

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/>



Autumn Flu and COVID Vaccination Clinics - Thursday 28th September & Saturday 7th October

Seasonal vaccinations are critical for public health. The 2023/24 free flu and COVID vaccination programme has started. **If you are offered a vaccination – please take it up.**

Patients will be contacted to book appointments. The Surgery are planning clinics on **Thursday 28th September and Saturday 7th October** for eligible patients. Other dates maybe added as required – vaccine dependant.

We will be offering flu and COVID vaccines to all eligible patients aged either **65 years and above** and those in priority, at risk groups aged 18 to 64 years.

We will be sending text messages with a link to book appointments to all patients with mobile numbers listed on their patient records. Please alert any family, friends and neighbours that this will be and reassure that they are not being sent a scam text message. Letters with details will be posted to all patients without a mobile number on record.

You may also receive a letter form the NHS National Booking Centre. You can choose where you have your vaccinations.



If you catch COVID - most people, no longer need to take a coronavirus test. To prevent the spread of infection, you should try to stay at home if you are unwell. For full details of the symptoms and the current guidance for what to do see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/>

Shingles Vaccination

Please consider having a shingles vaccination – please contact the Surgery if you think you are eligible for a vaccination. More people are now eligible for the vaccine.

The Shingles vaccine helps protect against shingles. It is recommended for people at high risk from shingles, including adults turning 65, those aged 70-79 and those aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system.

Shingles is an infection that causes a painful rash. See <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/shingles/>



The Surgery are planning extra clinics and contacting eligible patients.

Other News:

Choose Carefully



If you feel unwell - there are a range of local health services available. It is important to be aware of what is available locally.

Emergency Departments and 999: A&E and 999 are available for life threatening emergencies only. If you go to any emergency department for other conditions not only, are you likely to face a long wait (as priority is

given to patients with the most need) but you may be using resources vitally needed to save the lives of others.

NHS 111: If you need clinical advice **but are not in a life-threatening emergency** contact NHS 111 or 119 (for Covid related issues) - online 111.nhs.uk or call free. Fully trained advisers are available 24 hours a day, every day. The team will ask questions to assess your symptoms and provide healthcare advice or direct you to the right local service, book a GP appointment or call an ambulance if necessary.

For more information go to the 111 sites: <https://111.nhs.uk/>

GP Surgery: Marden Medical Centre can be contacted during normal working hours which are 8am-6.30pm on **01622 831257** or <https://www.mardenmedicalcentre.nhs.uk/>. For outside normal working hours GP assistance – call 111.

If you need to talk to or see a GP or Paramedic Practitioner either book an appointment on the Marden Medical Centre website (Patient Access login required) or the NHS app – if you are unable to book online, or on your smartphone/tablet - call the Surgery reception. Appointments can be booked up to 6 weeks in advance for routine reviews or non-urgent issues. Some routine reviews maybe completed via text – not requiring a face to face or telephone appointment.

You can also contact the Surgery online, using eConsult (during normal working hours) which lets you consult with your NHS GP online by completing a quick form that is sent and reviewed by the Practice. You can also be directed to patient self-help, pharmacy advice and local self-referral services.

Current GP telephone appointment wait times are typically 2 weeks - if you are happy to speak to any GP or 2-4 weeks to speak to a specific GP. *(Details as of 1st September 2023)*

If you are unable to wait to have a GP appointment - call the Surgery reception - another member of the medical staff maybe better suited to provide help. Same day GP and other medical staff appointments are always available for patients that need to be treated urgently – after an appropriate telephone screening call.

Pharmacy: Pharmacies provide advice about minor illnesses and conditions & advice on how to manage your medicines. The Surgery reception team may direct you to the local pharmacy for same day advice if they assess that they can safely manage your problem. The Marden Pharmacy can be contacted on **01622 831495**.

Minor Injuries Unit or Urgent Treatment Centres: If you need prompt advice or treatment for minor injuries, a Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) or an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) could help you as an alternative to going to A&E. You can get treatment at an MIU or UTC for deep cuts, eye injuries, broken bones, severe sprains, minor head injuries, minor burns or scalds, minor sports injuries. **No booking required – simply turnup.**

Local MIU's and UTCs are located at:

- The Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Pembury
- Maidstone Hospital
- Sevenoaks UTC

Self-care: Self-care is the best choice to treat very minor illnesses and injuries. A range of common illnesses and injuries can be treated at home simply by combining a well-stocked medicine cabinet with plenty of rest.

For information to help you self-care, including healthy lifestyle information, a health A-Z of conditions and treatments, or to find your nearest pharmacy for over the counter medicines, visit www.nhs.uk

WaitLess App



Patients in Kent and Medway can use an app to view waiting times at urgent treatment centres (UTCs) and minor injury units (MIUs).

The WaitLess app will help patients who have decided to go to a UTC or MIU make an informed choice about which site to visit. It displays the number of people waiting and the longest waiting times, along with travel information, so patients can decide to visit a site that is not so busy.

Kate Langford, Chief Medical Officer for NHS Kent and Medway, said: “I would always advise patients to contact NHS 111 first if they are not sure where to go or what service they need. NHS 111 will continue to offer booked appointments at our urgent treatment centres, where needed. However, we know some people decide to go straight to our UTCs without contacting NHS 111 first and this app will help them find UTCs that are not as busy, where the wait is potentially less. Kent and Medway has more than a dozen UTCs and MIUs. By checking the waiting times before they travel, patients can choose which one they go to when they have an urgent medical issue.”

The nearest UTC or MIU’s to Marden Medical Centre are:

- The Tunbridge Wells Hospital, Pembury (MIU)
- Maidstone Hospital (MIU)
- Sevenoaks UTC

The app is available free from iPhone App Store and Google Play Store – search WaitLess.

More information about using the right health service is available at www.stophinkchoose.co.uk. The site also includes a map of all pharmacies in the county. Pharmacists are trained professionals who can help with a wide range of common health issues.

Organ Donation Week 18-24th September 2023



Organ Donation Week is a week-long campaign that takes place every year, with the aim of raising awareness about the ongoing need for organ donors.

The more people we reach, the more people who register their decision to become organ donors after they die, and the more lives we save.

See <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/get-involved/organ-donation-week-2023/> for more information.