

# Sidney House and The Laurels Surgeries

Produced by the Patient Participation Group [PPG]

## PPG Newsletter

The PPG aim to produce this newsletter quarterly and it will be circulated by the following methods:

- Email to those valid email addresses that are held by the surgeries
- Available from either Surgery (newsletter stands located in the reception area)
- On the surgery website

## Christmas shutdown



## Extended Access:

Everyone registered at a GP practice in Maldon District, Chelmsford City or Braintree District can now book GP-led appointments at a wider range of times: on Saturdays and Sundays, over bank holidays and later into weekday evenings. Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has introduced the scheme, called Extended Access, under a national programme allowing people who might not be able to get to their GP surgery during normal 'working hours' to see nurse practitioners, GPs and healthcare assistants at other times.

You have a choice of evening and weekend appointments across mid Essex. These three hubs are open 7 days a week, 6.30pm-8pm on weekdays (9pm at Maldon) and 8am-2pm on weekends and bank holidays:

- Blackwater Medical Centre in Maldon
- Elizabeth Courtauld Surgery, Halstead
- North Chelmsford Health Centre in Springfield, Chelmsford

Three more hubs are available for weekend appointments between 8am and 2pm:

- Douglas Grove Surgery in Witham (Saturdays only from 4 May 2019)
- Greenwood Surgery in South Woodham Ferrers (Saturdays only from 4 May 2019)
- Mount Chambers Surgery in Braintree (Sundays only)

There should be no impact on appointments for patients registered at the practices offering Extended Access appointments due to the planning and extra resourcing for the project.

People wanting an Extended Access appointment book it through their own practice as they would any other appointment. Please note, these are not walk-in appointments – all appointments should be booked in advance. Appointments will be with the most appropriate clinician for their condition, which may be a nurse practitioner, GP or other healthcare professional.

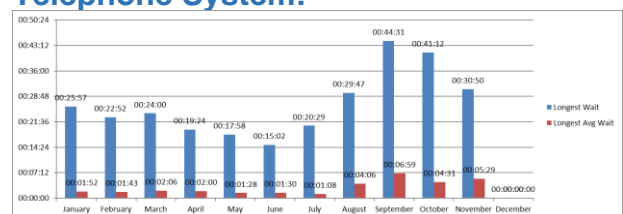
If you no longer need an Extended Access appointment you have booked, you should contact your own practice during working hours, or outside surgery hours, call 07384 579479 to cancel.

In most cases, people going to their GP practice have a condition for which nurse practitioners and allied health professionals can offer the right advice and treatment, and the new service follows this model. It's part of wider plans at the CCG to build a strong foundation for primary care – our GP practices – and make sure they continue to serve our local population long into the future.

For more information, including FAQs please see the website using:

<https://midessexccg.nhs.uk/news/935-extended-access-to-gp-services-in-mid-essex>

## Telephone System:



The graph above shows that although the telephone system has settled down there have recently been increases in wait time. This is currently under review.

## Shingles:

Shingles is a viral disease identified by a painful skin rash with blisters in a localized area. Typically, the rash occurs in a single wide strip on either the left or right side of the body or face. Two to four days before a rash occurs there may be a tingling or local pain in the area. Otherwise there are typically few symptoms though some may have fever, headache or feel tired. The rash usually heals within two to four weeks; however, some people develop ongoing nerve pain which can last for months or years. In those with poor immune function the rash may occur widely. If the rash involves the eye, vision loss may occur.

Shingles is due to a reactivation of the chicken pox virus where the virus may have remained inactive in the nerve cells after a previous attack of chicken pox.

If shingles develops then antiviral medications can reduce the severity and duration of the disease if started within 72 hours of the appearance of the rash. Paracetamol may be used to help with the acute pain.

It is estimated that about one third of people develop shingles at some point in their life. While more common among older people, children may also get the disease.

NHS England have put in place a vaccination program for those who are 70 years of age or above.



Further information can be found on the NHS website.

## Organ Donation:



The law is changing to help save and improve lives. Every day across the UK someone dies waiting for a transplant.

The opt out system in England will come into effect from Spring 2020. The law around organ donation in England will remain 'opt in' until this time.

These changes will affect all adults in England unless they have recorded a decision not to donate or are in one of the following excluded groups:

- Those under the age of 18
- People who lack the mental capacity to understand the new arrangements and take the necessary action
- Visitors to England, and those not living here voluntarily
- People who have lived in England for less than 12 months before their death

You are being asked to:

- Record your donation decision on the NHS Organ Donor Register
- Tell your family and friends what you have decided

There are some leaflets and posters can be found in the surgery, or visit the website:

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

**Note: This newsletter can be provided in larger print on request (please ask at reception).**