

SPRING 2025

ISSUE 6

NEWSLETTER

— HAPPY — Retirement



Dr James Clements will be retiring at the end of March after 33 years as a GP in Blandford

Dr Clements has given us a snapshot of his 33 year career below. I'm sure all our patients will join us in saying a heartfelt goodbye, and huge thanks for all of his dedicated hard work. He will be sorely missed by us all. We hope he has a long and happy retirement filled with all his outdoor hobbies.

"My first job for the NHS was in 1985. I was a medical student and had just bought an old heap of a car but could not afford any petrol.

I qualified as a Doctor in 1986 aged 22.

My early career focused on easy access to windsurfing hotspots along the South coast.

I tried various hospital based specialties including a year of Obstetrics and 18 months of Anaesthetics before deciding my vocation lay in General Practice.

I joined what was The Old Bank House in 1992 which then moved to become Eagle House Surgery a year later.

About this time we increased our family from 4-6.

My early career involved a full working week plus nights and weekends on call (I do not miss this).

The merge of practices in 2019 was immediately followed by the covid pandemic which was difficult but made us a close knit team.

I am proud to have worked for the NHS for so many years, to have been part of Blandford Group Practice and work with colleagues who all absolutely work their socks off for our patients.

I would like to offer my very best wishes to my colleagues and all our patients"

Nurse Buffy Wareham will be retiring at the end of March after 50 years in the NHS.

Our wonderful Practice Nurse Buffy Wareham who has seen 50 years of nursing within the NHS, will retire at the end of March.

For some people, she is the Practice Nurse who has repeatedly "jabbed " them over the last few decades. To others she has been a constant presence since their teenage years.

She is one of the most familiar faces at the Blandford Group of Practice where she has worked for the past 27 years.

We would like to express our huge thanks and gratitude for her enthusiastic commitment over the last 27 years. We will all miss her but wish her a fun filled retirement, enjoy this well earned time to yourself!



April is Stress Awareness Month

What is stress?

Stress is the body's reaction to feeling threatened or under pressure.

When we are stressed, our body releases a hormone called adrenaline (often called the "fight or flight" hormone), which usually gives us a boost or motivates us to act quickly.

But too much stress can affect our mood, our body and our relationships – especially when it feels out of our control. It can make us feel anxious and irritable, and affect our self-esteem.

Experiencing long-term stress or severe stress can lead to feeling physical, mental and emotional exhaustion, often called "burnout"

Signs and symptoms of stress

Stress can affect our emotions and we may: be irritable, angry or tearful feel worried, anxious, hopeless or scared struggle to make decisions, have racing thoughts or feel overwhelmed

The physical symptoms of stress include: stomach problems, stress headaches and other odd pains including muscle pain skin reactions like stress rashes, hives feeling dizzy, sick or faint.

Sometimes, stress causes high blood pressure and chest pains – but these symptoms should stop when your stress goes. If you have any symptoms that you are worried about, or feel you have more severe stress, see a GP.

Stress can also make us behave differently, especially around:

how much we eat or exercise
our habits around drinking, smoking or taking other substances
how much we see people or do things we used to do or enjoy (avoidance)

What causes stress?

The things that cause stress vary from person to person.

The level of stress you are comfortable with may be higher or lower than that of others around you. Stressful feelings typically happen when we feel we do not have the resources to manage the challenges we face. Pressure at work, school or home, illness, or difficult or sudden life events can all lead to stress.

For more information on stress visit –

www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/stress/



Dealing with stress

Stress is something everyone feels at times, especially when dealing with change or life challenges, such as money worries, work issues or relationship problems.

A little stress can be a good thing, as it helps us to get things done or focus on something that needs our attention.

How we manage stress can make a big difference to our mental wellbeing, and the first step to managing it is to know how it affects us and why.

Tips on managing stress

Try these practical self-care tips, as they might make a big difference.

Try positive thinking

Positive thinking can help with stress relief, so take time to think about the good things in your life. Each day, list 3 things you're thankful for, however small.

Talk to someone

Trusted friends, family and colleagues, or contacting a helpline, can help us when we are struggling. Check out our video on social connection.

Split up big tasks

You might feel less stressed if you can take practical steps, such as breaking a task down into easier, more manageable chunks and give yourself credit when you finish a task.

Be more active

Being active regularly can help you to burn off nervous energy, so it could be a way for you to deal with stress. Exercise might also help you manage or reduce stress. Try our Better Health: Home workout videos.

Plan ahead

Planning ahead for upcoming stressful days or events – creating a to-do list, planning your journey and listing things you need to take – can really help to relieve stress.

Spring Covid Campaign

Our Spring 2025 COVID-19 vaccination campaign will begin on Saturday 05th April 2025.

Please do not contact us.

Information on how to book your appointment will be available shortly on our website and social media.

We will be delivering vaccinations to the following groups:

Adults aged 75 years and over.

Individuals aged 18yrs and over who are immunosuppressed.



NHS Pharmacy First Service

Community pharmacies provide lots of services beyond supplying prescription medicines. Did you know that they can also:

Give advice and treatment for lots of common health problems (ie coughs, colds and flu) as well as being able to support with earaches/urinary infections/insect bites

Provide free of charge oral contraception

Support with stopping smoking including the free supply of medicines

Check your blood pressure

To find a pharmacy that provides one of these services, visit: Find a pharmacy - NHS

Across the country more and more patients are taking advantage of the services offered by local pharmacies.

Here's what one of our patients recently told us -

"I went to a local Pharmacy with my daughter who was suffering from a very painful earache. I was seen within 10 minutes (at 5pm on a weekday)! I just wanted to say how fantastic and prompt the service was, it was very reassuring, helpful and kind."



If you're a patient at our practice, you can use the NHS App to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

It doesn't replace existing services

You can still contact us in the usual ways.

Once you have verified your identity in the app, you will have easy, 24/7 access to a growing range of health services and information, order repeat prescriptions, get health information and advice, view your health record and test results securely, view your NHS number.

Go to the app store (Apple iOS) or google play (Android) to download the NHS App today.

Why wait to see a GP? You may not need to...



When you contact us, a member of our reception team will ask you some questions about your need

It's important you give receptionists like me as much information as possible. I'm specially trained to get you the right care from the right health professional. We want to support you to get the right appointment for your needs.

At The Blandford Group Practice, there are different specialist roles within our GP Team working together to care for you.

You could be offered an appointment with a nurse, a paramedic, a pharmacist, a healthcare assistant, a physiotherapist or another role rather than a GP if this is the best person to help you.

Because these specialists work across a few different surgeries locally, you might be asked to go to a different surgery than your usual one so that you get more choice of appointments.



Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS)

What is ARRS?

The Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) is a cornerstone initiative within the NHS Long Term Plan, designed to revolutionise primary care services across the UK. By offering strategic funding through the NHS Reimbursement Scheme, the ARRS enables Primary Care Networks (PCNs) to enrich their teams with diverse roles, addressing the urgent need for a more comprehensive healthcare workforce. The ARRS roles list encompasses a wide range of healthcare professionals, from clinical pharmacists to social prescribing link workers, significantly expanding the capabilities of PCN ARRS teams.

At The Blandford Group Practice we have many ARRS Practitioners such as -

General Practitioners (GPs): Newly qualified GPs employed through the ARRS funding bring essential clinical expertise to primary care networks. Equipped with a comprehensive understanding of both general medicine and patient-centred care, these GPs play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of service delivery within PCNs. Their integration into primary care helps to alleviate workloads, improve patient access, and provide continuity of care. The addition of GPs through the ARRS ensures that primary care teams can manage increasing patient demand while maintaining high standards of clinical care.

Pharmacy Technicians: Working closely with clinical pharmacists, pharmacy technicians assist in the management of medications, including organising prescriptions, ensuring the safe supply of medicines, and supporting patients in understanding their treatment regimes.

Paramedics: Within the primary care setting, paramedics bring their urgent care skills to provide acute care, home visits, and support for emergency situations, enhancing the responsiveness and flexibility of healthcare services.

Adult Mental Health Practitioners: These practitioners deliver crucial support in primary care settings, focusing on adults with complex mental health needs. They work to bridge the gap between primary and secondary care, offering interventions and promoting recovery and well-being.

Social Prescribing Link Workers: These workers help patients connect with non-medical sources of support within the community to improve their well-being. They address social, emotional, and practical needs, directing individuals to local services and activities.

Care Co-ordinators: They play a pivotal role in managing patient care, ensuring that individuals receive coordinated services across different healthcare providers. This role is crucial for patients with complex health needs, ensuring seamless care transitions and support.

Digital and Transformation Lead: Focused on improving healthcare services through digital innovation, these leaders manage and implement technology-driven projects. They work to enhance patient care, streamline operations, and ensure the efficient use of digital health solutions.

The next time you access your GP services you may be signposted to see someone other than a doctor, this is because it's not always necessary to see a doctor as a Pharmacist, Paramedic or Mental Health Practitioner may be more suited to your need.