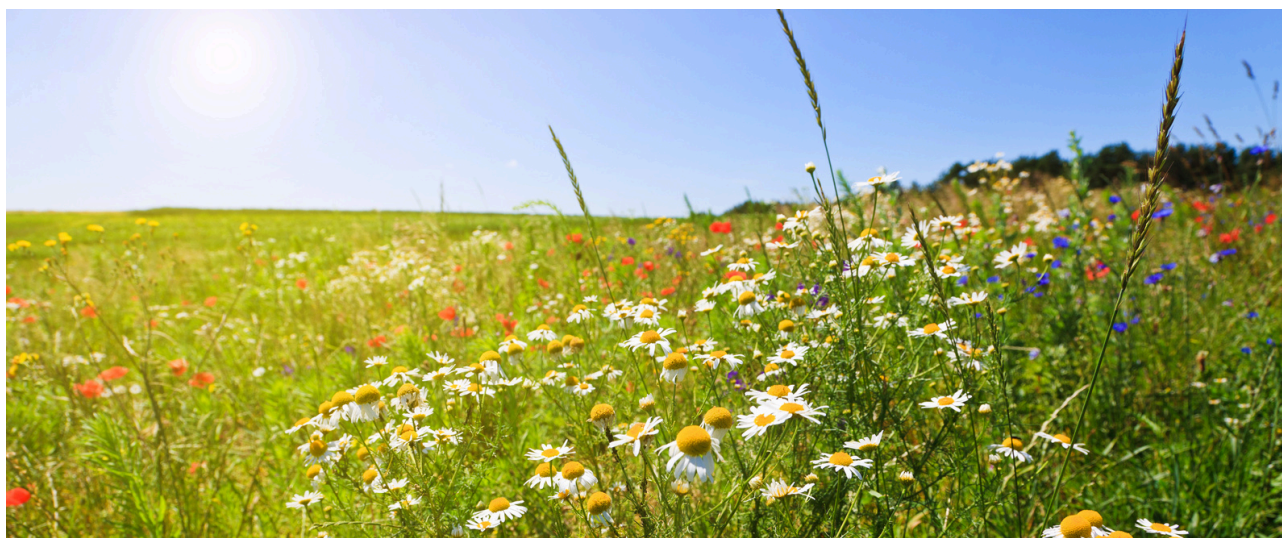


Monthly Patient Newsletter



New Weight Management Treatment: NHS Rollout of Tirzepatide (Mounjaro)

You may have heard that a new weight management injection, tirzepatide (brand name Mounjaro), has been approved for NHS use. This treatment is being rolled out gradually across the country, starting with those who are most at risk from weight-related health issues.

Who is eligible right now?

At this early stage, the NHS has set very specific criteria. To be considered, you must:

- Have a BMI over 40, and
- Have four or more of the following conditions:
 - Cardiovascular disease
 - High blood pressure (hypertension)
 - Obstructive sleep apnoea
 - High cholesterol
 - Type 2 diabetes

These guidelines have been set nationally by NHS England, so unfortunately, we are not able to prescribe this treatment outside of these criteria.

In this newsletter you can expect:

[Advances Practitioners and Physician Associates](#)

[How to stay safe in the sun](#)

[NHS Services - Using the right service at the right time](#)

[Meet the new Patient Surgery Manager at Sea Mills Surgery](#)

And so much more!

What is an Advanced Practitioner and how are they different to Physician Associates?

At MVMG, you may see a range of healthcare professionals as part of your care — including Advanced Practitioners (APs). You may also have heard of Physician Associates (PAs) in the wider NHS. While both roles contribute to patient care, their training and responsibilities are different — and it's important to know that MVMG does not employ Physician Associates.



What is an Advanced Practitioner (AP)?

An Advanced Practitioner is a highly trained healthcare professional — often from a nursing, paramedic, physiotherapy, or pharmacy background — who has undertaken additional education, often at master's level, to diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions.

At MVMG, our Advanced Practitioners:

- Come from established clinical backgrounds (e.g. advanced nurses or paramedics)
- Are qualified to work independently
- Can prescribe medications
- Can request and interpret diagnostic tests
- Are skilled in managing long-term conditions, urgent issues, and minor illnesses

What is a Physician Associate (PA)?

A Physician Associate is a newer role in the NHS. PAs are trained in the medical model to support doctors with diagnosing and managing patients. However, they must work under the supervision of a GP or consultant and currently cannot prescribe medication or request certain investigations like X-rays.

MVMG does not currently employ Physician Associates.

With our current clinical structure, we do not have any Physician Associates in our sites providing care for patients.

Why This Matters to You

We prioritise patient safety, accessibility, and high-quality care. Our team of Advanced Practitioners, GPs, nurses, and other clinicians work collaboratively to meet your needs — and you can be confident that whoever you see is fully qualified to help.



Staying Safe in the Sun: Your Guide to Summer Protection

As we enter into Summer, it's a great time to enjoy the outdoors — whether you're on holiday, in the garden, or just out for a walk. But while sunshine boosts mood and helps with vitamin D, too much can be harmful to your skin and overall health.

Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy.

There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects.

Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.

Here's how to stay safe in the sun and enjoy summer responsibly:

Avoid the Midday Sun

Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.

Make sure you:

- spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- never burn
- cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses
- take extra care with children
- use at least factor 30 sunscreens

Article continues on next page >

What factor sunscreen (SPF) should I use?

Do not rely on sunscreen alone to protect yourself from the sun. Wear suitable clothing and spend time in the shade when the sun's at its hottest.

When buying sunscreen, the label should have:

- a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 to protect against UVB
- at least 4-star UVA protection

UVA protection can also be indicated by the letters "UVA" in a circle, which indicates that it meets the EU standard.

Make sure the sunscreen is not past its expiry date.

Do not spend any longer in the sun than you would without sunscreen.

How to apply sunscreen

Most people do not apply enough sunscreen.

As a guide, adults should aim to apply around 6 to 8 teaspoons of sunscreen if you're covering your entire body. If sunscreen is applied too thinly, the amount of protection it gives is reduced.

If you're worried you might not be applying enough SPF30, you could use a sunscreen with a higher SPF.

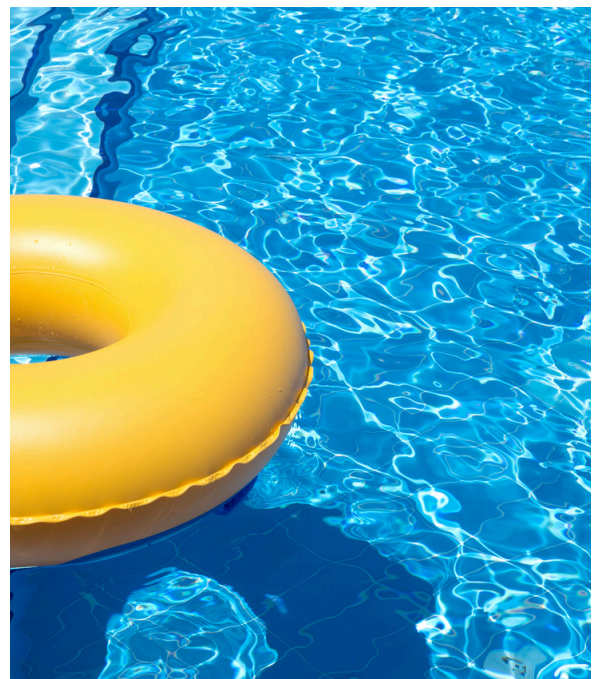
If you plan to be out in the sun long enough to risk burning, sunscreen needs to be applied twice:

- 30 minutes before going out
- just before going out

Sunscreen should be applied to all exposed skin, including the face, neck and ears, and head if you have thinning or no hair, but a wide-brimmed hat is better.

Sunscreen needs to be reapplied liberally and frequently, and according to the manufacturer's instructions.

It's also recommended to reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, as the sun can dry it off your skin.



Swimming and sunscreen

Water washes sunscreen off, and the cooling effect of the water can make you think you're not getting burned. Water also reflects ultraviolet (UV) rays, increasing your exposure.

Use water-resistant sunscreen if it's likely you'll sweat or have contact with water.

Sunscreen should be reapplied straight after you have been in water, even if it's "water resistant", and after towel drying, sweating or when it may have rubbed off.

Children and sun protection

Take extra care to protect babies and children. Their skin is much more sensitive than adult skin, and damage caused by repeated exposure to sunlight could lead to skin cancer developing in later life.

Children aged under 6 months should be kept out of direct strong sunlight.

From March to October in the UK, children should:

- cover up with suitable clothing
- spend time in the shade, particularly from 11am to 3pm
- wear at least SPF30 sunscreen

Apply sunscreen to areas not protected by clothing, such as the face, ears, feet and backs of hands.

To ensure they get enough vitamin D, all [children under 5 are advised to take vitamin D supplements](#).



Clothing and sunglasses

Wear clothes and sunglasses that provide sun protection, such as:

- a wide-brimmed hat that shades the face, neck and ears
- a long-sleeved top
- trousers or long skirts in close-weave fabrics that do not allow sunlight through
- sunglasses with wraparound lenses or wide arms with the CE Mark and British Standard Mark 12312-1:2013 E

Protect your eyes in the sun

A day at the beach without proper eye protection can cause a temporary but painful burn to the surface of the eye, similar to sunburn.

Reflected sunlight from snow, sand, concrete and water, and artificial light from sunbeds, is particularly dangerous.

Avoid looking directly at the sun, as this can cause permanent eye damage.

For more information on sun safety for to the NHS website: [Sunscreen and sun safety - NHS](#)



NHS Services – Using the right service at the right time

Navigating the NHS can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially when you're unwell or supporting someone who is. But knowing which service to use – and when – can help you get the care you need more quickly and make sure NHS resources are used efficiently. Here's a quick guide to help you choose the right NHS service at the right time:

1 Self- Care at Home

Many minor health problems can be safely managed at home with rest, fluids, and over-the-counter remedies. These include:

- Coughs, colds, sore throats
- Minor aches and pains
- Upset stomachs
- Mild rashes
- Bruises or small cuts

Make sure your medicine cabinet is stocked with:

- Paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Antihistamines
- Plasters and antiseptic cream
- Rehydration salts
- Thermometer

You can find helpful guidance on managing common symptoms at www.nhs.uk.



2 Pharmacies

Local Expert Advice - Pharmacists are highly trained and can help with:

- Coughs, colds, sore throats
- Skin rashes or minor infections
- Over-the-counter medicines and advice
- Many pharmacies now offer services like blood pressure checks

More information on how your local pharmacy can help - [How pharmacies can help - NHS](#)

3 NHS 111

Non - Emergency Help - If you need medical help fast but it's not life-threatening, call 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk.

They can:

- Offer urgent advice
 - Connect you to out-of-hours doctors
 - Book A&E or urgent treatment appointments if needed
-

4 Mental Health Support

For immediate mental health help, you can:

- Call your local crisis team
- Use NHS 111 and press 2 for mental health support
- Access talking therapies - [NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression - NHS](#)

5 GP Services

Your GP should be your first port of call for:

- Persistent health concerns
- Ongoing symptoms or pain
- Long-term condition management
- Prescriptions and medication reviews
- Referrals to specialists

To find your local NHS Service - [Find services near you - NHS](#)

6 Urgent Treatment/ Minor Injury Units

For minor injuries and urgent issues that don't need A&E, such as:

- Sprains, cuts, and minor burns
- Infections and minor illnesses
- X-rays (at some centres)

Check availability at your local centre before attending.

7 Emergency – Call 999 or go to A&E

Use only for life-threatening emergencies, such as:

- Chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Severe bleeding or head injuries
- Signs of a stroke
- Serious trauma or burns

Unconsciousness



Self Care

Care for yourself at home

Minor cuts & grazes
Minor bruises
Minor sprains
Coughs and colds



Pharmacy

Local expert advice

Minor illnesses
Headaches
Stomach upsets
Bites & stings



NHS 111

Non-emergency help

Feeling unwell?
Unsure?
Anxious?
Need help?



GP Advice

Out of hours:
Call 111

Persistent symptoms
Chronic pain
Long term conditions
New prescriptions



UTCs

Urgent Treatment Centres

Breaks & sprains
X-rays
Cuts & grazes
Fever & rashes



A&E or 999

For emergencies only

Choking
Chest pain
Blacking out
Serious blood loss

Only order what you need

The NHS spends an estimated £300m on unused medicines each year. We need your help to reduce this.

Every pound spent on wasted medicines is a pound less than can be spent on delivering NHS services and everyone has a part to play in reducing medicines waste.

You can help by:

- Planning ahead – make a note in your calendar before your prescription due date to go through your medicines and see what you need.
- Keep track of what medication you're taking – don't continue to order medicines you are no longer taking or where you have lots at home.
- Only order the medication you need – when putting in your next medicine order, look at what you currently have available and only order what you need.

Find out more at - www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/medicines-waste



Repeat prescriptions?



**Thank you for only
ordering what you need**

If you have enough medicine at home, there's no need to order now - **you can request more in future.**



Plan ahead



Keep track



Check your bag

Speak to your pharmacist if you have any questions or problems with your medicines.

#OnlyOrderWhatYouNeed

For more information visit bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk



Monthly Message from the Fraud Prevention Team

What is Courier Fraud?

Courier fraud involves the victim receiving a call from a fraudster pretending to be from their bank or the police. More commonly, they purport to be a high-ranking police officer, usually from London. They will claim that they need your help with an investigation. This is a long process where a range of lies are told in order to convince the victim that this is a legitimate investigation and often lasts a whole day or takes place over a couple of days. They will often claim that they have someone in custody claiming to be your relative. When you say that you don't have a relative of that name, they will say that they are using a false identity and have a cloned bank card of yours. They then say that there is fraud occurring within the victim's bank.

The victim will eventually be asked to attend their bank and withdraw a sum of money, or instead, purchase high value goods such as jewellery or gold. To make the fraud more plausible, they will often ask the victim to read out the serial numbers on the back of the notes. The fraudster will proceed to tell them that a large percentage of the notes are counterfeit and therefore must be collected by a "courier" as evidence. They will usually provide the victim with a pre-agreed password for pick up and may even



give them a receipt so that the money can be reimbursed. The fraudster may instead ask that they hand over their bank card(s) and PIN.

REMEMBER:

- The bank or police will NEVER ask you to withdraw cash, purchase high value goods or hand over your bank cards and PIN to assist with an investigation.
- HANG UP! – the genuine police or bank would never be annoyed by you being cautious of a call, only a fraudster.
- Fraudsters can disguise their numbers to appear to be calling from anywhere they want, including your bank. They can also hold the line open, so ensure you either do your checks on a different phone or wait at least 10 minutes for the line to clear. If you can, attend your bank or police station in person.
- Take 5 and Tell 2 – Take 5 minutes away from the contact and think carefully about what is being asked of you. Then, tell 2 people about the contact you have had to get their opinion.

Meet Sea Mills Surgery New Patient Services Manager

We're delighted to introduce Kathlene (Kath) Nash, our new Patient Services Manager at Sea Mills Surgery!

Kath brings a wealth of experience and a passion for helping others. Before joining the NHS, Kath worked in retail for over 28 years, where she developed a strong foundation in customer care and people management.

Her first role in the Healthcare was working as a Dispenser within a pharmacy for 5 years. In March 2023, she made the rewarding move to Mendip Vale Medical Group, starting her journey at Monk's Park Surgery as a Patient Coordinator, and later progressing to Care Coordinator.

Kath recently joined the Sea Mills team to take the next step in her career. She also plays an important role in assisting patients directly — helping with feedback, answering queries, and making sure everyone receives the support they need to access our services confidently and comfortably. Known for her positive attitude and approachable nature, Kath aims to be someone both staff and patients feel at ease turning to for help and guidance.

When she's not at the surgery, Kath enjoys going to the gym, swimming, and taking long walks with her dog, Lola. And for a bit of fun and relaxation, she turns to her favourite hobby — building Lego!

We're thrilled to have Kath at Sea Mills Surgery and know she'll be a fantastic asset to both our team and our patient community.

If you see Kath around the surgery, please don't hesitate to say hello — she'd love to meet you!





Coniston Medical Practice Update – Improving Our Space for a Growing Community

We're excited to share some important updates about Coniston Medical Practice as we prepare for a more modern and accessible future for our patients.

Why are we making changes?

Coniston Surgery is being extended and improved to ensure we can continue to provide high-quality care for our growing community. With the development of new housing in the local area, we are expecting an increase in the number of patients registering with us. In response, we're investing in our premises to help meet this rising demand.

What's changing?

- Extension of the Surgery

We are extending the existing building to increase capacity. This will provide more clinical space, improve the flow of patients through the surgery, and allow us to accommodate additional staff as needed. The extension will help us continue offering a wide range of services in a safe and comfortable environment.

- Pharmacy Conversion

The on-site Lloyds Pharmacy has now moved to a new location, 5-7 The Parade, Patchway and the former pharmacy space has been converted into new 3 new consultation rooms.

What does this mean for you?

Services will continue as normal during the building works, though there may be some disruption around the site. We'll keep you informed and do everything we can to minimise the impact.

If you need to collect prescriptions, the new pharmacy location remains nearby, and your care should not be affected.

We'll continue to keep patients informed about the progress of the extension through our newsletter, website, and at the surgery. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to speak to a member of our team.



Discover simple steps to help look after your mental wellbeing



Search Every Mind Matters



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 by clicking on the link below.

[Click here to share your feedback](#)