



JANUARY-MARCH 2025

8TH EDITION

DON VALLEY HEALTHCARE NEWSLETTER

BOTH SITES WILL BE **CLOSED FROM 12 PM ON 8TH JANUARY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 5TH & 12TH MARCH** FOR STAFF TRAINING. IF YOU NEED CARE DURING THIS TIME, PLEASE CONTACT **NHS 111** OR THE **SAME DAY HEALTH CENTRE ON 0300 123 3103**.

A FLU AND RSV VACCINE UPDATE

Flu and RSV are both contagious respiratory infections and to help prevent future illness, we provide vaccines. If you did not manage to get your flu or RSV vaccine between September and December, we will be providing flu vaccines at Don Valley Healthcare until March 2025 and RSV until August 2025.

If you are eligible and would like your flu or RSV vaccine, please contact us on 01302 874551 to book a suitable appointment. For eligibility criteria, please refer to our previous newsletter via our website or ask a member of the reception team who will be able to check your online medical record.

FIREFLIES WALLYTHON UPDATE

In our last newsletter, we shared how staff members Chelsea and Jessica walked the 21 miles from Weston Park Hospital, Sheffield to The Salutation on South Parade, Doncaster to help raise money for Firefly's Cancer Charity that provides free transport to local cancer patients in Doncaster to treatment hospitals within the region.

We have since learned that the walk raised a total of £11,056 for the charity, which will go towards vehicle maintenance to enable the charity to carry out their work. We look forward to participating and helping the cause further in Summer 2025.



YOUR NHS REFERRAL

THE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SURROUNDING YOUR NHS REFERRAL AND WAITING TIMES

Suspected Cancer Referrals:

An suspected cancer referral is also known as a 'two-week wait' referral. Your GP will discuss your impending referral during your initial consultation, so please provide the doctor with a preferred contact number. Your referral is generated and the hospital will contact you within 2 weeks to advise you on the next step or provide an appointment. However, some clinics will assess your referral and contact you directly, so please ensure your contact information and address are up to date.

Routine Referrals:

Routine and some other urgent referrals are processed via the electronic referral system, and shortly after seeing the doctor, you will receive information regarding your referral via text or post. The information will provide a selection of hospitals where you can choose to be seen. However, not all hospitals deal with certain specialties, so the choice may be limited. You can then book your appointment online or by phone. Should there not be an appropriate appointment available for us to book, your referral will be set as 'defer to provider' and your name will be placed on a waiting list at the hospital of your choice. The hospital will then contact you directly with an appointment.

Current Referral Waiting Times:

Once a referral has been sent, the hospital manages your referral and we are guided by the hospital's assessment. All referrals are triaged by a specialist at the hospital and a suitable appointment will be assigned to you. Unfortunately, we have no exact information about current waiting times, but please be aware that waiting lists, in general, are increasing, and are now often many months. If you have any queries regarding waiting times, please contact the hospital's booking team directly on 01302 642500 or dbth.contactcentre@nhs.net.

Expediting Appointments:

As indicated, we have no control over how the hospital manages its workload and if you feel your assigned appointment needs to be expedited, please contact the hospital directly. However, if your symptoms change please contact us on 01302 874551 at the surgery to book a suitable appointment to discuss these changes with the referring clinician.

QUARTERLY SPOTLIGHT

Every quarter, we release our GP infographics to give you an insight into DVH. The infographics below relate to the three month period between **October - December 2024**.

14,091 Total Registered Patients

7085 Appointments Given (Tel Con & Face to Face)

499 Did Not Attend Appointments (Non Tel Con)

23,479 Calls Answered (Averaging 372 Calls Per Working Day)

7396 Prescriptions Issued (Non Repeat Dispensing)

85 Home Visits (Non Residential Care Homes)

273 New Patients Registered

PODIATRY REFERRALS TO CANTLEY HEALTH CENTRE

A podiatrist is a specially trained healthcare professional who helps people deal with a range of mobility issues, relieve pain and treat infections of the feet and lower legs. The scope of practice of podiatry is much wider than many people realize and includes:

- Foot Pain (Musculoskeletal Conditions)
- Skin Conditions
- Ulceration/non-healing wounds
- Infection in growing toenail with discharge
- Painful corns or callus
- Nail Removal

Our new podiatry referral services see that we work alongside Cantley Health Centre, who provide top-grade podiatric care to many of our patients. If you wish to get in touch with Cantley Health Centre, you will need to self-refer via a form which can be collected from your nearest branch reception; however, our staff can help refer patients if they may struggle to do this themselves. If you have any questions regarding the self-referral service to Cantley Health Centre, please contact us at syicb-doncaster.dvh@nhs.net.

STAY WELL THIS WINTER

With the excitement of Christmas behind us, this time of year can be challenging for many, which is why we recommend practicing self care to support your overall wellness. Here are some ideas to help manage any negative impacts the winter season may have on you!

Enjoy a hobby - Whether its reading a book or learning a new skill, hobbies help occupy your hands, your mind and reduce stress levels.

Socialise - Directly following the festive season, the months after can feel lonely. Make time for social activities and regular meet ups with family and friends.

Spend time outdoors and exercise - Take a daily walk to get some fresh air, get your body moving and boost serotonin levels which in turn, help your mood.

Eat well and stay hydrated - Eating well and hydrating play a large role in physical and mental health. Why not cook a nice stew filled with plenty of hearty vegetables?

Take Vitamin D - During winter in the UK, the sun isn't strong enough for our bodies to produce Vitamin D, so taking a supplement will help boost your levels through the season.

Know yourself - Winter is the peak season for illness, many of which can be treated using over the counter medication from your local pharmacy, however, if you need medical care, contact us via our website www.donvalleyhealthcare.co.uk.



WORLD CANCER DAY 2025

World Cancer Day is an international day observed on 4th February to help raise awareness about cancer and encourage its prevention.

Cancer is more than just a diagnosis—it's a deeply personal matter and lot of cancers cause physical symptoms, so knowing what to look out for can help you determine when you need to seek medical advice.

Common early symptoms of cancer in both men and women include:

- Unexplained weight loss
- New pain
- Fatigue
- New lumps
- Changes in your skin
- Unusual bleeding
- Trouble urinating
- New stomach pain or bloating



Whilst there are many forms of cancer, breast and testicular cancers are some of the most common. It is recommended to check your breast or chest and testicles once a month as doing so regularly can help you learn what feels and looks normal for you.

For more information on how to check yourself properly, visit the NHS website at www.nhs.uk for step-by-step guides for both men and women.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

The NHS Friends and Family Test was created to help service providers understand whether patients are happy with the services provided by their local GP surgery. The Friends and Family Test offers a swift, effortless, and confidential avenue for you to share your thoughts..

After receiving treatment at the hospital, attending a GP appointment, or being discharged from a service, you will be invited to participate in this feedback gem. At Don Valley Healthcare, we typically reach out to gather your insights via post or text message. Upon receiving the invitation, you will rank your experience from "very poor" to "very good," and have the opportunity to elaborate on your score with additional comments. You may also encounter a few follow-up questions to further your feedback.

Rest assured, your responses remain anonymous and your personal details will not be shared. The collected responses to the questions are synthesized to form an overall average, which is then published on the NHS England website for public viewing. The reflections from service users are preserved by the practice and shared with staff when beneficial.

We encourage all patients to engage with the friends and family test when invited, as your feedback plays a vital role in the ongoing enhancement of service at Don Valley Healthcare.



OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Our patient participation group consists of patients who wish to be involved in our practice whilst taking an active role in developing local health services.

The purpose of the group is to enable patients and practice staff to work together to share ideas and help improve the services offered at the practice in addition to sourcing any local community services that would help enhance patient's lives. The group also offers an avenue for patients to have a say in how services are planned, developed and build good working relationships with practice staff and GP's alike.

Our recent meetings have given patients an insight behind the scenes at DVH, such as how we have improved our telephone system, staff updates and new changes to some of the services we provide such as ear syringing and minor operations.

If you would like to join our patient participation group, we invite you to attend our next meeting as advertised below. We would love to have your insight and help us strive to make Don Valley Healthcare a pinnacle of healthcare within Doncaster.

OUR NEXT PPG MEETING WILL BE HELD AT OUR BENTLEY SITE ON MONDAY 13TH JANUARY AT 5PM.

IF YOU WISH TO JOIN OUR PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP, WE WELCOME YOU TO ATTEND OUR NEXT MEETING.

HELLO, HOW CAN I HELP?...

Every quarter we are shining a spotlight on a member of our team for our patients to better know the staff that help take care of them medically. This quarter DVH Partner and GP, Dr Forshaw has provided some words to share with our newsletter readers.

Hi, I am Karen Forshaw one of the GPs at Don-Valley Healthcare. I qualified as a doctor in December 1999, and I have been a GP at DVH since August 2009. I have two lovely girls who are doing GCSE and A Levels this year, so our house is very busy at the moment! I love being a GP and am really passionate about resilience and wellbeing which led to my book 'How to Rise - A Complete Resilience Manual' being published in 2021. Whenever you feel stressed or upset remember your breathing. Deep belly breathing will switch of the fight-flight response that creates that horrible feeling of anxiety and you can do it where ever you are.

TO HELP US IMPROVE DON VALLEY HEALTHCARE, COMPLETE OUR FEEDBACK FORM ON OUR WEBSITE.

