after they're born

### **Shingles Vaccine**

Shingles is a painful rash caused by the reactivation of the chickenpox virus (varicella-zoster). It can lead to long-term nerve pain and other complications. The shingles vaccine can reduce your chance of getting shingles.

#### **Who should have the shingles vaccine?**

- People who turn 65 on or after 1st September 2023
- People aged 70 to 79
- People aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system

### **Pneumococcal Vaccine**

Pneumococcal disease can cause serious infections like pneumonia, meningitis, and sepsis. The pneumococcal vaccine protects against these complications and are especially important for older adults.

#### **Who should have the pneumococcal vaccine?**

Babies, Adults over 65, and children and adults at higher risk of getting seriously ill.

### **Why Vaccinate?**

**Protect Yourself:** Vaccines reduce your risk of severe illness, hospitalisation, and complications.

**Protect Others:** By staying vaccinated, you help protect vulnerable members of the community, such as babies, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems.

**Ease the Strain on Healthcare Services:** Preventing illness through vaccination means fewer hospital visits and shorter wait times for everyone.

### **How to Get Vaccinated**

Preston Park Surgery offers flu, RSV, shingles, and pneumococcal vaccinations. If you're unsure which vaccines you need, our team can guide you based on your age, health conditions, and lifestyle.

**Book your vaccination appointment today and take an important step in safeguarding your health this winter.**

**Stay safe, stay well, and remember: prevention is always better than cure.**

# How are you really feeling?

## How are you really feeling?

It's a question you may often ask other people, but how often do you stop to check in with how you are really feeling?

The festive season is often painted as a time of joy, family togetherness, and celebration. Yet, for many people, Christmas can bring feelings of stress, loneliness, or sadness. It's important to remember that you're not alone and that support is always available if you're struggling.

## Common Challenges During Christmas

The pressures of gift-giving, social expectations, and financial concerns can feel overwhelming. For some, Christmas might highlight feelings of isolation or grief for loved ones who are no longer here. Even joyful gatherings can be draining if you're managing mental health conditions like anxiety or depression.

Feeling unable to cope, worried you may hurt yourself or somebody else and/or experiencing suicidal feelings?

If your life - or someone else's life - is in immediate danger, call 999 or go A&E.

For same or next day help (all services are free):

- [Call NHS 111 and select the mental health option](#)
- [Visit a Staying Well Service \(Brighton, Crawley, Eastbourne, Hastings, Worthing\)](#)
- [Text the word SUSSEX to 85258](#)
- [Download the Stay Alive app](#)



**We all get days when we feel sad, anxious or low, but if how you are feeling is having an impact on your day-to-day life, help is available.**

Find mental wellbeing support that's right for you.

<https://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/about-us/news-events/how-are-you-really-feeling>



# GP Patient Survey

The GP Patient Survey assesses patients' experience of healthcare services provided by GP practices, including experience of access, making appointments, the quality of care received from healthcare professionals, patient health and experience of NHS services when their GP practice was closed.

## The Results

Questions	Preston Park Surgery	NHS England Average
% of patients who find the receptionists & administrative team	<b>94%</b>	<b>83%</b>
% of patients who describe the experience of contacting the surgery as GOOD	<b>81%</b>	<b>67%</b>
% of patients who say their healthcare professional was good at treating them with care and concern	<b>94%</b>	<b>89%</b>
% of patients who were involved in decisions about their care	<b>96%</b>	<b>91%</b>
% of patients who had confidence and trust in their healthcare professional	<b>95%</b>	<b>92%</b>
% of patients who said their Overall Experience of their GP Practice as GOOD	<b>80%</b>	<b>74%</b>

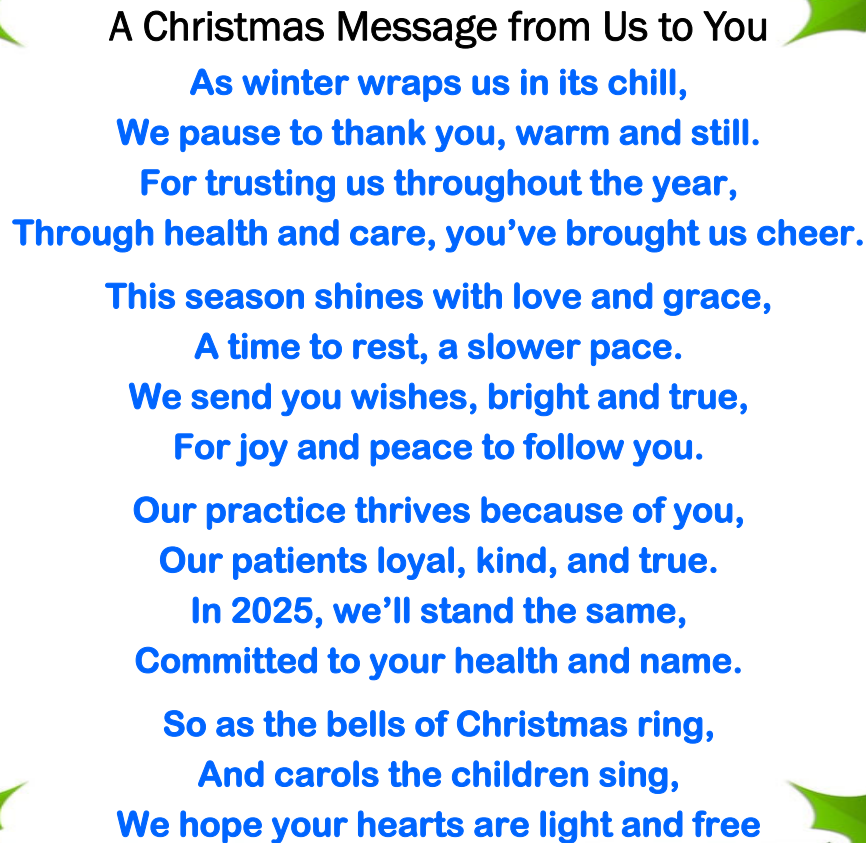
The above table is snapshot of the results, a detailed breakdown of results is available on our website.

Overall the results are very encouraging and point positively in a number of key areas and whilst we have consistently outscored the NHS National Average the surgery will continue to work to improve patient



*"80% of patients said their overall experience of Preston Park Surgery was GOOD"*





**A Christmas Message from Us to You**

**As winter wraps us in its chill,  
We pause to thank you, warm and still.  
For trusting us throughout the year,  
Through health and care, you've brought us cheer.**

**This season shines with love and grace,  
A time to rest, a slower pace.  
We send you wishes, bright and true,  
For joy and peace to follow you.**

**Our practice thrives because of you,  
Our patients loyal, kind, and true.  
In 2025, we'll stand the same,  
Committed to your health and name.**

**So as the bells of Christmas ring,  
And carols the children sing,  
We hope your hearts are light and free**

### **Exciting Updates Coming to Our Newsletter!**

We are delighted to share with you some of the exciting content we have planned for upcoming issues of our newsletter. At Preston Park Surgery, we aim to keep you informed, supported, and engaged in your health and well-being.

Here's a sneak peek at what's in store:

#### **1. Practice News and Updates**

Stay informed about what's happening at Preston Park Surgery! We'll be sharing updates on opening hours, changes to our team, new services, and other important announcements to keep you in the loop.

#### **2. Health Tips and Seasonal Advice**

Each edition will include practical health advice tailored to the season. From managing winter colds to staying hydrated in summer, we'll provide simple tips to help you stay well year-round.

#### **3. Patient Spotlights and Stories**

We love celebrating our patients! If you have a positive story about your health journey or experience with us, we'd love to feature you (with your permission, of course).

#### **4. Community Events and Local Resources**

We'll highlight events, support groups, and services in our community that can help you connect with others and access additional support for your health and wellness.

#### **5. Wellness and Lifestyle Features**

Learn more about nutrition, exercise, mental well-being, and other lifestyle topics to help you lead a healthier, happier life.

#### **6. Staff Highlights**

Meet the faces behind your care! Each issue will feature a staff profile so you can get to know the team working hard to support you.

We're excited to bring you this new, improved newsletter and look forward to staying connected with you. If there are topics you'd like us to cover, or if you have suggestions for improvement, please let us know—we'd love to hear your thoughts!

Here's to a healthier, happier year ahead.