
Dear Patient,

At Hartland Way Surgery, we are committed to providing you with proactive, high-quality, and personalised care. Following new clinical guidelines established across Croydon for 2026–2029, we are launching an enhanced support and management register for patients with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), recently updated in medical literature to Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS).

This guide explains what PCOS/PMOS is, why structured tracking is essential for your long-term health, and what you can expect from your upcoming annual health checks at the surgery.

Did You Know?

PCOS affects an estimated 1 in 8 women in the UK. Alarming, between 50% and 75% of women with the condition remain undiagnosed. Our new programme is specifically designed to close this gap and provide early support.

Why We Are Introducing This Service

PCOS is a common endocrine (hormonal) and metabolic disorder. While it naturally affects reproductive health and the menstrual cycle, it also has a significant impact on your body's metabolism and long-term well-being. If left unmonitored or untreated, PCOS can increase the risk of developing several serious health complications over time, including:

- **Metabolic Concerns & Diabetes:** Insulin resistance can lead to Type 2 diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance.
- **Cardiovascular Health:** Increased risks of elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- **Liver Health:** Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).
- **Sleep Health:** Obstructive sleep apnoea (disrupted breathing during sleep).
- **Womb Health:** A long-term risk of endometrial changes (thickening of the womb lining) if periods occur less than once every 3 months.
- **Well-being:** Psychological impacts such as anxiety, stress, or low mood.

What We Are Going To Do: Your Annual Health Check

To safeguard your health, Hartland Way Surgery is introducing a dedicated PCOS Register. Every registered patient over the age of 18 on this register will be invited to a comprehensive Annual Health Check. During this tailored appointment, your care team will perform and discuss the following:

What We Check / Provide	Why It Matters & What It Covers
Vitals & Biometrics	We check your Blood Pressure and Body Mass Index (BMI). Monitoring these regularly helps protect your heart and track cardiovascular health.
Comprehensive Blood Screening	We arrange tests for HbA1c (to screen for early signs of diabetes) and a full Lipid Baseline/Profile (to monitor cholesterol levels). If you experience irregular or heavy cycles, we may also review thyroid (TSH) or prolactin levels.
Cycle & Womb Protection	We review the frequency of your menstrual cycles. If you have prolonged gaps between periods (fewer than one period every 3 months), we provide medical management to protect the lining of your womb. We will also ensure your routine cervical screening (smear test) is up to date.
Lifestyle & Weight Support	We offer personalised, practical guidance on nutrition, healthy lifestyle modifications, or direct referrals to specialised weight management support services to help optimise metabolic health.

Personalised Treatment & Symptom Management

PCOS affects everyone differently. Your annual check is also a space to discuss frustrating symptoms and access targeted treatments:

- **Family Planning:** Depending on whether you are currently planning a pregnancy or looking for reliable contraception, we will tailor your care and treatment pathway using the latest national evidence.

Understanding Specific Medications (e.g., Metformin)

You may sometimes hear about or be prescribed a medication called Metformin. We want to ensure you have clear, straightforward information regarding its use:

1. **Off-Label Use:** Metformin is primarily licensed for Type 2 Diabetes, but it is frequently used 'off-label' globally to treat PCOS because it improves how your body responds to insulin.
2. **Specialist Coordination:** Under local Croydon guidelines, your GP will frequently consult clinical specialists (Advice & Guidance) or initiate treatment based on precise criteria to ensure it's the safest choice for you.
3. **What to Monitor:** If initiated, we will discuss potential mild side effects (like temporary stomach upset) and recommend periodic monitoring of your Vitamin B12 levels.

Your Next Steps

Respond YES to the text message you received today, and a member of the team will contact you to book an appointment.

If you prefer not to take part at this time, please reply NO.