

## Flu vaccinations

There is still time to have a free flu vaccination at the surgery if you are in one of the below categories.

- those aged 65 years and over
- those aged 18 years to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- 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
- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2024

If you don't wish to have a flu vaccination this year, please let us know so we can allocate this vaccination to another patient and stop sending you invitations.

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## Christmas closures

The surgery will be closed for the Christmas period

**Christmas Day** - Wednesday 25th December

**Boxing Day** - Thursday 26th December

**New Year's Day** - Wednesday 1st January

Please allow 10 days to process prescriptions ordered between 20th December & 3rd January. Please remember that pharmacy services may require additional time. If you need medical advice whilst the surgery is closed, please contact 111.

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## Training closures

Each month we close for half a day of staff training to continue our professional development. We close between 13:30 and 18:30 on these days.

Please see the dates below for our planned training closures for this quarter.

- 10th December 2024
- 23rd January 2025
- 25th February 2025

## Patient feedback

Since starting our new feedback system, we have received over 10,000 feedback replies, with over 99% of all replies being a **Good** or **Very Good** score.



We thank everyone for the positive feedback and after some constructive criticism, we have now limited the number of messages that will be sent after appointments. We hope this will reduce the amount of text messages requesting feedback sent to those who frequently attend.

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## Pharmacy First: Quick, Convenient Care for Minor Ailments

Pharmacy First is a free NHS service offering fast, expert care for minor illnesses without needing to see your GP. Participating pharmacies can help with conditions like sore throats, colds, skin conditions, and stomach issues.

Pharmacists are highly trained professionals who can provide advice, recommend treatments, and even supply some medications free of charge if you're eligible.

This service is convenient—no appointment is needed, and many pharmacies have extended hours, making it easy to get help when you need it. You may be directed to this service by our reception team when you call.

By using Pharmacy First, you can save time and help reduce pressure on GP surgeries and A&E departments, ensuring faster care for everyone. Next time you have a minor health concern, visit your local pharmacy to see how they can help!

## The impact on patients from missing appointments

Did you know that every missed appointment means another patient misses out on care? When you don't attend your scheduled appointment, the time is often wasted, and others who need care might have to wait longer.

Over the last quarter, **155** GP appointments were missed. If patients had cancelled these appointments in advance, we could have offered over **3 full days** of 10-minute GP consultations to other patients for quick consultations. This could have helped reduce waiting times for those who need an appointment.

For Nurse appointments, **231** appointments were missed in the last quarter. These are typically 30-minute slots for things like wound care, dressings, and other nursing services.

If patients had cancelled these appointments, we could have offered over **14 full days** of nurse appointments to other patients who were waiting for care.

### The impact on you as a patient

Missed appointments don't just waste valuable time – they prevent other patients from getting the care they need. When you don't attend an appointment and don't cancel in advance, we miss the chance to offer that slot to someone else. This impacts everyone, especially those who are waiting for an appointment.

### How you can let us know you want to cancel your appointment



Call us on 01823 259333. Our 24/7 automated appointment management service is available at all times



Email us at [somicb.cwsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:somicb.cwsoffice@nhs.net)



Submit our cancellation form or send us an online consultation, at [www.collegewaysurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.collegewaysurgery.nhs.uk)



On foot. Just visit our reception between 08:30 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 18:30 Monday to Friday

## Staff spotlight: Jasmine, Our Apprentice Receptionist

Jasmine has been an integral part of our reception team for a while now, all while completing her studies as an apprentice. She has worked tirelessly to balance learning the ropes of a busy reception area with her academic commitments, and her dedication doesn't go unnoticed!



When reflecting on her journey, Jasmine shared:

*"Working here has taught me so much about communication and multitasking. It's challenging at times, but I love helping patients and being part of such a great team."*

Her friendly smile and willingness to go the extra mile make a real difference to both staff and patients. We're proud to support Jasmine as she continues to develop her skills and grow in her role, bringing a fresh perspective to our practice.

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## Get U Better App: Your Recovery Companion

The Get U Better app is a free, NHS-approved tool to support recovery from common musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions like back or neck pain. It provides personalised plans, self-care advice, and easy-to-follow exercises, helping you manage your recovery confidently. Accessible on your smartphone, the app tracks progress and reduces the need for GP visits. Convenient, evidence-based, and empowering, it's a simple way to take charge of your health. Use the app at <https://app.getubetter.com/> to start your journey!

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## Somerset Village Agents

Village Agents are here to help anyone over 18 who may need support navigating challenges like loneliness, financial worries, health issues, or accessing essential services. They provide personalised advice and connect individuals to local resources, helping with housing, food, care, and more. If you or someone you know could use this support, a referral can be made contacting the Community Council for Somerset directly through their website or requesting a call back online. For details, visit <https://somersetagents.org>

## Dry January 2025

Dry January is an NHS-backed campaign encouraging individuals to pause alcohol consumption for the month. It helps participants improve health, save money, and reassess their relationship with drinking. Research shows that a break from alcohol can improve energy levels, sleep, and mental clarity. It's a chance to explore alcohol-free alternatives and participate in a growing community of health-conscious individuals. Learn more at [Alcohol Change UK](#).

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## Veganuary 2025

Veganuary inspires people to adopt a plant-based diet throughout January. By promoting sustainability, improved health, and animal welfare, this campaign invites individuals to try vegan meals and learn about their benefits. Participants can access recipes, nutritional advice, and meal-planning resources to ease the transition. It's an excellent opportunity for health-conscious and eco-aware communities to come together. Find more resources at [Veganuary](#).

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## Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Running throughout January, this campaign raises awareness about cervical screenings and HPV vaccinations. It aims to increase attendance for these life-saving tests, particularly among younger demographics where uptake is lower. Educational materials and outreach will guide individuals on how screenings work and why they're vital for early cancer detection.

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## NHS 111 - "Help Us Help You"

NHS 111 is an essential service offering quick access to healthcare advice and support. If you're facing a non-life-threatening health issue, NHS 111 helps you find the right care, whether it's through a pharmacist, an urgent care centre, or a GP appointment. You can contact NHS 111 by phone or online for guidance, reducing unnecessary visits to emergency departments. This service plays a key role in easing pressure on urgent care services, ensuring they remain available for those in critical need.

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## Surgery Facebook Page

Did you know we now have a facebook page which contains important news and updates? Search for us or visit [facebook.com/collegewaysurgery](https://facebook.com/collegewaysurgery)

## NHS App Support

### Session



Our recent NHS App Support Session was a great success and many of our patients are now able to access key features of the NHS App, empowering them to manage their health more effectively.

Patients were guided through essential functions like ordering repeat prescriptions, viewing medical records, and accessing test results. Some even discovered how to use the app to track vaccinations and refer themselves to NHS services without needing to contact their GP.

We're pleased to announce that we will be running another NHS App Support Session in the New Year to help more patients take full advantage of this useful tool. Whether you need help accessing your medical information, arranging appointments, or using NHS services, our team will be on hand to support you.

Stay tuned for details and make sure to take this opportunity to get familiar with your NHS App!

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## Important Information for New Patients

If you've recently moved to our practice from another surgery in England, please note that, for safety reasons, any ongoing medications from your previous GP will be stopped upon your registration with us. This is a standard procedure to ensure your treatment is up-to-date and appropriate.

Please phone the prescriptions line on 01823 256 880 upon ordering your first prescription to discuss which medications you would like to be issued. Your GP will be in touch if further review is needed. Please allow 10 working days for this first prescription to be processed.

This ensures that all medications are safely managed and tailored to your specific needs. We look forward to supporting your healthcare journey with us.

For further information, please contact our reception team.