

The Westgate Practice Newsletter

SPRING EDITION 2026



COVID SPRING BOOSTERS

We are pleased to announce that, following recent operational changes introduced by NHSE regarding the administration and recording of Covid vaccinations, the practice will be delivering the Covid Spring Booster to eligible patients from 13th April 2026.

We will be trialling this service for the first time and encourage eligible patients to have their vaccination with us, helping ensure we can continue to offer this service in the future.

The Spring booster will be offered to:

*Adults aged 75 years and over (inc. those who turn 75 yrs by 30th June 2026)

* Care Home residents

* Immunosuppressed individuals

Our care home residents and eligible housebound patients will be contacted by the practice once visit dates have been confirmed.

Eligible patients will be invited to book via a self-booking link sent by text message, or a letter, if no mobile number is recorded.



Spring's unpredictable weather and rising pollen levels can trigger a range of seasonal illnesses.

High pollen from trees, grass and mould often causes hay fever symptoms such as sneezing, itchy eyes and congestion, and can also worsen asthma.

Fluctuating temperatures mean colds remain common in early spring, while viral stomach bugs can spread more easily as people spend more time socialising.

April also marks the start of tick season, increasing the risk of Lyme disease, which may cause fever, fatigue and joint pain.

To reduce the risk of illness, wash hands regularly, keep windows closed on high-pollen days and stay well hydrated—especially if you begin to feel unwell.

Medication Reviews

Medication reviews (or Structured Medication reviews) are comprehensive, evidence-based reviews conducted by our practice pharmacists or doctors to ensure your medications are safe, effective and optimized for your specific needs.

These reviews can be conducted via the telephone or in person. They focus on reducing risks, addressing side effects and improving understanding for patients with complex conditions or taking multiple medications.

It is important that these reviews are conducted annually. Should you miss your medication review, this may lead to your medication being moved from repeat to acute until such time that your medication review has been undertaken and updated.

RSV Vaccination expansion programme

Following JCVI advice, the government is expanding its Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccination programme from 1st April 2026.

Since September 2024, RSV vaccination has been routinely available to older adults as they turn 75 years of age, with an initial catch up offered to adults who were aged 75 years and over on 1 September 2024 and had not yet reached 80 years of age.

The forthcoming change will expand the eligibility criteria for the older adult RSV programme to also include those aged 80 years and over (with no upper age limit).

In addition, all residents in care homes for older adults will also become eligible, regardless of their age, due to their increased risk from RSV.

This expansion to the programme aims to reduce severe respiratory illness and hospitalizations. This will run alongside the existing programme for those turning 75, 75–79-year-olds and pregnant women.

Patients will be contacted in or around their birthday month. This will be via a self-book text link or letter, when no mobile number is available. Due to the large number of eligible patients needing to be contacted, we ask that patients await their invitation.

OTHER NEWS

PRACTICE NOTICES

The Practice has scheduled Protected Learning Time on Tue 14th April, Wed 13th May and Thurs 11th June from 1-6.30pm

During these times, clinical availability will be limited. Please submit your usual online forms the following day.

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

The last PPG meeting was held on Fri 25th February. Meeting minutes are available on our website. The next PPG meeting is scheduled for Wed 20th May 2026.

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE PRACTICE

The latest news and health forms on the website:

www.westgatepractice.co.uk

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WELCOME AND FAREWELL



We are pleased to announce that we have 3 new salaried GPs joining the practice. They are Dr Johal, Dr Sah and Dr Benyamine.

We are sad to say that our Lead Pharmacist is leaving for pastures new and our Patient Liaison Officer is retiring. We would like to thank them for their service and wish them all the best for the future.

PLEASE REMEMBER!

Let us know if any of your details change including:

- new address/email
- changed your mobile number
- become a carer