

#choosewell

Choosing which service is right for you at a given time may not always be easy. Often you have more than one option. Use the list below to guide you if you're not sure where to start. You can also visit the NHS Choices website for advice and support.



Call 111 if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. You can also call NHS 111 if you're not sure which NHS service you need.



Call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.



Visit a walk-in centre, minor injuries unit or urgent care centre if you have a minor illness or injury.



Ask your local pharmacist for advice.

Pharmacies can give you advice for many common minor illnesses, such as diarrhoea, minor infections, headache or sore throats.



Make an appointment with your GP if you are feeling unwell and it is not an emergency.



WESTBURY GROUP PRACTICE

TIMES ARE CHANGING

“When I moved to Westbury forty five years ago, if I was ill, I was always seen by a doctor at the surgery or was visited at home. Now, in 2017, there are many highly trained clinicians who support the doctors in their work. This leaflet has been put together to explain the roles of these people and why you may be offered an appointment with them rather than a GP.”

Shelagh Carpenter

WGP Patient Participation Group Chair

Nationally, it is difficult to recruit GPs and Nurses. Westbury Group Practice is no exception in finding it challenging to recruit doctors. GPs are in short supply and by accepting an appointment with one of the clinicians listed below, you are making a GP appointment available for a patient with more complex needs.

When you want to make an appointment, the receptionist will ask questions to ensure you are going to see the most appropriate clinician. This will either be with a GP or a Nurse specialising in your condition, illness or ailment.

- **Chronic Disease Nurses** see patients with long term conditions. Some examples of Chronic diseases are Heart Disease, Diabetes, Stroke, and Chronic respiratory problems. Some patients may need an appointment with a Doctor. The Nurse will assess the situation and in some cases will organise blood tests and other investigations.
- **Contraception and Sexual Health Nurses** see men and women for a variety of different topics including Contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), Swabs, Cervical Cytology (Smear) and Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT).

- **Health Care Assistants** are trained in a wide variety of skills such as taking bloods, injections, dressings, health checks and ECGs. They work under the guidance of a qualified healthcare professional and will refer you to a GP if necessary.
- **Minor Illness Nurses** are Registered Nurses who see patients with minor ailments such as infections of the chest, Urinary Tract (UTIs), ears, nose and throat.
- **Nurse Practitioners** are Registered Nurses with advanced training in diagnosing, prescribing and treating illnesses. They can also conduct physical examinations and refer patients to other services such as X-Ray and Physiotherapy.
- **Wound Care Nurses** are specifically trained in the reviewing and dressing of wounds. 'Tissue Viability' is a growing speciality that primarily considers all aspects of skin and soft tissue wounds such as pressure ulcers, surgical wounds and leg ulceration.
- **Practice Paramedics** not only see patients at the surgery but also attend home visits. They can provide treatment and advice for many ailments and illnesses. Furthermore they can conduct physical examinations and arrange appropriate medication.