

Patient Newsletter

Winter 2024/25

WELCOME TO THE TEAM, DR VYNIKA THIRUMALA



We're excited to introduce our new GP!

Born and raised in India, Dr Thirumala graduated from Dr NTR University of Health Sciences in 2013. Following graduation, Dr Thirumala pursued a career in emergency medicine in India and became a member of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine in 2017.

In 2018, Dr Thirumala relocated to the UK and worked as a Senior Clinical Fellow in the Accident & Emergency department at Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH). With a passion for providing comprehensive, patient-centered care, Dr Thirumala transitioned into general practice, completing GP training in Norfolk and qualifying as a General Practitioner in 2024.

Dr Thirumala joined the team at Watton Medical Practice in January 2025 and is committed to providing compassionate, high-quality care to patients of all ages. Outside of work, Dr Thirumala enjoys a happy family life with her spouse and young child.

Please join us in giving Dr Thirumala a warm welcome!

STAFF STARTERS AT WATTON MEDICAL PRACTICE

Since our last newsletter, we are excited to introduce some new staff members who have joined our team!

- Rhiannon Patrick: Care Co-Ordinator
- Dr Vynkia Thirumala: GP
- Laura Fitzpatrick: Care Navigator

We are currently completing recruitment checks for the following roles so will hopefully be able to announce their start dates soon!

- GP
- Cleaner
- Administrator

We hope that by expanding our team we will provide a better service and care to our patients. With more staff, we can help more people. We're excited to grow and improve our team to help our community even more!

PATIENTS NOT ATTENDING APPOINTMENTS

If you cannot attend your appointment, please contact the surgery to let us know. This can be done through replying to your reminder text message, contacting us via the website, telephone or practice reception.

From 01 September to 31 December 2024, 842 appointments were missed.

It's important to tell us if you can't make your appointment because it lets us offer the time to someone else who might need it. It helps us to stay organised and make sure everyone gets the care they need. If you let us know early enough, we can offer your appointment to another patient and find another time for you to come in if you need to!

2024 APPOINTMENT DATA

As part of our constant review and reflection, we have looked into data for the year of 2024 and wanted to share this with you.

- 44,535 telephone calls answered by our reception team.
- 87,952 clinical appointments delivered to our patients.
- 46,483 GP and AHP appointments delivered to our patients.
- 49,480 face to face appointments delivered to our patients.

The above data shows how successful we have been in providing care and support to our patients throughout 2024. Answering over 44,000 calls and delivering nearly 88,000 appointments shows our team's hard work and dedication. We have offered a mix of appointments, with face to face and telephone, as well as different clinicians (GPs, Paramedics, Nurses etc.). This ensures that we have been able to meet the needs of our patients and provide them with the care that you deserve. This success reflects our commitment to delivering excellent service and improving health outcomes for everyone!

OUTREACH CLINICS

We have been completing outreach clinics as way of supporting patients who may struggle to attend the surgery in the usual way. These clinics are predominately held at Watton Sports Centre. We are holding clinics on 7th and 14th March 09:00-12:00. If you would like assistance or guidance from the practice and struggle to get to the surgery, please come and speak to us during these clinics!

NHS HEALTH CHECKS

You are eligible for an NHS health check if you are between 40 and 74 years old and don't have existing health conditions like heart disease, diabetes or high blood pressure. The check is a way to help spot early signs of health problems so you can get help to prevent them before they come serious. You'll usually be invited every 5 years if you're in this group. Invitations are sent to patients but if you would like to see if you are eligible, please contact Reception.

From September to December 2024, we completed 326 NHS Health Checks. This was the highest amount delivered by any individual GP practice in Norfolk!

RESPIRATORY IMMUNISATIONS

We have been inviting eligible patients in for their respiratory immunisations (pneumonia, flu, RSV). If you would like an appointment for this, please contact reception to check your eligibility.

It is important to have your immunisations because they help protect you from serious illness. They make your body stronger against these diseases so you're less likely to get really sick. They also help keep others around you safe, especially those who might be more at risk, like older people or young children. Getting vaccinated is one of the best ways to stay healthy!

If you are receiving text messages inviting you in for immunisations that you do not wish to have, please let us know as we can stop these messages being sent to you.

NATIONAL DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAMME (NDPP)

NDPP is a programme to help patients who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. It provides support and advice on healthy eating, physical activity and weight management to help prevent or delay the onset of diabetes.

If you are pre-diabetic or have a history of gestational diabetes you will be invited for an annual blood test and review where this programme will be discussed.