

Panton Practice

PPG Newsletter

Special edition

These include:

- **Your local pharmacist**
- **NHS Choices (an online symptom checker)**
- **NHS 111**
- **A&E or ED**

Do you know anything about your PPG?

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) work in partnership with their practices to:

- help patients to take more responsibility for their own health
- contribute to the continuous improvement of services and quality of care
- foster improved communication between the practice and its patients
- provide practical support for the practice and help to implement change

So what is your PPG like? We are a group of patients just like you, who are registered with the Panton Practice surgery. We have no medical training but have a real interest in the services provided to our patients. We want to enable you as a patient to have the best medical care that can be provided within the facilities we have. In doing this, we can help make our surgery one you feel comfortable and reassured in using especially when you are not feeling well.

Like many patients, there are times when you are not sure whether you need to see a GP, a pharmacist, or to call 111 or not. So how can we help to reassure you on the best course of action? Let's start at the beginning.....



It doesn't matter what age you are, very few people feel well all the time.

Fortunately, there are lots of ways you can get help when you're ill or when you need advice about your health.

Your GP practice doesn't always need to be your first point of contact when you feel unwell. There are other services that can help you directly and quickly to put your mind at rest.

Your local pharmacist



If you have a minor illness, think about talking to your pharmacist first. They can help you decide if you need to see a doctor. Pharmacists are the medicine

professionals on the high street. They should be able to advise you on problems such as:

- aches and pains
- allergies
- sore throats and colds
- eye infections
- stomach problems
- skin conditions
- women's health issues
- common medications

They can also answer any questions about prescription items you are taking.

You can talk to your pharmacist in confidence and you don't need to make an appointment and it won't cost you a penny. Many pharmacists now have a private consultation area where you can talk without being overheard.

NHS Choices online symptom checker



The NHS Choices online symptom checker allows you to complete questions and receive online information and advice on the best action to take. If necessary, you will be told to expect a call back from a nurse or adviser at NHS 111.

<https://www.nhs.uk/symptom-checker/>

Please turn over



NHS 111

111 is a free national, 24-hour telephone line that provides a single

point of access for people needing urgent medical help or advice in a non-life-threatening situation.

NHS 111 staff may tell you how to look after yourself at home, or they may recommend you see a pharmacist, or make a GP appointment when the surgery is next open. If the problem is more serious you may be advised to go to your nearest walk-in centre, or minor injuries unit, or A&E department. If very serious, you can be connected directly to the ambulance service.



A&E or ED

If you believe your illness or injury may be life-threatening, seek help by calling **999** or go to your nearest A&E or ED department.

Life-threatening conditions include:

- **loss of consciousness**
- **persistent chest pain for 15 minutes or more**
- **heavy blood loss**
- **medicine overdose**

It's also important to be aware of symptoms that may indicate a stroke.

Remember the **FAST** test:



Facial weakness: can they smile? Has their mouth or eye dropped?

Arm weakness: can they raise both arms?

Speech problems: can they speak clearly and understand what you're saying?

Time to call 999, if you see any single one of these signs.

We hope these things may help you decide on your first port of call. Please **do not** use the hospital's A&E or ED when it is not an emergency. In non-emergency cases, try speaking to someone else first. They will send you to the hospital if they think it is necessary.

We hope you manage to keep well, but if you need to contact the surgery, the opening hours at Gervis Road are from 8.00am - 6.30pm and St Leonard's Road is open from 8.00am - 6.00pm.

More information can be found on the surgery website on <http://www.thepantonpractice.co.uk>

Please keep this newsletter which may be helpful for future reference.

OTHER PPG NEWS

We have been selling hand-made cards for a few years now with success and also have books, CD's and DVD's which can be borrowed for £1 and then returned for someone else to use. The money from these items goes towards equipment for the surgeries to enhance patient care and comfort.



We are working hard for you as a patient to make sure you are receiving the best possible health care. We are very fortunate to have excellent doctors who do their best to get their patients on the road to recovery. We are also fortunate to have longer appointment times than some surgeries, so you will not feel rushed when seeing the doctor. All the staff that work either on reception or behind the scenes as on the phones or in the offices, work diligently to make sure your care is the best possible. They are a good team of workers. Your PPG considers the Panton Practice to be an exceptionally good surgery, which we are lucky to have.

If you have an interest in joining the PPG, we meet every other month for an hour. A lot of communication is by email but is not an essential part of being a member. Please contact the Practice Manager at the surgery for a PPG contact number in the first place and then we will contact you and send you some information. We look forward to meeting you.