

AUTUMN 2025



ISSUE 8



NEWSLETTER



Our Autumn Flu and Covid vaccination clinics have begun, so far we have delivered
1529 - Covid vaccinations
3408 - Flu vaccinations

This year's eligible cohorts for the covid vaccination have been updated by NHS England. Now only patients over 75 years of age and certain immunosuppressed patients will be offered the covid vaccination. This means many patients who have been offered the vaccination in previous years are now no longer eligible.

This is an NHS England decision and we have no control over this.

We thank you for supporting your local Practice - by choosing us to administer your seasonal flu and covid vaccinations. Our staff are fully trained, experienced, and make the whole process quick and easy. We continue to have direct access to your medical records, so your immunisations can be immediately added to your patient record with a smooth, hassle-free experience. We can also let you know if you are entitled to other vaccinations, such as Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), Shingles or Pneumonia.

Autumn 2025 COVID-19 Vaccination Eligibility Criteria from October 2025:

Adults aged 75 years and over.

Residents in care homes for older adults.

Some individuals who are immunosuppressed aged 6 months and over.

Please note, NHS England have changed the criteria since the Autumn 2024 programme.

We are unable to give vaccines outside of these cohorts.

Our clinic's for our eligible patients will be started on Saturday 4th October 2025 at The Whitecliff surgery.

Flu Vaccination Eligibility Criteria from 1 September 2025:

Pregnant women.

All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2025.

Primary school aged children (from Reception to Year 6) to be given in school.

Secondary school aged children (from Year 7 to Year 11) to be given in school.

All children in clinical risk groups aged from 6 months to less than 18 years, school age to be given at school.

Flu Vaccination Eligibility Criteria from 1st October 2025:

Those aged 65 years and over.

Those aged 18 years to under 65 years in clinical risk groups (as defined by the Green Book, Influenza chapter 19).

Those in long-stay residential care home.

Carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person.

Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals.

Frontline workers in a social care setting without an employer led occupational health scheme.

For Housebound and Care Home patients Dorset HealthCare will be in touch to arrange your vaccination.

Navigating Your Child's Illness with Confidence

When your child is unwell, it can be incredibly stressful. While there is a wealth of information available, finding resources that offer clear and accurate guidance can be a challenge.

The resources on the Healthier Together website have been created through collaboration between parents and healthcare professionals from all over the country. Here, you'll discover clear information about common childhood illnesses, including:

- Advice on identifying 'red-flag' signs
- Guidance on where to seek help
- Tips on keeping your child comfortable
- Information on the expected duration of symptoms

Most importantly, these resources are utilized not only by parents but also by healthcare professionals. This ensures that you and your child receive consistently high-quality care, no matter which healthcare provider you consult. The advice provided is likely to align with what you find on the Healthier Together website. By minimizing unnecessary variation, we enhance the overall quality of care and alleviate the parental anxiety that inconsistent advice can cause.

To access the healthier together app see what other NHS apps are available visit the orcha app library by scanning this QR code, or alternatively visit the app library to download the app.



SCAN ME



What is NHS Healthy Start?

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under the age of 4 and meet the qualifying conditions, you can get help to buy basic foods and milk.

You can also get free Healthy Start vitamins. to find out more scan the qr code with your mobile phone camera



SCAN ME



Autumn Health eating recipes

The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

You do not need to achieve this balance with every meal, but try to get the balance right over a day or even a week.

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day

Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other protein foods



Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates

Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks and yoghurts)

For recipes and health eating ideas scan the QR code with you mobile phone camera



SCAN ME



Repeat prescriptions? ☒

Only order what you need

 10% of medicines prescribed nationally are not needed

 In Dorset we spend £9 million a month on repeat medications

 Speak to your pharmacy team about only ordering what you need

Find out more about our medicine waste campaign at:
nhsdorset.nhs.uk/yourmeds



Repeat prescriptions? ☒

Only order what you need

Pharmacists and GPs across Dorset are once again urging people to 'Only Order What You Need'.

Every month, around 50,000 people in Dorset receive repeat prescriptions for multiple medications. It's estimated that 1.6 million of these items are wasted unnecessarily in the county every year.

The second year of the campaign encourages Dorset residents to check their medication at home before placing a new order; reducing waste, improving safety and helping to protect NHS resources.

Peter Cope, Head of Medicines Optimisation at NHS Dorset and a former community pharmacist, said:

"We want to remind people how important it is to check what medicines they have at home before placing their repeat prescription order. Repeat prescriptions cost the local NHS around £10 million a month, and we know that a significant proportion of these medicines go unused.

"With the support of our people and communities, we can reduce medicine waste, prevent supply pressures, and ensure the right medication is available for those who need it most. "Thank you to the many people who already do this – your small actions make a big difference."

People are advised to:

Check their medicines before ordering repeat prescriptions

Only order what they need – even if it's on their repeat list

Speak to their pharmacy team if they have questions or need support.

Unused or out-of-date medicines can be returned to any pharmacy for safe disposal.

To find out more, visit Medicines waste – NHS Dorset by scanning this QR reader with your mobile phone camera.





November – Mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer

Since 2003, Movember has funded more than 1,250 men's health projects around the world, challenging the status quo, shaking up men's health research and transforming the way health services reach and support men.

To speak with someone immediately, contact National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on 988, contact Lifeline Crisis Chat or contact National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) on 800-950-6264 or Text NAMI to 741741. If you're ever worried that someone's life is in immediate danger, call 911 or go directly to emergency services.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men over 45. But there's a lot that you can do.

Just by knowing some important facts about risk – and knowing when to take action.

Remember: early detection is key. That means understanding your risk of prostate cancer. It means knowing when to start conversations with your doctor. And it means, when the time is right, taking action and not hesitating.

Testicular cancer is the #1 cancer in younger guys. But good news: it's highly curable when caught early.

Learn how to give your nuts a feel and get to know what's normal for you. So if you notice a change – or that something doesn't feel right – you'll know to act on it.

If you or anyone you know has any concerns please make an appointment to see your GP, for more information and support for mens health scan this QR code with your mobile phone camera



We celebrate international Volunteers Day on 5th December 2025 and recognizes the contributions of volunteers worldwide.

This moment serves as a heartfelt opportunity to applaud the selfless efforts of individuals who dedicate their time, energy, and skills to making meaningful changes in our communities and beyond.

We would like to take this opportunity to extend our deepest thanks to our incredible volunteers—from our Patient Group, our dedicated Health Champions (see their groups on the next page), and our inspiring Digital Champion. Without the generosity and commitment of these individuals, our patients would not benefit from the invaluable support and compassionate care they provide.

Your contributions truly make a difference, and we are endlessly grateful.





WHAT IS ON IN BLANDFORD? VOLUNTEER HEALTH CHAMPIONS

CONTACT - SARA.STRINGER@DORSETGP.NHS.UK FOR INFO OR A LEAFLET



DOMESTIC ABUSE PEER SUPPORT GROUP

CONTACT SARA
OR CALL OUR
GROUP LEAD
07494141752

CARER'S SUPPORT GROUP

1ST THURSDAY OF
THE MONTH
10:30AM -
12:30PM
BLANDFORD
RUGBY CLUB,

MENOPAUSE PEER SUPPORT

CURRENTLY
FACEBOOK
SUPPORT
"BLANDFORD
MENOPAUSE
PEER SUPPORT"

CHAIR BASED EXERCISES

TUESDAYS 3-4
CONTACT SARA TO
BOOK YOUR SPACE
SARA.STRINGER@
DORSETGP.NHS.UK

LGBTQ+ PEER SUPPORT

CONTACT KYLE
07494524965
EMAIL:
KYLEHACKCOCK230
@GMAIL.COMChair Based
Exercise session for
housebound
patients in
your own home
with Naomi.
For a referral
contact Sara

BEGINNERS RUNNING GROUP

WEDNESDAY'S
9:00AM
MILLDOWN CAR
PARK

Parky Cafe Parkinson's Support

1st Monday of each month
United Reformed Church
2-4pm
Contact:
Bob - parkycafe@btinternet.com
or
Sara

PARENT & CARERS SUPPORT SPACE

PEER SUPPORT
GROUP FOR
PARENTS/CARERS
OF YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH A MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITION
CONTACT ALICE -
ALICE.BENNETT@DORSETGP.NHS.UK

SUSPENDED COFFEE

BUY ANOTHER
COFFEE FOR
SOMEONE IN
NEED AT LUCY'S
CONTACT SARA
FOR INFO

COSY CAFE CORNER CHATS

MEET UP & CHAT
MONDAY'S
10:00AM - 11:30AM
ALSO MONTHLY
LUNCH
BLANDFORD DAY
CENTRE
CONTACT JACQUI
07950753320

SING TOGETHER SINGING FOR HEALTH

TUESDAY'S
1:45PM - 2:45PM
DEMENTIA
FRIENDLY GROUP
3:00PM-3:45PM
BLANDFORD
RUGBY CLUB

WALKING GROUP

VARIOUS WALK
OPPORTUNITIES
DAY TIME AND
EVENINGS
CONTACT 01245
480811
OR
SARA FOR A
LEAFLET

SNOOKER / POOL CLUB

WELCOMES
PLAYERS OF ALL
ABILITIES
CONTACT:
07966276612

TAI CHI

GENTLE STRENGTH
AND CONDITIONING
FREE 6 WEEK COURSES
CONTACT SARA TO
BOOK YOUR PLACE
SARA.STRINGER@
DORSETGP.NHS.UK

THE COMMUNITY FRIDGE

WED/FRI
9:00AM -
11:00AM
BLANDFORD
LEISURE
CENTRE

WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

CONTACT
CHARLIEBARN
@GMAIL.COM

ORIENTEERING

THE MEADOWS
AND THE MILLDOWN
ASK FOR A MAP
OR GO ON THE
MAPRUN 6 APP

FIBROMYALGIA GROUP

BLANDFORD
SCOUT HUT
THURSDAY'S
10.00AM -
1.00PM

Good Companions

last Wednesday of the month
Bereavement Peer Support
Langton Long Church
Enjoy a chat and a simple
lunch. 12-2.30pm
Contact:
Sara 01258 452501
sara.stringer@dorsetgp.nhs.uk

BEFRIENDING

FEELING
LONELY OR
ISOLATED?
CONTACT
SARA TO
ARRANGE A
BEFRIENDER

BLANDFORD BRAINS

ADHD AND
NEURODIVERGENT
SUPPORT GROUP
ON FACEBOOK

HEAR US HEARING LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

BLANDFORD
SCOUT
HUT
THURSDAY'S
10.00AM-1.00PM

WELLNESS WALKS FOR NEW MAMAS

FRIDAY'S 9:AM
PIMPERNE
VILLAGE HALL
CAR PARK

DEES LUNCH CLUB

1ST FRIDAY OF
EACH MONTH
(FULL AT PRESENT)

BLANDFORD PARK RUN

SATURDAY'S
9:00AM ON
THE
TRAILWAY

GARDENING TUESDAY AM

THE
VICTORIAN
GARDEN
CONTACT
SARA

BLANDFORD CLAAS

CARE LEAVERS &
ADOPTEE SUPPORT
FB - BLANDFORD
CLAAS
TEL ROBYN
07853144400
R.K.MCINER@GMAIL.COM

IT SUPPORT

CONTACT A
MEMBER OF THE
WELLBEING TEAM
TO BOOK WITH
OUR EXPERT
PATIENT FOR
SUPPORT

Prostate Cancer Support

Contact Sara to
be put in touch
with our expert
patient for peer
support

DIABETIC SUPPORT

ON FACEBOOK:
BLANDFORD
TYPE 2
DIABETES
SUPPORT

NORDIC WALKING

FRIDAY AM
CONTACT
BRONWEN:
01258 458350

Fishing

2nd & 4th Tuesday
of each month
The Victorian Barn
Wooland
For more info contact:
Sara
or
Doug 07971409889

Oct 25/2

Pick up a copy at Whitecliff surgery or see our website.

Nicky Gibson is one of Dorset's First Contact Mental Health Practitioners, working at The Blandford Group Practice, Blandford.

Her role helps people get the right care at the right time and makes sure support is accessible to everyone. Nicky works closely with GPs, nurses, pharmacists, CMHT care coordinators, and social prescribers, who help people manage Depression, Anxiety, Stress, and life's Mental Health difficulties through practical and community-based support.

If you need help, please reach out. You don't have to face it alone.

If you're not sure whether your situation is urgent, call anyway, it's always okay to ask for help.

Where else to find support: Connections 0800 6520190 (open 24/7)

• NHS 111 – press option 2 (Always open)

• Dorset Mind – 0300 102 1234 (9am–5pm, weekdays)

• Samaritans – 116 123 (Always open)

• Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) – 0800 58 58 58 (Open 5pm–midnight)

• PAPYRUS – for people under 35 – 0800 068 4141 or text 88247

WWW.THEBLANDFORDGROUPPRACTICE.CO.UK



Parent and Carers Support Space

An informal and welcoming group offering peer support to local Parents and Carers who care for a young person dealing with day to day challenges, where you can learn different strategies and gain confidence.

For further information please contact:

Email: alice.bennett@dorsetgp.nhs.uk

Tel: 01258 452501

When: 1st Friday of each month - 10.00am-11.30am

Where: The Brewery Tap, Blandford St Mary




Here for you

Low mood, anxiety,
or mental health
concerns?

You don't have to face
it alone.



Nicky Gibson
First Contact Mental Health Practitioner
Blandford Group Practice

www.staywelldorset.nhs.uk



Staying Well This Autumn/Winter



As the days get shorter, and the weather colder, it is normal for us to go out less. We are more susceptible to viruses, and can generally feel a bit down. Keeping yourself, and your home, warm and looking after yourself is a priority!

Lower temperatures increase the risk of flu, covid-19, heart attacks, strokes and hypothermia.

Getting Winter ready:

Consider having your flu and covid vaccinations - the surgery will be in touch when the clinics are arranged. It is a good idea to have your boiler serviced annually (before the winter if possible) so it is ready. If you are over State Pension age, have a disability or long-term illness or are vulnerable, make sure you are on the Priority Services Register with your energy supplier. This gives you access to free support and services. Call them or go online for more information.

Ask for a free Safe and Well visit from the Fire Service. They can provide free smoke and/or carbon monoxide alarms and other equipment - contact us for more details.

Purchase a bag of grit and/or salt (you can get these from a DIY store or online) to sprinkle on your path or walkways if needed. • Stock up on tins of warming foods (soup or microwavable meals) During a cold snap:

Heat your home to at least 18°C (64°F) during the day and night. If you need help with paying for heating, please contact the Wellbeing Team on 01258 452501.

Wearing multiple layers of clothing will keep you warmer as air is trapped between them.

Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture, and never use them for drying clothes. Always unplug heaters when you go out or to bed.

At night, a hot water bottle or electric blanket can warm up your bed (never use both together as this is dangerous, and do not leave an electric blanket on all night unless it is specifically made for this purpose). If your electric blanket is over 3 years old you need to have it checked - for more information contact Citizens Advice on (freephone) 0808 223 1133. Look after yourself:

Consider doing some gentle daily exercise to keep yourself strong and improve your balance (we can provide some exercises to follow if you need them) - make sure you don't 'over do' it, and stop if you feel dizzy or any pain

Eat well - make sure you have at least one hot meal a day and have plenty of warm drinks (at least 6 to 8 per day)

Stay connected with others. Call friends and family for a chat regularly and know who to call if you need help.

If you have a fall:

Lie still for a minute and get your breath. Stay calm, and check yourself for injuries.

To get up, roll to one side and push up on to your elbows, then use your arms to push yourself upwards on to your hands and knees. Crawl towards a stable piece of furniture and hold on to it for support. Slide or raise your foot so it is flat on the floor, then lean forwards and push up on the furniture using your arms and front leg. Slowly rise to a standing position. Turn around and sit down for a few minutes before trying to walk again.

If you cannot get up, or are in pain, call for help. If you have a care alarm, press the button, If not, bang on walls or radiators to alert your neighbours

Try to keep warm by covering yourself with whatever is close by, Try to keep moving (if it doesn't hurt to do so!) by moving your limbs and rolling from side to side if you are able to

For more information on care alarms please contact the Wellbeing Team at the surgery on 01258 452501

Going out: If you must go outside when it's icy, wear shoes or boots with a good grip and a warm lining and put on thick socks. Ideally, stay indoors and ask a friend or neighbour to get you what you need.

Did you know ... You may be entitled to certain benefits to help keep you well and happy during the Winter months, including fuel allowance, free TV licence and others. Check with Citizens Advice on (freephone) 0808 223 1133 to ensure you are getting what you can. We are here for you if you need us: The Wellbeing Team at the Blandford Group Practice - 01258 452501