

Monthly Patient Newsletter

July 2026

2025 Patient Survey Update from the Patient Participation Group

Since the Survey was carried out last October the Patient sub-group has been doing a lot of analysis on the 3005 responses that were received. At the same time Mendip Vale has been working on the main issues that have been raised. More recently four members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG), Geoff Matthews, Ruth Crick, Geoff Richardson, and John Gowar, have been working with the Practice to review the actions and communications for each of the five key areas identified in the Survey.

The five areas are as follows.

1. Getting in touch with the Practice and improving the access to appointments.

The Practice is making improvements to the system, clarifying the options available, and aiming to reduce the 3 working days that it can currently take to give a date for a routine appointment.

2. Better understanding for patients on how their application for an appointment is handled and the

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the way that the medical team are involved in assessing all applications for appointments.

This will be set out in Patient Newsletters and other channels of communication.

3. There was concern expressed in the Survey about the continuity of care provided.

Much work has been carried out by Dr Layzell on this key issue. The Practice is to allocate each patient to a named GP who will oversee their health issues. This is especially important for those with long term conditions and those needing long term care.

4. Many patients expressed concerns over using eConsult on-line to book appointments.

The Practice, with support from the PPG, is looking at alternative systems used in other Practices and new software services that are being developed.

5. Patients described problems they had experienced in receiving feedback from test results, hospital referrals, and follow up actions.

The clinician making the referral will take responsibility for each aspect of such communication, and the preferred method of feedback will be agreed in advance with each patient.

Good patient/Practice communication is the key to increasing patient satisfaction in each of these areas and it is the hope that the changes will result in a closer personal relationship between patients and the Practice, particularly with their named GP.

Providing Continuity of Care and Answering Questions

As is mentioned in the initial article from the PPG, one of the key issues raised in the 2025 Survey was the wish of many patients to have greater emphasis on Continuity of Care. This was set out in the June Newsletter, and if you would like to read that article you can read that here:

<https://mendipvale.nhs.uk/about/continuity-of-care>

Patients were asked whether they had any questions on the article and set out below are some of the key questions that have been sent in along with the responses. Thank you to everyone who sent us a question.

“If my relationship with my named GP has broken down or I have a strong preference for another GP because of historical experiences, can I ask for a change?”

Yes. If you feel that your relationship with your named GP has broken down, or you have a strong preference to see a different GP because of your previous experiences, you can request a change.

Each request is considered on an individual basis. We will review your individual basis. We will review your named GP is clinically appropriate

and that the receiving GP has capacity to provide safe, high-quality care. Each GP has a patient list, and it is important that these lists remain balanced so that all patients have fair access to appointments and continuity of care.

Where possible, we will try to accommodate your request. If we are unable to allocate your preferred GP, we will discuss alternative options with you and work with you to identify the most appropriate clinician to support your ongoing care.

“Thankfully I don’t attend the surgery regularly. I’d like to know who my named GP is but can’t see this in the NHS app.”

As the NHS App is a national system and links with the different clinical software systems used to store your medical records, we are currently unable to configure this locally. However, we have shared your feedback with the NHS App team for consideration, as we recognise this could be a useful improvement for patients across many practices.

As part of our ongoing work to improve continuity of care and



support patients to see their usual GP where possible, your consultation notes within the NHS App should show a consistent GP name linked to your care.

If you would like to confirm who your named GP is, your options are to telephone the practice, to ask a member of our Reception team, to fill in online an eConsult form, or to contact your surgery on their email address which can be found on our Mendip Vale website.

“How do I request to see the same GP?”

All routine appointments should be prioritised with your Named GP in the first instance. Should you wish to request your Named GP, you can do this when completing an eConsult, submitting a request form, or speaking with a Patient Coordinator.

If your Named GP is unavailable due to annual leave, sickness, or other commitments, a designated backup GP will provide cover for their patients. Each Named GP is paired with a specific colleague who becomes familiar with their patient list, helping to maintain continuity of care when they are unavailable.

In the rare circumstances where both your Named GP and their designated alternative GP are unavailable, we will try to offer you an appointment at your usual surgery. wherever possible, however on occasions it may be necessary to ask you to attend at an alternative surgery to avoid causing delays in

your care.

Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that you will be able to see your named GP for an urgent appointment due to on the day capacity.

“Can we choose to see a doctor other than the designated one?”

We always encourage patients to book appointments with their named GP where possible, as this supports continuity of care and helps us to provide the best possible care. However, if you would prefer to see a different GP for a particular episode of care, you are welcome to request this, and we will do our best to accommodate your preference.

“How can I send a message to my GP?”

For administrative requests for a clinician, we kindly ask that you submit an eConsult form, or complete a paper request form at your surgery, or telephone the practice so that a message can be passed to the appropriate clinician.

If you would like to make a compliment, raise a concern or submit a complaint, please contact your surgery by telephone, in writing or via your surgery's dedicated email address. You can find the relevant contact details here:

<https://mendipvale.nhs.uk/contact-us>

“When I have appointments at a hospital or clinic I can tell them who my doctor is but where should he be addressed? Southmead and

Henbury Family Practice/ Langford Surgery? Mendip Vale or what? It confuses me and them!"

If you need to contact us about a persistent problem, please let us know who you have previously seen and what actions have been taken so far to help with your symptoms. This will allow our team to review your case and ensure you are directed to the most appropriate clinician for ongoing care.



How to request an appointment and How Medical Triage Works



We know that getting the right care, at the right time, is important to our patients. Our appointment system is designed to ensure you are seen by the healthcare professional best placed to help you, whether you have a long-term condition, a new health concern or need urgent medical advice.

Types of Appointment

Urgent appointments are for health problems that need to be assessed on the same day or as soon as possible because waiting could affect your health. These requests are clinically triaged and prioritised

according to medical need.

Routine appointments are for ongoing conditions, medication reviews, non-urgent symptoms, or issues that can safely wait a little longer. Routine appointments are normally offered within two weeks of contacting the practice.

If you experience a **life-threatening emergency, always call 999** or attend your nearest Emergency Department Immediately.

However you contact us, your request goes through a process called clinical triage.

What is Clinical Triage?

Clinical triage is the process of assessing your symptoms to determine how quickly you need care and which clinician is best placed to help you. This is done by one of our experienced GPs every day.

Triage is not about deciding whether you deserve an appointment. It is about making sure you receive the right care, at the right time, from the right healthcare professional.

To help us assess your request safely, you will be asked a series of questions about your symptoms, medical history or administrative needs. Some questions may seem unrelated to your main concern, but every question helps build a complete picture so our clinicians can make the safest and most appropriate decision about your care.

How to request an Urgent Appointment

If you believe your condition cannot safely wait until the next available routine appointment and you need to be assessed on the same day, please telephone the practice.

Please do not submit an eConsult for urgent medical problems.

When you call, one of our Patient Coordinators will ask you a series of questions about your symptoms. This information is essential and enables the Duty Doctor to assess how urgently you need to be seen

and what the most appropriate course of action is.

The Duty Doctor will review your request and decide whether:

- You need to be seen the same day.
- You should receive advice over the telephone.
- Another healthcare professional, such as a community pharmacist, is best placed to help you.
- You need to attend another urgent service, such as an Urgent Treatment Centre or Emergency Department.
- A routine appointment is more appropriate.

The Duty Doctor list is reviewed continuously throughout the day, so you may be contacted at any time. To ensure you receive timely care, you may be offered an appointment at a different Mendip Vale Medical Group surgery if this allows you to be seen sooner.

How to request Routine Appointment

You can request a routine appointment by:

- Completing an eConsult via our website.
- Calling the practice.
- Completing a paper request form at reception.

Once your request has been submitted, it is reviewed by one of our GP Partners as part of our clinical triage process. They will decide the most appropriate next step based on the information you have provided.

This may include:

- Self-care advice or information.
- A telephone or face-to-face appointment with a GP, if possible your Named GP.
- An appointment with another member of our multidisciplinary team, such as a Practice Nurse, Clinical Pharmacist, First Contact Physiotherapist, Mental Health Practitioner, Social Prescriber or Health & Wellbeing Coach.
- Signposting to another NHS or community service if this is the most appropriate place for your care.

Currently, a Care Coordinator will contact you within three working days (we are aiming to reduce this time) to discuss the outcome of your request and arrange the next steps. This may include booking an appointment, providing advice or directing you to another appropriate service.

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Why Might I Not Be Offered a GP Appointment?

General practice is delivered by a team of highly skilled healthcare professionals, each with specialist knowledge and expertise.

By directing patients to the right professional, GPs have more capacity to care for patients with complex or multiple medical conditions.

Still have questions about How to request a routine appointment and medical triage?

Complete this survey and we will answer your questions in the next patient newsletter:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/3ktPpZGZX4>



Do more with the NHS App!

- 🔗 Order repeat prescriptions
- 📅 Book appointments
- 👁️ View your records
- And much more...**

NHS App

The advertisement features a hand holding a smartphone displaying the NHS App interface. The app screen shows the NHS logo, a clock icon, and a login section with the text 'Access your NHS services' and 'Continue with NHS login'. Below the phone is the NHS App logo, which consists of the NHS logo inside a blue square with the word 'App' below it.

Wish you were here...

Sea Mills Community Initiatives invites you to

Holiday at Home

Thursday 13th August | 2.00pm

Sea Mills Methodist Church & Garden

Join us for a relaxing afternoon
of summer fun and holiday memories.

There will be refreshments, nostalgic light entertainment, optional games and quizzes, and plenty of time to chat and reminisce. At 3.45pm, we will enjoy a homemade cream tea, before the event finishes at 4.30pm.

We welcome holiday photos, souvenirs,
and favourite holidaywear.

We look forward to seeing you!

To book your place please telephone Cassie 07920 642437
or send an email cassie@smci.org.uk

It's *free* to attend, if transport is an issue please ask!



MVMG Merge with West Harptree and Cameley Surgery



We are pleased to confirm that West Harptree and Cameley Surgery formally merged with Mendip Vale Medical Group on the 1st of July.

This is an exciting development for our organisation and reflects our commitment to building sustainable, high-quality primary care services for the future.

We understand that some patients may wonder what this means for them and whether the growth of the organisation will affect access to care. We would like to reassure all Mendip Vale patients that this merger will not impact the services you currently receive.

What does this mean for me?

As an existing Mendip Vale patient, there are no changes to how you access care.

- You will continue to contact your practice in the same way.
- Appointment booking arrangements remain unchanged.

- Your usual surgery and care teams remain the same.
- Existing services and clinics continue to operate as normal.
- Your medical records remain secure and confidential.

Will this effect appointment availability?

No, the addition of West Harptree and Cameley Surgery does not reduce the appointments, services, or resources available to existing Mendip Vale patients.

West Harptree and Cameley Surgery serves a different local population in a separate geographical area. Patients will continue to receive care from their local practice teams, just as they do today.

This merger is about strengthening our organisation and increasing resilience across primary care services. It is not about moving patients between

sites or changing how existing patients access care.

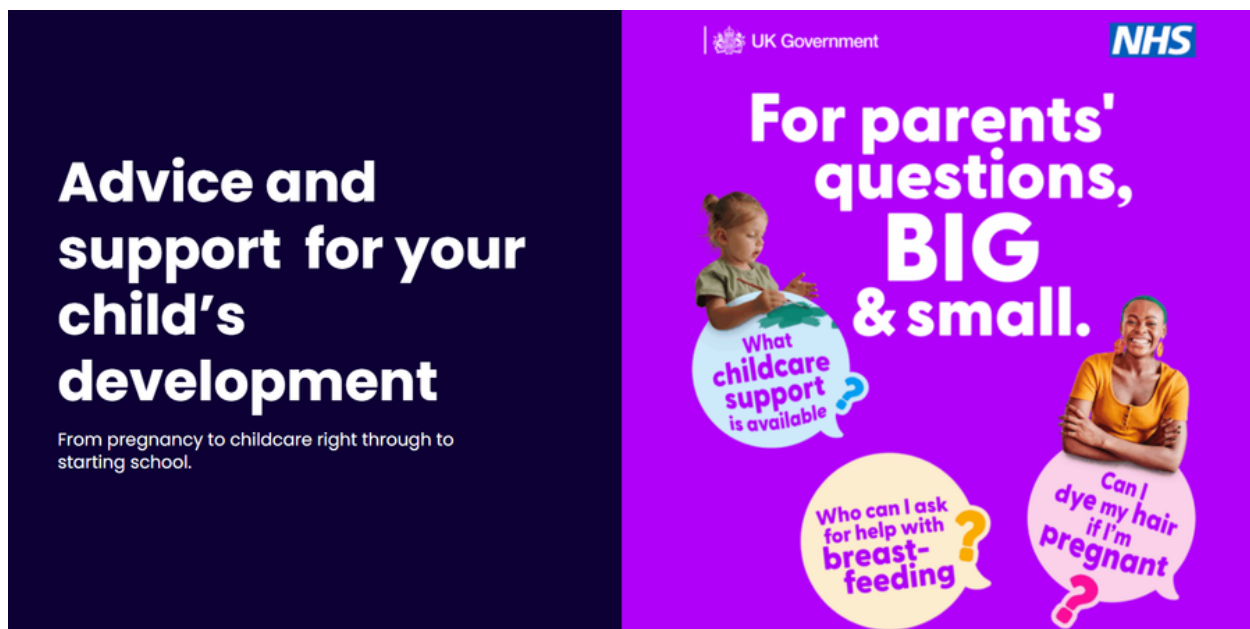
Why has Mendip Vale grown?

Primary care continues to face increasing demand and challenges across the NHS. By bringing organisations together, we can share expertise, strengthen our workforce, and create a more

resilient organisation that is better placed to support patients both now and in the future.

The merger also enables us to benefit from shared knowledge, greater collaboration between clinical teams, and increased opportunities to invest in services and staff.

Best Start in Life – Confident Steps from Bump to Baby



Starting a family is an exciting time, but it can also feel overwhelming when you're not sure where to turn for trusted advice for all your questions. Best Start in Life brings together NHS-approved information to guide you through every stage of pregnancy and preparing for labour, helping you feel informed, confident and supported.

A week-by-week pregnancy guide is packed with practical tips, covering everything from managing morning sickness and choosing safe foods, to preparing for labour and what to pack in your hospital bag. Simple actions such as attending your 10-week booking appointment, taking folic acid and eating well, can make a big difference to your baby's health.

Best Start in Life is here for every step of your pregnancy journey. Visit [BestStartinLife.gov.uk](https://www.BestStartinLife.gov.uk) for NHS-approved support.

Monthly Message from the Fraud Team at Avon and Somerset Police: Amazon Scam Warning

Avon and Somerset Police are witnessing an increase in cases where fraudsters are purporting to be from Amazon.

They will claim that someone is purchasing expensive items on their Amazon account, such as a phone, and that they wanted to check it was actually them. The panicking victim states that it is not them making the purchase, and the fraudster says that this means that their account has been hacked. The fraudster will then take the victim through steps to “rectify” this, which usually involves them gaining remote access to their device.

Once they have remote access, they are able to access the victim’s online banking and make transfers, often claiming that are helping to move their money to a “safe account”, which is actually just an account belonging to the fraudster. They may also access the victim’s Amazon account and place orders to themselves. This will often include the victim receiving a one-time passcode (OTP) to their phone and being requested to read this out to the fraudster so that they can gain access to the Amazon account.

Advice:

- If you receive an unexpected phone call and they ask you to download a remote access app, it will be a scam
- Hang up and check your purchase history on your Amazon account
- If you are still unsure, contact Amazon through the genuine website or app
- Never provide anyone with your one-time passcode (OTP)
- Don’t be pressured – fraudsters will create a sense of urgency to convince victims to do what they are asking
- Hang up the phone, give yourself time to think, and speak to a friend or family member about it
- If you believe your bank account has been accessed/money has been sent to a fraudster, you can get through to your bank’s fraud team quickly by calling 159
- Fraud needs to be reported either online or over the phone to Report Fraud 0300 123 2040



GetUBetter App

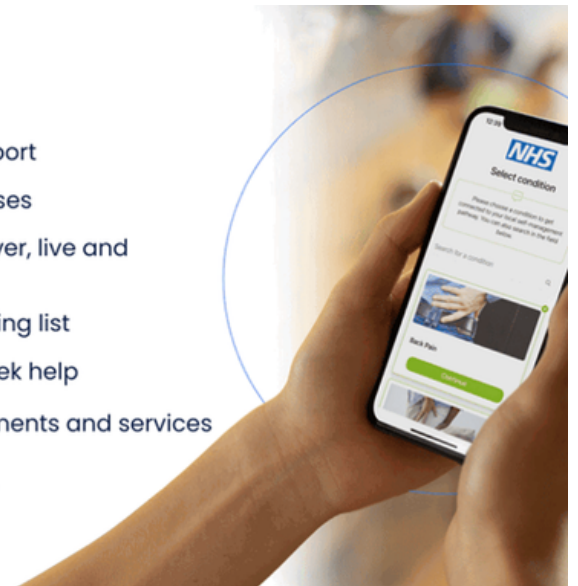
An NHS-approved digital platform designed to help you self-manage muscle, bone, joint (musculoskeletal) injuries, and women's pelvic health. It provides 24/7 access to personalised recovery plans, step-by-step exercises, and guidance on when to seek medical help.

You can download the getUBetter app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or access it via the getUBetter Web App. You will need to register using the specific link provided by your local healthcare provider.

Got to the Mendip Vale website for more information: [GetUBetter App on MVMG website](#)

What you get

- Instant and 24/7 support
- Easy-to-follow exercises
- Supports you to recover, live and work well
- Helps when on a waiting list
- Advice on when to seek help
- Access to local treatments and services



Newsletter Feedback

We're always looking for ways to improve how we communicate with our patients – and that includes our newsletter. Whether you found it helpful, had suggestions for new topics, or felt something was missing, we'd love to know what you think.

Our newsletter is created with you in mind, aiming to keep you informed about health advice, local services, new treatments, and how to get the most from your NHS care. But we can only make it better with your input! Share your thoughts:

[Click here to leave your feedback](#)

