

## Newsletter

### Winter/Spring - 2023/24

Keeping warm this winter can help prevent illnesses such as cold and flu and also fights against more serious problems like strokes, heart attacks, pneumonia and depression. NHS advice is to try and keep the room temperature at 18C in the rooms you are in most of the time, like your living room and bedroom.



With the current cost of living crisis, it's important that struggling households check to see if they are missing out on any benefits or discounts they may be entitled to claim. The government benefits checker, [www.gov.uk/check-benefits-financial-support/y](http://www.gov.uk/check-benefits-financial-support/y) can help in identifying any benefits that households may be eligible to claim.

It's not too late to help protect yourself from the flu virus this winter. If you are aged 65+, have an existing health problem, are a carer or pregnant then protect yourself and those around you as flu can be dangerous. Please call the surgery or book through the AskFirst app to make an appointment. Your health is our priority.



You can treat a common cold without seeing a GP and you should feel better within a week or two. To help you get better more quickly: rest and sleep, drink plenty of water or fruit juice, ease aches or lower temperature with paracetamol or ibuprofen and for sore throats, adults can gargle with salt water. More information can be found in the AskFirst app 'Self Help' option.



**Hartland Way Surgery**  
CQC overall rating  
**GOOD**  
15th July 2022

**Hartland Way Surgery**  
1 Hartland Way  
Croydon  
CR0 8RG  
020 8777 7215

#### Practice Partners

Dr Lydia Osei-Boateng  
Dr A R Ingram  
Ms Rena Amin

#### Out of Hours Service

If you need urgent access to a GP when the surgery is closed, ring the NHS non-emergency number: **111**. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

#### Patient Contact Details

Please let the surgery know as soon as possible if any of your contact details change, such as address, email, telephone or mobile number. It is important that we have up to date contact information in case we need to contact you.



### AskFirst Access to NHS Services

Patients at Hartland Way surgery now have the option to register for their own personal online virtual health assistant now that the surgery has teamed up with **AskFirst** to increase the range of services offered to their patients. **AskFirst** has been developed in partnership with the NHS, helping patients to self-help and connect with the right services at the right time.

The **AskFirst** app is available to install on a smartphone or tablet and is free to download and use from the Apple store and Google Play or can be accessed directly at <https://sensely.com/askfirst> and acts as a gateway to a wide range of GP services, wellbeing resources and self-care information available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Once the **AskFirst** app has been downloaded or accessed directly online and an account has been created by entering the information requested (postcode, surname, date of birth, email address) together with a secure password, the system will automatically associate the account with the Hartland Way surgery by matching the post code and personal details entered to those held by the surgery.

When a patient selects either routine or urgent appointments the virtual assistant will ask what the main medical symptom is together with a number of follow-up questions and depending on the symptoms and responses given, the app will prioritise those patients needing to see a GP into either a more urgent appointment slot and offer those patients with less urgent needs a later appointment slot. Patients are able to book appointments

directly through the app without the need to call the practice, so no more early morning rush to ring the surgery, constant redialling or waiting for the receptionist to answer. In addition, a transcript of the questions asked by the virtual assistant and answers provided by the patient are sent to the surgery, helping to make the consultation more efficient and effective.

Apart from being able to book routine and urgent GP appointments directly from the app, there are a range of other options available, including repeat prescription requests and pharmacy information, general non-medical inquiries such as requesting a sick note, Covid 19 and flu vaccination booking, manage appointments, self care information, service finder (dentist, pharmacy etc) and wellbeing (social and mental health).

Instead of all appointment requests being directed to the GP in the first instance to diagnose the appropriate treatment the patient needs, the **AskFirst** app is able to triage the patient to the required health professional, whether it's a GP, nurse, social prescriber, first contact practitioner, NHS 111 or A&E, freeing up additional appointment slots for the GP to see patients that require more urgent care.

For the patient **AskFirst** provides an easy and convenient way to seek self care advice, wellbeing support and access to GP services whenever help or assistance is required.

### CARERS

Do you look after someone who is ill, frail or disabled?

We are interested in identifying carers, especially those who are caring without help or support. We know that carers are often "hidden" looking after a family member or helping a friend or neighbour with day to day tasks and may not see themselves as a carer.

Here at Hartland Way, **Lyndsey Booth** is the practice Carers Champion, who is the focal point for all carer matters. Should you have any questions or would like to have a confidential discussion, please ask at reception. Alternatively, ask for a Carers identification form at reception.