

NEWSLETTER

**PROTECT YOURSELF.
PROTECT OTHERS.**
GET YOUR **COVID** AND **FLU** VACCINATIONS




COVID and flu can be serious,
but vaccines offer strong protection.



CLINIC DATES

We are administering **COVID** and **FLU** vaccines
(where eligible)



**12
SEPT**

PREGNANT WOMEN

CHILDREN AGED 2-3 YEARS
(NASAL FLU VACCINE)



**3 & 10
OCT**

OVER 75s

COVID and **FLU** vaccines
(co-administered)



**17 & 24
OCT**

50-74 YEARS

Will be offered **COVID** vaccine
if eligible
FLU vaccine



**31
OCT**

**18-49 YEARS
IMMUNOSUPPRESSED**

Will be offered **COVID** vaccine
if eligible
FLU vaccine

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE COVID VACCINE?

75+

Adults aged 75 years and over
(including those who will be 75
by 31 January 2027)



Residents in a care home
for older adults



Individuals aged 6 months and over
who are immunosuppressed
(as defined in the COVID-19 chapter
of the Green Book)

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE FLU VACCINE?



Pregnant women



Children aged 2 or 3 years
(nasal flu vaccine)



65+ Adults aged 65 years and over



Children from 6 months to less
than 18 years in clinical risk groups



Adults of any age in clinical
risk groups



Pregnant women



Residents in a care home



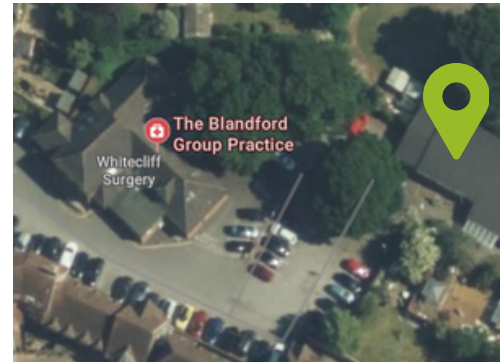
Carers



Frontline health and
social care workers

Flu vaccine is also available to household contacts of immunosuppressed individuals.

Exciting news for our patients and community!



We are delighted to share we have successfully secured the lease of the NHS property adjacent to our Whitecliff Surgery site known as Blandford Clinic.

Alongside this, we have also secured a Utilisation and Modernisation Fund (UMF) grant from the government to fully renovate the building and bring it up to the standards required for modern primary care.

We are incredibly grateful for the support of the NHS Dorset Estates Team in helping us make this happen.

Renovation work has now commenced with our building team, Shoreline Contractors, and we are hoping to be able to occupy the building later in the autumn.

Once complete, Blandford Clinic will become our urgent on-the-day hub, with patients able to see clinicians in 7 brand-new, fully fitted consulting rooms. The building will also provide additional space for administrative staff. This is an exciting step forward for our Practice and will help us provide a better environment for both our patients and staff. It also represents investment in the future of our services and the care we provide to our patients.

We look forward to sharing further updates as the project progresses and will keep patients informed of key milestones over the coming months. We are excited about the positive impact these improvements will have and look forward to welcoming patients into the new clinical space when the work is complete.

Paramedics working in Primary Care

When you think of a Paramedic, you may immediately think of emergency situations, providing urgent care and transporting patients to hospital. However, the role of Paramedics has developed significantly, and they are now an important part of the multi-professional team within many GP practices and primary care settings. Their experience of assessing and managing patients in a wide range of situations makes them well suited to primary care.

Paramedics are trained to quickly but thoroughly assess a patient, considering their symptoms, medical history and clinical observations. Combined with their clinical judgement, they can identify potential risks, make decisions about the most appropriate immediate actions and initiate treatment when required. They are also able to recognise when a patient needs further investigation, referral or urgent escalation. These skills transfer well to primary care, where Paramedics can assess and manage a wide range of patients and conditions. They can support GPs and other healthcare professionals by managing appropriate consultations, helping to reduce workload and ensuring patients receive timely and effective care. Their ability to recognise deterioration and respond to urgent presentations is particularly valuable.

Paramedics are therefore an important part of modern primary care. Their clinical knowledge, emergency care experience, decision-making and communication skills allow them to provide safe, patient-centred care while supporting the wider multidisciplinary team and improving access to appropriate treatment for patients.

The Paramedics working at The Blandford Group Practice all hold Masters Level Clinical qualifications enabling them to carry out thorough clinical assessments, make diagnoses, initiate treatment plans, referrals, investigations, prescribe and arrange follow-up. Working along side the Duty GP they provide same day urgent clinical care both in the surgery's clinics and in the community.

Michelle is an Advanced Clinical Practitioner – Paramedic at The Blandford Group Practice.

Michelle started her clinical career in SWAST(South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust) from 2005 – 2019 at which point she joined the Surgery.

While in the Ambulance service she also worked for Out of Hours, triaging calls, doing home visits and doing some clinics in the urgent treatment centres.

Since joining the surgery, she has further developed her Frailty Focused skills to support her primary role, which is to attend the housebound patient group presenting with acute illness or deterioration. She will liaise with other support services to manage illness at home or arrange an admission to a general hospital if this is deemed appropriate.

She can also be found doing urgent – Same day clinics at Eagle House when demand is high.



Here for you

The right care doesn't always mean seeing a GP

I can help with timely urgent care, expert advice, and home visits for those who need them

Our Dorset

Dorset General Practice Alliance

Michelle Axtell
Advanced Clinical Practitioner Paramedic
The Blandford Group Practice

www.staywelldorset.nhs.uk

Winter Pressures – How You Can Help Your GP Practice

As we enter the winter months (October to March), GP practices across the NHS experience a significant increase in demand. Seasonal illnesses, vaccination programmes and the ongoing care of patients with long-term conditions all contribute to a busier period for primary care services.

Winter is always one of the busiest times of the year for GP practices. As the weather gets colder, we see a significant increase in seasonal illnesses such as coughs, colds, flu, COVID-19 and chest infections, alongside continuing to care for patients with long-term health conditions and urgent medical concerns.

Our doctors, nurses, reception and administrative teams are working hard to ensure everyone receives the care they need. During periods of high demand, routine appointments may take a little longer to access, but we will always prioritise patients who need urgent medical attention.

There are several simple ways you can help both yourself and our practice this winter.

Please order repeat prescriptions well in advance, particularly before weekends and bank holidays, to avoid running out of essential medication.

If you are unable to attend an appointment, let us know as soon as possible so it can be offered to another patient.

Many common winter illnesses can be treated at home with rest, fluids and over-the-counter medicines.

Your local community pharmacist can also provide expert advice and treatment for a range of minor conditions, often without the need for a GP appointment.

If you are eligible, we strongly encourage you to have your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations, as these remain one of the best ways to protect yourself and those most vulnerable to serious illness.

Thank you for your continued patience, understanding and kindness towards our staff during the busy winter months.

By working together and using NHS services appropriately, we can help ensure appointments remain available for patients who need them most and continue to provide safe, high-quality care throughout the season.

As cold weather and winter approaches there are things we can all do to keep well. apps can be a good source of information, advice and motivation.

At Our Dorset there is a selection of Apps to help you manage your health concerns common for this time for year.

Use your phones camera to scan the QR code to find out more

or visit – ourdorset.orchahhealth.com/en-GB/winter-pressures

