



Welcome to our Autumn 2023 newsletter, hope you find the content both informative and enjoyable.



BREAKING NEWS...

Special points of interest:

Our Lloyd George notes have gone digitised.

New Health Kiosk installed in Reception

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YOUR ANNUAL FLU JAB WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE AT THE SURGERY

The Flu Vaccine

Flu vaccine is the best protection we have against an unpredictable virus that can cause unpleasant illness in children and severe illness and death among at-risk groups, including older people, pregnant women and those with an underlying medical health condition. Studies have shown that the flu vaccine will help prevent you getting the flu.

How do I book my flu vaccine?

If you are eligible to receive

the flu vaccine, you will receive an invitation, you can book by selecting the link you receive on your text message or you can go online and book into one of our allocated flu clinics. **BOOK NOW!!**

Flu Saturday Clinics

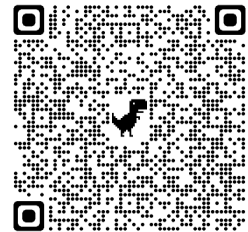
We currently have 2 Saturday flu clinics which are being held on the 16th and 23rd September which you can book into and we will be running various other weekday clinics throughout September/October time.

Housebound Patients

Let us know that you would like a flu jab and, if you are housebound, a member of the team will contact you to organise your flu vaccine as a home visit.

Eligibility

Please scan QR code below to find out if you are eligible to have your flu vaccine:



Children's Flu Party Clinic

This will be running again this year. We will soon be contacting parents and carers of eligible children

COVID BOOSTERS WILL BE OFFERED TO YOU DURING YOUR FLU VACCINATION



THE ST MARGARETS WELL PHARMACY HAS CHANGED

We have had a new Pharmacy.
 Our attached Pharmacy has now changed from Lloyds Pharmacy to Hasbury Pharmacy.



WHO'S NEW? ... AND WHO IS LEAVING?



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome a few new staff to the practice team:

Clinical Team

Dr Faryal Zafar, GP Registrar

Louise Thomas, Practice Nurse. Joining the team shortly.

Dr Sue McKinnon, Salaried GP. Joining the team shortly

Will Hook, First Contact Physiotherapist (FCP) who has replaced Stephanie who has now moved on to new horizons.

The role of an First Contact Physiotherapist

This service provides direct access to a specialist musculoskeletal physiotherapist for early assessment. It is designed to be a triage service rather than a traditional treatment service to make sure patients get to the right service as quickly as possible. The FCP's will

manage patients who require early advice and education **however they will not provide regular treatments.**

The first contact physiotherapist can see musculoskeletal conditions such as back pain, neck pain, and tennis elbow & sports injuries to name a few examples. The FCP role works best when they are fully integrated in to a GP practice for example they will write their notes directly on to the patient record other health care professionals to see and liaise with reception staff and secretaries regarding onward referrals.

Admin & Reception

Mandy Hale, Patient Services Officer

Helen Payne, Clinical Services Officer

Clare Vokes, Clinical Services Officer

Doug Parkes, General Practice Assistant

June Bradshaw, General Practice Assistant

Announcements

Dr Claire Halford

Dr Claire Halford has reduced her number of clinics worked each week to Wednesdays and Thursdays. Dr Halford has retired from the Partnership role at the practice but remaining as a retain-ee GP for 2 days per week.

Dr Sarah Allen

Dr Sarah Allen has reduced her number of clinics worked each week to Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Dr Allen has retired from the Partnership role at the practice but remaining as a retaine GP for 2 days per week.

Dr Charlotte Gregory

Dr Gregory will be joining the Partnership from October 2023.

VACCINES

FLU

Now available at the practice. If you have received a letter to book your flu, you can book a slot online or put in a request through footfall and receive your appointment via text/email/phone call.

COVID

We will be offering autumn Covid boosters again this year. We aim to offer covid boosters alongside flu vaccine. You will not need to book a separate Covid vaccine appointment.

MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella Vaccine)

With cases of measles increasing in some parts of the UK, it is important to catch up on any missed vaccines. 2 doses of the vaccine are recommended by the NHS. Children will receive the vaccine as part of the childhood immunisation programme. Some adults may have received only 1 or no doses of MMR. It is important to check with the practice if this applies to you.

PNEUMOCOCCAL

Pneumococcal is available to: People aged 65 and over. Anyone from ages of 2 to 64 with a health condition that increases their risk of pneumococcal infection. If you are eligible you will be called in for your pneumo vaccine.

HOME VISITS

We do offer home visits for these vaccines, but we would urge patients who are mobile to attend the surgery for these wherever possible as this means that protection can be offered as soon as possible into the winter season.

KEITO HEALTH KIOSK / STATINS

New Keito K8 Health Monitoring Kiosk in Reception.

You may have already seen our new kiosk in Reception, the Keito K8.

This is a free to use health kiosk



which checks your blood pressure, pulse rate, height and weight all in one, it also calculates your BMI.

The information downloads into your medical record and is a quick and easy way for you to get the results (you can also have a printout directly from the kiosk).

No need to wait in queues and take time out to get your blood pressure check. Patients are welcome to access the Kiosk any time during opening hours.

If your readings are a little high, a member of the team will be in touch with you to organise an appointment to re-check your measurements and offer treatment or advice where necessary.

If you need any assistance, please ask one of our Patient Services Officers to assist you.

Statins

Statins are a group of medicines that can help lower the level of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol in the blood.

LDL cholesterol is often referred to as "bad cholesterol", and statins reduce the production of it inside the liver.

Your doctor may recommend taking statins if either:

- * you've been diagnosed with a form of CVD
- * your personal and family medical history suggests you're likely to develop CVD at some point over the next 10 years and lifestyle measures (see below) haven't reduced this risk

Read more about when statins may be recommended:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/tests-and-treatments/medicines-and-medical-aids/types-of-medicine/statins#when-they-may-be-used>



YOUR PRACTICE BASED PHARMACISTS ARE HERE FOR YOU

PRACTICE BASED PHARMACISTS - HOW WE CAN HELP?

Clinical pharmacists in GP surgeries will resolve day-to-day medicine issues and consult with and treat patients directly. This includes providing help to manage long-term conditions, advising those taking multiple medicines (polypharmacy) and delivering clinical advice about treatments. They will also assist with communication across a patient's care pathway, manage



medicines shortages by suggesting suitable alternatives where appropriate, and mentor newer pharmacists.

Who are our Practice Based Pharmacists?

Arfaan Sultan, Lead

Lynn Rees

Sameena Hareem

Lisa Davies (Pharmacy Technician)

Appointments for our Pharmacy team are available weekly and you may find you will get a call from a Pharmacist regarding your medication review if it is due.

What can Clinical Pharmacists help with?

- Prescribing
- Medication reviews
- Medication queries
- Telephone reviews
- Ensuring patients get the most out of their medication
- Ensuring there is joined-up care for patients

If you need a medication review or have a query regarding the medications you are taking, book an appointment with one of our Practice-Based Pharmacists. We have a Pharmacist on site Monday to Friday.

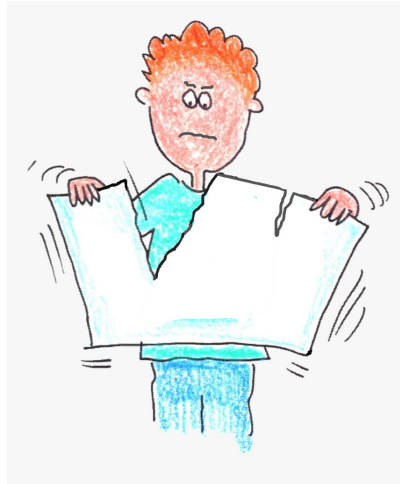
ICE - PATHOLOGY (BLOOD) REQUESTS

We have moved to a new pathology request system. What this will mean for you is that, instead of receiving a bloods form, you will be given a series of labels to take with you to your blood appointment, but the service you receive remains the same.

WE HAVE GONE DIGITISED!

The Lloyd George envelope digitisation project aims to digitise the historic paper records held by GP practices. This NHS Digital Programme is designed to reduce the burden associated with the movement of paper records and free up space in the practice. Rather than a paper record and an electronic, there is now one single electronic record.

We are one of the early take-up practices for



digitisation and we have had our Lloyd George notes digitised from 4th October 2022. This process took up to 8 weeks and there were various detailed quality checks along the way. Following sign-off by the practice, the old Lloyd George (or A4) notes have all be securely destroyed.

DUDLEY CARERS HUB & WELLBEING SERVICE

Dudley Carers Hub

Located at Brett Young Carers Hub and Queens Cross Network, Dudley, the hub offers information, advice and a range of support to anyone caring for a family member or friend. Many people who provide care often do not recognise themselves as a carer, and are therefore unaware of the support available to them. We aim to empower carers to make informed choices and Provide specialist advice and support including:

- Information on financial and legal rights
- Advice on respite services
- Advice on accessing social care and health and wellbeing services
- Emotional support
- Support with getting out and about, including social groups and carers

groups

- Help with arranging a carers assessment
- Specialist training courses for carers

For more information contact the Carers Network on 01384 818723, or email:

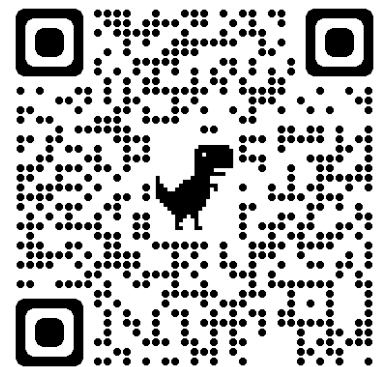
carers.network@dudley.gov.uk

or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/carers

Dudley Carers' Network is a [Community Information Point](#) (Telephone access).

The practice has some leaflets available for you to take away, you can register as a carer with the Dudley Carers Hub.

You can also scan this QR code on your phone to access the website and



further information regarding the service, how to register and what they offer.



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Did you know that your practice has a Patient Participation Group open to all patients registered at the Practice?

Its purpose is to give patients a voice, to work with the Practice to help make improvements and provide a patient perspective on how the Practice works for them. It also provides information from Health Care Professionals employed from both within the Practice and the wider NHS together with other allied organisations. It meets at the surgery about every 8 weeks in an upstairs

room, on a varied rota of a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, commencing at 5.45 pm and lasting approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours.

We often have speakers, sometimes from within the Practice, other times guest speakers. Topics include matters that are related to General Practice, the wider NHS, a range of common health conditions, social care, wellbeing etc.

If you would like to find out more and help us increase the diversity and number of attendees to our meetings, you'll be made

very welcome. Information and sign up available on our website:

<https://www.halesowenmedicalpractice.nhs.uk/patient-participation-group>

Next PPG Meeting:

Tuesday 5 September

Start time is 5.45pm



DUDLEY TALKING THERAPIES

WHO ARE WE?

We provide help and support for people experiencing:

- Anxiety
- Low mood/depression
- Stress
- Panic
- Phobias
- Other similar difficulties

If this is affecting your daily living, you are over 16 years of age, a school leaver and registered with a GP in the Dudley borough then this service could be for you. This service is not appropriate for people who are already receiving treatment from another mental health service, or who have a severe and enduring mental health problem.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

We offer a range of evidence based therapies, advice and information working together to find the most appropriate treatment for you. All therapies are underpinned by our popular wellbeing workshops and comprehensive computerised cogni-

tive behaviour therapy (cCBT). Your pathway may include:

- Wellbeing workshops
- Computerised cognitive behaviour therapy (cCBT)
- Books on prescription and recommended helpful reading
- Self-help and guided self-help
- Group or individual therapy
- Signposting to other helpful services

HOW CAN THE SERVICE HELP ME?

- You will be able to talk about your concerns with a trained practitioner over the phone
- You will be listened to without prejudice
- You will have an opportunity to explore your current difficulties that you feel are important in a safe and confidential setting
- Your progress will be reviewed through discussion and regular use of short questionnaires
- You will need to be actively involved and motivated to work through your problems

Visit our website - www.dwmh.nhs.uk or call the freephone number on 0800 953 0404 between 9am – 4.30pm, Monday - Friday (excluding bank holidays)

Your GP can also refer you to Dudley Talking Therapy Service. Upon receipt of your referral, we will contact you within 72 hours. This will generally be a telephone appointment with one of our qualified practitioners.





Availability of GP appointments

We have a further GP Registrar and a new Salaried GP starting with us in November which will increase our GP appointment capacity.

Test result telephone call

We have made it easier for patients to book a telephone appointment following a test result by sending text message to patients with a link to book their routine follow-up appointment.

Privacy of front desk

We recognise that some patients prefer a little more privacy when they speak to a receptionist in the practice. For the safety and

protection of our staff, we will not be removing the glass screen but we have made a clear sign to advise patients that they can request an 'away from the desk' conversation with one of the team. Patients will be offered a quieter room to discuss their problem with the receptionist.

Call wait times

We have received lots of feedback about the length of time waiting in the phone queue. We have maximum capacity of reception staff answering calls through the day. We encourage patients with a non-urgent problem to contact us via the east to use 'contact us' option on the website. Patients can sub-

mit both non-urgent appointment requests or general enquiries through the site and the practice will respond within 2 working days.

Clinicians running late

Delays in clinics are unfortunately unavoidable. Patients asked to be informed when they arrive about wait times. Our reception team will do their best to inform you of known delays when you check in at the desk. We have also programmed the automatic arrival screen to inform the patient about delays when they check-in.

THANK YOU FOR THE FEEDBACK!

CHANGES TO MEDICAL RECORDS ACCESS ONLINE

By 31st October 2023 patients will be able to view more of their GP records online via the NHS App or Patient Access site. This will include GP consultation notes, test results, immunisations and clinical letters, in addition to the information that is already visible—medication, medical problem codes and allergies. This 'prospective' access will only include information added to the medical record after 31st October 2023. For new patients joining the practice on or after this date, you will only be able to view your records that have been added by this practice after the day you have registered with us. This change will only apply to people aged 16 years or older.

If you have proxy access to someone else's online account you will still have the same level of access to their account when the change comes into effect with regards to ordering medication or booking appointments.

You may come across abbreviations in your record which are unfamiliar. You can access a "help with abbreviations" section in the NHS App that provides definitions for abbreviations commonly used in medical records to help you understand them.

There may be times when it is not suitable for a patient to access their records online. For example where the disclosure or access to the information is likely to cause serious harm to the physical or mental health of the individual or another person. The clinician may redact information from patient's view on a temporary basis for example a positive test result which needs to be discussed with the patient first. We may also restrict access where patients that may be vulnerable to coercion.

If you think a record entry is inaccurate, please contact the practice to let us know. We will review your request and contact you to discuss this further. You

can easily contact us via the admin form on our website.

The practice has taken steps to review patients who may fall into the vulnerable group to ensure access to records is safe and appropriate. For more information on how to register for an NHS account visit

www.nhs.uk/nhs-app

QR code for Patient Access:



QR code for NHS App:



 **SCREENING SAVES LIVES!**

**Help Us Help you—
Bowel Screening**



Bowel cancer is one of the most common types of cancer in the UK with around 43,000 new cases every year. Bowel cancer means cancer that starts in the large bowel (colon) and the back passage (rectum). It is also known as colorectal cancer.

Symptoms of bowel cancer can include bleeding from the back passage, blood in your poo or a change in your normal bowel habit. The risk factors for cancer include your age, family history, lifestyle factors and other medical condition.

Treatment depends on whether you have colon or rectal cancer as well as your cancer stage. You might have surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy or a

combination of these.

Bowel cancer screening aims to find cancer early or to find changes in your bowel that could lead to cancer. The screening programme sends a bowel cancer testing kit every 2 years to patients aged 60-74 years. A home test kit (called faecal immunochemical test or FIT) is sent to eligible patients from the NHS national screening programme. The programme has started to include 58 year olds also.

The FIT kit is easy to use and requires the patient to collect a small sample of poo on a small plastic stick and put it in the sample bottle, then post it to the lab for testing. Instructions are provided with the kit and are also available on gov.uk.

It is important to do your sample if you have been sent one in the post and do not put it off - screening saves lives!

Call the free NHS bowel cancer screening helpline on 0800 707 6060 for more help and information, or you can scan the QR code below:

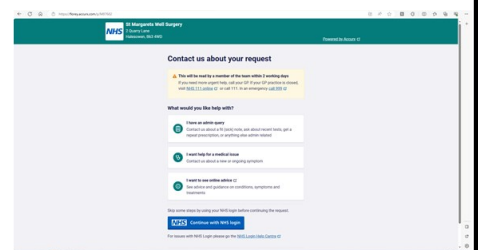
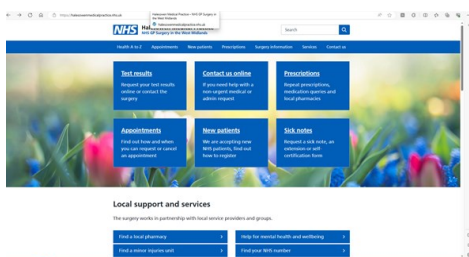


HAVE YOU USED OUR WEBSITE YET?

If you need to contact us with a non-urgent query then use our website as an alternative to telephoning the practice.

Visit: halesowenmedicalpractice.nhs.uk

Contact us online



BITS AND PIECES

ONLINE ACCESS USING NHS APP

Now that the POD has closed, there is another option to order your prescriptions online.

The NHS App can help you order repeat medications, meaning you do not need to ring or contact the GP practice, and if your pharmacy offers it, you can receive notifications once your medication is ready to be collected.

...but that is not all you can do on the app...

Once an NHS account is linked you can:

- View your health record – securely access your GP health record, to see information like your allergies and your current and past medicines. If your GP has given you access to your detailed medical record, you can also see information like test results and details of your consultations
- Get your NHS COVID Pass – view and download your

COVID Pass for travel abroad. There are also other ways to get your NHS COVID Pass

- Register your organ donation decision – choose to donate some or all of your organs and check your registered decision
- Find out how the NHS uses your data – choose if data from your health records is shared for research and planning
- View your NHS number Book appointments – some GP practices allow you to search for, book and cancel appointments at your GP surgery, and see details of your upcoming and past appointments.

You can download the NHS App on the app store or on google play. Here is a QR code you can use to access the app:



ARRIVAL SCREEN

We would like to remind patients that we have an automated arrival screen in the waiting area.

If you only need to book yourself in for a pre-booked appointment, please could you use the arrival screen. You will be asked to enter your gender and day/month of birth and automatically book you in for your appointment so you can avoid waiting in the queue at the reception desk.

WHAT THE PRACTICE NEEDS FROM YOU

APPOINTMENT DNA'S

The practice still has several appointments that are not attended or cancelled each week.

In order for us to ensure that as many patients as possible can be offered an appointment, we would respectfully ask you to ensure that your appointment is attended, or cancelled if no longer required.

TOTAL DNA'S JULY 2023

124 wasted appointments

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

If you change any of the following bits of information, please ensure you let us know:

- * Email address
- * Mobile phone number
- * Landline number

- * Address
- * Married name

If we do not have the up to date details we may not be able to reach you for recalls, or if we have to cancel a clinic at short-notice. You can request these amendments through our website.





PRACTICE ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Halesowen Medical Practice has a Zero Tolerance Policy.

A zero-tolerance policy **draws a clear line that an employer does not condone certain behaviours, whether that's discrimination, sexual harassment, theft or use of racial slurs.**

In order for the practice to maintain good relations with their patients the practice would like to ask all its patients to read and take note of the occasional types of behaviour that would be found unacceptable:

- Using bad language or swearing at practice staff
- Any physical violence towards any member of the Primary Health Care Team or other patients, such as pushing or shoving
- Verbal abuse towards the staff in any form including verbally insulting or intimidating the staff
- Racial abuse and sexual harassment will not be tolerated within this practice
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff will not be accepted. Requests will be met wherever possible and explanations given when they cannot
- Causing damage/stealing from the Practice's premises, staff or patients
- Obtaining drugs and/or medical services fraudulently
- We ask you to treat your GPs and their staff courteously at all times.

REMOVAL FROM THE PRACTICE LIST

The removal of patients from our list is an exceptional and rare event and is a last resort in an impaired patient-practice relationship. We value and respect good patient-doctor relationships based on mutual respect and trust. When trust has irretrievably broken down, the practice will consider all factors before removing a patient from their list, and communicate to them that it is in the patient's best interest that they should find a new practice. An exception to this is in the case of immediate removal on the grounds of violence e.g. when the Police are involved.



JUST FOR LOFFS!



Doctor Vs Patient

Doctor: Do exercise daily for good health.

Patient: Sir I play tennis, football and cricket daily.

Doctor: Very good! How long to you play?

Patient: Until the battery in my mobile goes down!!



 **SHINGLES****What is Shingles?**

Shingles (also known as herpes zoster) is a painful condition caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. Anyone can get it, but it's most common in older people.

The main symptom of shingles is a painful, blotchy rash on 1 side of your body. It mainly affects the skin, but can sometimes affect the eyes too.

The rash appears as blotches on your skin, on 1 side of your body only. A rash on both the left and right of your body is unlikely to be shingles.

Medicine from a doctor can help speed up your recovery from shingles if it's taken within 3 days of the symptoms starting, but not everyone needs it. Rest is critical when you have shingles as this can ease discomfort. Regular baths and showers can also provide relief from shingles. You cannot catch shingles from a person that has shingles.

How long does it take for shingles to go away?

Most cases of shingles last 3 to 5 weeks.

The Shingles Vaccine

The shingles vaccine is available at the practice for all patients aged 70-79 years old. From September the eligible cohort will include patients turning 65 onwards until they reach the age of 80. Also those patients from age 50 with a severely weakened immune system. You will receive an invite via text or post to remind you that you are eligible for the vaccine which is now given in 2 doses.

Visit www.nhs.uk/shingles for more information.

 **LONG TERM CONDITIONS****What is a Long Term Condition**

There are several long term conditions that you will be recalled for as follows:

Diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, chronic kidney disease (CKD), hypertension (high blood pressure), mental health conditions, learning disabilities, coronary heart disease (CHD), certain cancers, dementia.

The practice runs an annual long term condition (LTC) recall system. If you have a long-term condition you will be automatically contacted (usually on your birthday month) to attend for your LTC health check. The appointment may include having some bloods taken a few days before your appointment and also bringing along a specimen of your urine for testing.

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO BRING ALONG YOUR INHALERS, AND URINE SAMPLES IF ASKED TO DO SO.

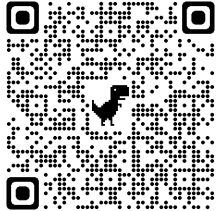
It is very important that you attend your appointment, these health checks ensure that your medication is still working for you and that there are no other complications emerging with your condition.

If you do not attend, it may be unsafe to issue certain repeat medications and you may find that they have been put on hold when you call in for your repeat. Certain medications require tests to ensure they are not having any side effects that show up in a blood test.

The LTC review will take between 20-30 minutes (depending on your LTC).

If you are housebound and cannot attend for your LTC, your name will be put on a list and you will receive a visit at your home on an allotted date.

WANT TO LEAVE US A REVIEW?
SCAN ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW.



FRIENDS AND
FAMILY



NHS CHOICES



FACEBOOK

2023 BANK HOLIDAY CLOSURES

New Years Day - Monday 2 January - CLOSED
 Good Friday – Friday 7 April - CLOSED
 Easter Monday - Monday 10 April - CLOSED
 Early May Bank Holiday - Monday 1 May - CLOSED
 Spring Bank Holiday - Monday 29 May - CLOSED
 Summer Bank Holiday - Monday 28 August - CLOSED

Christmas 2023

Christmas Day - Monday 25 December - CLOSED
 Boxing Day - Tuesday 26 December - CLOSED
 Wednesday 27 to Friday 29 December - OPEN
 New Years Day - Monday 1 January 2024 - CLOSED

WE ARE ON THE WEB:

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

 **...AND FINALLY**

OVER TO YOU

Do you want to share your own personal experience with us and the community?

If you would like to speak about your health experiences, in your own words, please contact the Editor, Wendy Abraham, on 0121 504 0141, who will be happy to discuss this with you.

Your story can be regarding anything you would like, it can be an inspirational story of your battle with an illness, which may help to inspire others who are in a similar situation, or maybe something funny that has happened to you that you would like to share.

All stories will be considered

and, with your consent, will be published in a future issue. This can be left anonymous if you prefer, it is entirely up to you. If you wanted to leave any contact details for other patients to speak with you, then we are happy to include these.

GET INVOLVED

If you have any topics you would like to see in this newsletter, please let us know, we want everyone to get involved and feel part of our newsletter.

Thanks for reading.



HALESOWEN NEWSDESK TEAM

Editor

Wendy - Management Support
Officer

Contributors:

Rose Dunnington - Practice Manager

Thank you to all those involved in producing this quarterly newsletter.

Next Issue:

To be released Winter 2023.

THANK YOU