



WELCOME TO OUR

# Newsletter

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2026

## Meet a staff member...

### Health Care Assistant (HCA)



Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) play a vital role in supporting our Nurses and ensuring patients receive high-quality care. As part of our primary healthcare team, HCAs carry out a wide range of services including taking blood samples, performing NHS health checks and annual reviews, conducting ECG heart tests, administering B12 injections and other vaccinations, welcoming new patients, restocking consultation rooms, and processing lab samples. Their work helps keep our clinics running smoothly and ensures patients feel supported at every stage of their healthcare journey.

## Measles cases are on the rise

Measles cases are continuing to rise across the world, putting children who are not fully vaccinated at serious risk of illness and complications.

- Measles can affect many parts of the body, most commonly the lungs and digestive system. Common complications include severe diarrhoea and dehydration, ear infections (otitis media) and pneumonia, which is the leading cause of measles-related deaths in young children.
- Less common but very serious complications can also occur, such as swelling of the brain (encephalitis), seizures, vision loss or blindness.

Our nursing team can offer catch-up MMR vaccinations for any children who have not received both recommended doses in the past. If your child has missed one or both MMR vaccinations, please contact reception to book an appointment. Gelatine-free vaccine alternatives are available for families who prefer this option. Vaccination is the best way to protect your child and help prevent the spread of measles.

Measles can make your child seriously unwell

Make sure they are up to date with their MMR vaccines.

**Be Wise. Immunise**  
against measles, mumps and rubella.

HERE TO HELP

# Are your medicines working for you?

**It could be time to book a review.**

Over time our bodies change, so to make sure they still work for you, your medicines may need to change too.



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## **Are your medicines stacking up? Only order what you need.**

Every year, about £20 million worth of medicine goes to waste in the North East and North Cumbria. This includes things like inhalers, pain medicine, and creams.

The NHS needs your help! Following these easy steps when ordering your medicines:

1. Only order what you need - before getting more, check what medicine you already have.
2. Return extras - when picking up your medicine at the pharmacy, only take what you need. If you return something before leaving, it can be used again.
3. Stick to your routine - order your medicine when you're running low, but not too soon.

By doing this, you will:

- Get the right medicines and care
- Help reduce waste
- Save NHS resources

It's also safer! Keeping too much medicine can cause confusion, especially if your prescription changes.

If you have questions, your doctor or pharmacist can help. Reach out to them for advice

## BE WISE – IMMUNISE!

Flu season is already here, with higher levels of Influenza A being seen earlier than usual this year. As more people become unwell with flu, some may need hospital care, which puts extra pressure on the NHS.

Some people are more likely to become seriously ill from flu. These include:

- Young children (especially those under 5, and particularly under 2)
- Adults aged 65 and over
- Pregnant women
- People with long-term health conditions such as asthma, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, or weakened immune systems
- Health and care workers
- People living in care homes or long-term care settings

Flu can cause more than just a bad cold. While many people recover at home, flu can sometimes lead to complications such as chest infections—including pneumonia or bronchitis, ear or sinus infections, worsening of existing conditions like asthma or heart disease, and rare but serious problems affecting the heart, brain, or other organs.

These complications are more common in older adults and those with underlying health conditions, and in some cases can lead to hospital admission.

Flu vaccinations are available now at local pharmacies, including vaccines for 2- and 3-year-olds. If you haven't had your flu vaccine yet, it's not too late. Flu cases usually peak in January, so getting vaccinated now can still provide important protection.

Take action today by getting your flu vaccine, you are helping to protect yourself, your family and those around you, and the NHS during a busy winter period.

Please book your flu vaccination today.



## Supporting Health and Wellbeing in Our Workplace

The BHAWA (Better Health at Work Award) was created to support healthier workplaces by promoting wellbeing and sharing practical health information. Through BHAWA, organisations plan and deliver campaigns on topics such as healthy eating, mental health and sleep awareness, physical activity, women's health, and much more.

We are proud to be part of the BHAWA programme and are currently working towards achieving the Gold Standard, having already successfully attained Bronze and Silver.

By prioritising the health and wellbeing of our staff, we help create a positive and supportive working environment. This commitment not only benefits our team but also contributes to a better experience and higher standard of care for our patients.





## Join Our Patient Participation Group

A PPG is a group of patients who work with the surgery to make things better for everyone – patients, doctors, and staff.

As a PPG member, you can:

- 🗣️ Speak up for other patients and carers
- 💡 Share your ideas and feedback
- 👂 Help us understand patient experiences
- 📖 Learn how the surgery and the NHS work
- ⭐ Play a part in improving our services

**If you are interested in joining our PPG group, ask for a sign up sheet at the reception desk**

### NHS Outpatient appointments on the NHS App



Did you know you can manage some of your Newcastle Hospitals appointments on the NHS app?

Patients can now easily view, accept, request to change or cancel outpatient appointments at Newcastle Hospitals in the NHS App.

Over 1 million appointments are now live in the app for patients to manage, either through their mobile phone, tablet or computer. Outpatient clinic letters are also accessible in the app.

If you have any issues accessing your appointments, or have any questions, you can call the Appointment Booking Centre on 0191 282 4444. For more information, visit the NHS Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals website.

### This months mythbuster!

**Skipping meals helps you lose weight.**

**✘ FALSE!**

Skipping meals can leave your body short of essential nutrients and make you feel tired or low on energy. When you miss meals, you may become very hungry later in the day, making it harder to resist foods that are high in fat and sugar. This can lead to eating more calories than your body needs overall.

Eating regular, healthy, and balanced meals throughout the day helps keep your energy levels steady and supports better food choices.