

## Marden Medical Centre Patient Participation Group



# News Update

### Marden Medical Centre News:

For the latest Marden Medical Centre updates please refer to the Surgery website:

<https://www.mardenmedicalcentre.nhs.uk/>



### 2024 Spring Covid Booster Campaign

We are starting to recall call patients in eligible groups for their Covid Spring Booster. If you are in one of these groups you will be contacted by text or phone. Please do not call the Centre until you have been contacted.

*Eligible groups are patients aged 75 years old or over, those who live in a care home, are aged 6 months old or over and have a weakened immune system.*

### MMC News Update - Issue with myGP App Integration

It has come to our attention that the myGP app is not able to integrate effectively with our most up-to-date booking system. We have made both myGP and the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) aware of the issue and hope that they may take steps towards resolving this.

In the meantime, the NHS app is fully compatible and functional in allowing online appointment booking as well as for viewing your medical notes and test results.

If you are unable to install the NHS app and would like some help, please do not hesitate to contact the Surgery.

### Marden Medical Centre makes the News

You may recently have seen press coverage about the Marden Medical Centre requesting patients to bring batteries with them for 24-hour ECG or 24-hour blood pressure recording. Some of the reporting has been ambiguous and misrepresented the facts so we felt it important to provide some clarity.

This has been our policy for in excess of 10 years and is in line with our drive to reduce wastage and support sustainability and a "Greener" NHS. ( [Greener NHS \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/greener-nhs))

When we previously used rechargeable batteries, we found an unacceptable rate of failure during a 24-hour recording. Reusing partly used non-rechargeable batteries also had an unacceptable failure rate, so we found ourselves using a new set of batteries for each recording: creating significant wastage and batteries which we needed to recycle.

We request that, if able, patients bring in 2 x AA long life batteries for their 24-hour monitoring which are returned to them at the end of the process for their own use.

At least one media outlet picked up on the sustainability aspect of this policy:

[Medical Centre Encourages Eco-Friendly Practice by Asking Patients to Supply Own Batteries for Tests \(ytech. news\)](#)

We do keep a stock of batteries and are always willing provide these for patients who are unable to bring their own. We have never received any patient complaints about this, and the quantity of batteries sent for recycling has greatly reduced.

We would like to point out that not all GPs provide these services. The alternative is referral to a hospital with the associated time, travel and parking costs, and long waiting times.

Our 24-hour ECG machine was provided by the Friends of Marden Medical Centre through charitable donations. Until now we have chosen to provide this as an additional service to our patients, unfunded by the NHS. Unfortunately, the machine has recently broken and repairing it is not a viable option, so we have taken the difficult decision not to replace it. We do intend to continue to offer 24-hour BP monitoring.

We welcome patient feedback and always seek to learn from it. Over time we will be exploring whether there are now more reliable rechargeable batteries which will power our 24-hour blood pressure monitors and provide working reassurance for the duration of the monitoring period.

### Protect General Practice



There is mounting concern that General Practice is under threat. We are concerned by the imposition of the latest GP 24/25 contract proposal which represents a funding cut. As GPs, we want our patients to know that we want to be there for you and your family whenever you need us. But this is getting harder and harder.

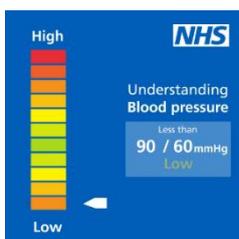
These are some simple stats which demonstrate the scale of the problem. Since 2015:

- Over 1000 practices gone
- Over 2000 GPs gone
- Over 6,000,000 more patients on the books
- Meanwhile value of GP contract has eroded by £620million compared with five years ago.

If you want your GP to be there for you in the future, you can help us. Please view the campaign video below and look out for updates over the coming weeks.

<https://vimeo.com/920537994?share=copy>

### New Hypertension Campaign Launches



The Department of Health and Social Care and the NHS is urging eligible adults aged 40 and over to get a free blood pressure check at their nearest pharmacy.

High blood pressure is responsible for one in four deaths in England; it can have no symptoms, but it can be easily treated. An estimated 4.2 million people in England are unaware they have it and the only way to know is to get a blood pressure check.

As a general guide: normal blood pressure is between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg (this applies if it is measured at home or at a pharmacy, GP surgery or clinic).

Patients can get a free NHS blood pressure check at a local participating pharmacy. Find further details at <https://www.kentandmedway.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/local-services/free-blood-pressure-checks>

**Sustainable General Practice**



The NHS is responsible for 4-5% of the UK’s carbon footprint. To have a 50% chance of avoiding the consequences of >1.5°C of warming, our global carbon emissions will have to reach net-zero by 2050.

We have signed up to the RCGP’s Green Impact for Health Toolkit and are proactively looking at ways that we can improve our sustainability, reduce our carbon footprint and adapt to climate change.

Amongst other initiatives we are looking at ways in which we can reduce our energy consumption, improve our waste management and recycling and improve efficiencies in prescribing.

**Other News:**

**The NHS App**



The Surgery are keen to encourage patients with the NHS App to use it for requesting **repeat medication**. It is simple to use at any time that suits patients, creates a record of your request directly to your medical records and reduces the workload for our busy dispensing team.

**How it works.....**Patients can use the NHS App to view their previous orders and request a repeat prescription if the medication item is available to order. It is a completely free service which is quick, easy, and convenient for our patients.

When a patient selects a repeat prescription request, it is sent directly to the Surgery for sign-off and then issued directly to the nominated pharmacy or prepared ready for collection at the surgery. Orders can be made at any time at a patient’s convenience, they do not have to wait for the Surgery to open.

Once they have placed an order, patients can view their repeat prescriptions status and history, including when an item was last ordered.

## NHS Virtual Wards



Maidstone and Tonbridge Wells NHS Trust is recognised as being a leading adopter of Virtual Wards. Some Marden patients have already been supported by their services and some of you might in the future when a hospital stay might typically be required.

For more information see:

<https://www.mtw.nhs.uk/virtual-wards/>

<https://www.mtw.nhs.uk/2024/03/hospital-virtual-ward-team-shortlisted-for-national-award/>

Virtual wards, also known as hospital at home, provide patients with the care they need at home instead of in a hospital setting. These remote services use technology to support patients who would otherwise be hospitalised, ensuring they receive acute care, monitoring, and treatment in their own homes or care facilities.

You may be provided with:

- iPad
- Pulse oximeter\*
- Scales\*
- Blood pressure cuff\*
- Thermometer\*

(\*Subject to your clinical need).

NHS Virtual wards offer several benefits:

1. Reducing Congestion: Virtual wards help decongest hospitals and care settings by providing acute care to patients at home instead of in a hospital environment.
2. Cost-Effectiveness: These services are cost-effective, as they minimize the need for hospital admissions and reduce the strain on healthcare resources.
3. Freeing Up Beds: By caring for patients remotely, virtual wards free up secondary care beds for critical or urgent cases, ensuring that hospital resources are allocated efficiently.
4. Complementing Healthcare Professionals: Virtual wards complement the existing work of healthcare professionals, allowing patients to be monitored from home until their treatment is complete. This approach can lead to shorter hospital stays and better patient outcomes.

In summary, NHS virtual wards enable patients to receive necessary care safely and conveniently at home, contributing to improved healthcare delivery and resource utilisation. (Source Microsoft CoPilot April'24).

If any Marden Medical Centre patients have any experience of the MTW virtual ward service and are prepared to share some feedback – please let me know via email - johnehaddow@yahoo.co.uk.

## West Kent HCP – New video highlights progress on Population Health and Health Inequalities



An update from west Kent Health Partnership (HCP). Marden Medical Centre is part of the Weald PCN group of 9/10 Practices and in turn part of the West Kent HCP (Kent and Medway is divided into 4 Health Care Partnerships) – that looks after approximately 504,000 patients.

The West Kent Health & Care Partnership (WKHCP) has been developing its approach to tackling Population Health Management and Health Inequalities over the last two years.

Last year west Kent area had 11 local initiatives to address health inequalities in the community – where a population or group was not being reached or getting the same health outcomes as the majority of the population.

Some examples of this work included two community ladders in the most deprived wards in Maidstone, providing pop-up health checks and wellness clinics for hard to reach communities, supporting people with mental health issues (led by Dr Justin Charlesworth from Cranbrook – Marden Medical Centre was also part of this initiative) through multi-disciplinary working and social prescribing, and helping people to return to work after a period of long-term illness.

We have produced a short video to highlight this work which you can access here: <https://vimeo.com/920391859>

The WKHCP is continuing to develop and build on its Population Health Management programme through 2024. Many of the West Kent health inequalities initiatives will continue into 2025 to fully realise the benefits. Alongside these initiatives, the partnership will be working to improve its shared data set to better support risk stratification and the identification of key populations in need of support.