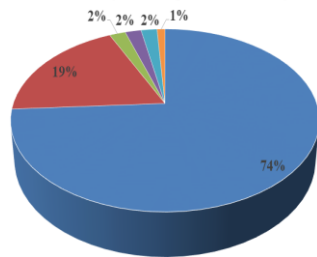


# WEALDEN RIDGE MEDICAL PARTNERSHIP PPG

March 2026

## FRIENDS AND FAMILY RESULTS

Wealden Ridge Medical Practice  
Friends & Family Test Responses - February 2026



Very good ■ Good ■ Neither good nor poor ■ Poor ■ Very poor ■ Don't know

### Contact Us

Newick Health Centre or South Chailey Surgery 01825 722272

Heathfield Surgery or The Firs Surgery 01435 864999

All numbers flow to one reception team, who can book appointments at any site



## MESSAGE FROM JACKIE, THE PPG CHAIR

Being able to support our Medical Partnership through being the chair of the Patient Participation Group, is worthwhile and feels rewarding. The supportive nature of the group is gratifying and enables the staff at the partnership to feel valued and appreciated.

If you have any queries about the PPG, please let the Practice Manager know and we will be happy to give you information about this group of patients. We meet quarterly and produce newsletters about different areas of interest. Please feel free to look on the Partnership website for previous meeting's minutes and newsletters.

I do hope you are able to find time to look at these. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the PPG members for their involvement in making our group supportive and helpful.

Jackie Wood, Wealden Ridge Medical Partnership, PPG Chair

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*“To ensure good health, eat lightly, breathe deeply, live moderately, cultivate cheerfulness and maintain an interest in Life” (William London)*

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## SPRING ADVICE

- **Diet and Nutrition:** Eat **fresh fruit and vegetables**, seasonal, if possible, such as spinach, radishes, asparagus, and rhubarb to increase nutrient intake. **Go for as wide an assortment of colours as possible** (don't forget trusty beetroot, and broccoli). Support your gut with probiotics like **LIVE** yogurt and kefir. **Yuka** is a free app for your smartphone that can scan food bar-codes and give you useful information about the impact on your health.
- **Physical Activity:** Try and get some time to enjoy activities outdoors, such as **walking**, gardening, jogging, or biking, to increase vitamin D levels. Aim for at least 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week, **but if this is difficult remember that even a little exercise is better than none.**

- **Sun Protection:** Protect skin from increased sun exposure by using at least SPF 15 daily, even on mild days, **the higher the protection the better. Wear sunglasses in bright sunshine, as this protects against development of cataracts in later life.** Report any new or changing pigmented non-hairy skin lesion, especially if it bleeds.
- **Mental Well-being:** Spend time in nature, which can boost mood and reduce stress. Practice mindfulness through activities like **meditation, pilates,** yoga or gardening.
- **General Health:** Stay hydrated: **try to drink at least 2 litres of fluid per day unless specifically advised by your clinician not to,** and maintain good sleep hygiene, such as avoiding screens before bed: get advice if you snore badly, have sleep apnoea (stop breathing), or sleep more than 40 minutes during the day. Manage spring allergies by limiting exposure to pollen.
- **Preventative Measures:** Stay up to date with vaccinations and wash hands regularly to avoid seasonal illnesses.

**Did you know our practice has mental health support workers working at our sites?**

For more detailed information and to book vaccinations, visit the NHS website or contact the practice.

## **NEWS FROM THE PRACTICE**

### **NHS App Pilot Update**

We are pleased to report that this pilot is still going well, statistics show a **20% reduction of incoming calls** to the practice. In addition, we are seeing a spread of contact from patients requiring an appointment on the day coming in throughout the day as opposed to the 8am rush we previously experienced.

It is worth reminding that **patients can book ahead with the practice, and the on-line triage service is for urgent requests on the day not routine/non urgent issues.**

The NHSE team are back in the practice soon and are looking to carry out patient interviews. We will also be asking patients who are using the App option for their permission to send them a satisfaction survey via SMS. Results will be collated by the NHSE team and fed back to the practice.

### **AI in General Practice**

We are continuing to use AI for our **back office clinical correspondence.** We have started small with this and continue to monitor closely.

### **GP Contract**

We are currently reviewing the new GP contract issued by NHSE. Much of it we are already doing but there are a few requirements that we need to review and possibly modify our procedures as a result. The new contract comes into place from 1<sup>st</sup> April.

### **Covid Spring Boosters**

Commencing Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April.

Patient cohort includes:

Over 75's;

Patients in a care home for older adults;

Patients aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed as defined by the NHSE/Government.

There are changes to the way we order and record the vaccine. We are awaiting patient searches to be updated so we can plan and then start inviting patients in.



### **PLT afternoon**

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April – the practice will be closed for staff training.

**An out of hours telephone number will be provided whilst we are closed for any urgent matters that cannot wait until the surgeries re-open, details of which will be provided on the practice website, telephone message and front doors at the time of the closure.**

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Did you know?... Numerous studies have shown that poor oral health (of the teeth and gums) can contribute to at least fifteen serious health conditions, including cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, osteoporosis and some cancers. Research suggests that cleaning your teeth three times a day may be even more beneficial than just once or twice.

## **COMMUNITY PHARMACY – NOT JUST FILLING YOUR PRESCRIPTION**

**What can my Pharmacy do for me?**

**The answer is.....Much more than you think!**

You've heard of 'Pharmacy First'? Headed by NHS England Pharmacy First is there to help ease the burden of our growing population on our stretched NHS Doctors. Here is what our Pharmacists CAN do for us. (check with your local pharmacy).

Every Pharmacy has a pharmacist who has done 5 years of training to help you. They can advise and supply prescription strength medications for seven common ailments.

Sinusitis (ages 12 +), Sore Throat (ages 5+), earache (age 1 – 17yrs), Infected insect bites (age 1+), Impetigo (age 1+), Shingles (age 18 +), Uncomplicated Urinary Tract infections (women ages 16 – 64).

Other clinical services too! Dispense medications from NHS prescriptions and Private Prescriptions, Emergency supplies ie: if you run out of your prescribed medications (pharmacist discretion), Health checks like blood pressure monitoring, support for Weight loss, Stop Smoking services, Vaccinations for Flu and Covid and sometimes Travel vaccinations too. They advise on newly prescribed medications, especially antidepressants. And they will always advise on any over the counter medications, Tummy upsets, Aches and pains and all of this can be discussed in a private consultation room provided for your privacy.

There are many other services too after you have contacted your GP and used 111, these include Chlamydia Screening, Cholesterol testing and Blood sugar testing, weight loss, substance misuse which may include Needle and syringe exchange.

When a GP has prescribed any new drug, the pharmacist can help and advise how best to take them and when, creams – how and when to apply and indeed everything to do with any medications sold or prescribed within the pharmacy.

Some pharmacists can offer the emergency contraceptive pill (over 18yrs) commonly known as the morning after pill and some pharmacies offer a free condom service when the patient meets criteria.

If you fall outside of the age ranges above, the pharmacist can still advise you and importantly refer you to a GP or other health care provider.

Your pharmacist works closely with your GP and will update your medical records so that your GP can give you the best care through that sharing of information from the pharmacist.

Your pharmacist has trained for 5 years minimum and does ongoing training as part of their licence to practice from the GPHC register.

The whole pharmacy team are there to help so do try the pharmacist first. Put the pharmacy number in your phone and ring them first.

**The GP is best placed for more serious conditions and of course any chest pains or sudden paralysis it's always 999.**

All information can be found on the NHS website

## **DON'T MISS YOUR APPOINTMENT**

**DO YOU FEEL FRUSTRATION WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING AN APPOINTMENT?**

**793** appointments were missed in the period December 2025 to February 2026

These are broken down as follows:

**317 GP Appointments.**

**416 Nursing & HCA appointments.**

**Please help us to help you – if you no longer need your appointment, please let us know.**

## **INTERESTING INFORMATION**

### **New Sussex Cancer Centre**

A new five-storey cancer centre serving Sussex patients is planned on the site of the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, with work beginning this year on the open area beside the hospital car-park. Two thirds of us will have a diagnosis of cancer in our lifetime, and half of all deaths are due to cancer, but this is improving with earlier diagnosis. The centre includes more inpatient beds, all in single en-suite rooms. There will be a dedicated acute cancer assessment unit, enabling many to be treated as out-patients, and the new centre will manage three times as many patients as currently. Dr Anna Olsson-Brown, consultant medical oncologist and clinical director of clinical cancer care, said the design of the centre was crucial in not just treating cancer itself but offering a holistic approach supporting the whole person. She said, "We've focused on creating spaces filled with natural light, with views of the sea and green areas, and with access to peaceful gardens and terraces whilst optimising the delivery of treatment". The new centre is scheduled to open in 2029, and the project was heralded as momentous news by Dr Sarah Westwell, consultant clinical oncologist and chief of cancer services at the trust.

