Shipston Medical Centre
Patient Participation Group (PPG)
Website: https://shipstonmc.warwickshire.nhs.uk/
X: https://x.com/ShipstonGP
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ShipstonMC
Instagram: shipstonmedicalcentrenhs
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AUTUMN EDITION



STAFF UPDATE

Saying goodbye.. and welcoming new members of our team.

There have been a number of changes to our team recently and we would like to take the opportunity both to say goodbye and thank those who have left us, and to welcome new colleagues to the practice.

Dr Caroline Ward has left the practice to take up a new position working with reablement services in Gloucestershire. We would like to thank Caroline for all her hard work, care and dedication to our patients and the practice over the years, and wish her every success in her new role.

We have also said goodbye to **Kam Sangha, our Pharmacy Technician**, who has left to help run her family business. We would like to thank Kam for everything she has contributed during her time with us and wish her and her family every success with their business and for the future.

Karen Harwood, our Reception Lead, has also left the practice to take up a new position. Karen has been a valued member of our reception team, and we would like to thank her for all her hard work and commitment to the practice and our patients. We wish her all the very best in her new role.

We have also said goodbye to **Alison Humphries, one of our medication delivery drivers**. Alison has played an important role in helping us ensure that our dispensing patients receive their medication, and we would like to thank her for all her efforts and commitment during her time with us. We wish Alison all the very best for the future.

Welcome to Lucy and Ian

We are very pleased to welcome **Lucy Stewart**, who has recently joined the practice as a **Care Coordinator**. Lucy will be working as part of our practice team to help coordinate care and support for our patients, and we are delighted to have her on board.

We are also pleased to welcome **Ian Ferguson**, who has joined us as a **medication delivery driver**, helping us to continue providing our medication delivery service to our dispensing patients.

We are very grateful to Caroline, Kam, Karen and Alison for everything they have contributed during their time with us and send them our very best wishes for the future. At the same time, we hope you will join us in giving **Lucy and Ian a very warm welcome to the practice**.



Our staff are here to help, and we would really appreciate your help in treating them with **kindness, courtesy and respect**.

The last few months have been challenging for everyone while the refurbishment of the Medical Centre has been taking place. Our teams have continued to provide services while working around building works, temporary rooms, changes to entrances and waiting areas, and frequent changes to the way we use the building.

We know that some of these arrangements have also been inconvenient and frustrating for our patients, and we are very grateful for your patience while the work has been underway.

Behind the scenes, our staff are working incredibly hard to keep services running and to help patients as quickly and effectively as they can. They may not always be able to provide the answer, appointment or outcome that you were hoping for, but they will always do their best to help.

A little patience, courtesy and understanding makes a real difference, particularly during what has been a demanding period for everyone. Thank you to the overwhelming majority of our patients who already treat our colleagues with kindness and respect. It really is appreciated.

REFURBISHMENT UPDATE – WE'RE NEARLY THERE!

We are pleased to say that the majority of the planned work is now complete. The final significant internal building work is to the flat roof, which we expect to continue until mid to late September.

Once this has been completed, we will be able to move our reception team back to the front of the building in a modern reception area:



The temporary entrance on the left-hand side of the Medical Centre will then be removed and this area reinstated.

We are also awaiting a confirmed date for an important upgrade to the **electricity supply** to the Medical Centre. Our existing supply will be upgraded to a three-phase electricity supply, which is more appropriate for the needs of a modern healthcare building.

We currently expect this work to take place towards the end of September or possibly into October. There may be a short period during these works when the electricity available within the Medical Centre is restricted. This could mean that we need to rearrange some services at relatively short notice or provide them from a different site. We will do everything we can to minimise disruption and will keep affected patients informed.

What has the refurbishment achieved?

Although it has been a challenging few months, the work has delivered some important improvements to the Medical Centre.

We now have modern accessible toilet facilities, as well as a new purpose-built dirty utility/sluice area. Our waiting area, reception, initial consultation and duty examination room have also been refurbished to provide modern

healthcare facilities which better meet current infection prevention and control standards.

Upstairs, the offices in the front half of the building have also been refurbished, providing a much-improved working environment for our practice team.

Unfortunately, the rear half of the building remains largely as it was. This refurbishment represents the first phase of a much larger project, and the funding currently available has only enabled us to undertake the work completed during this phase. We hope that further funding opportunities will allow us to continue improving the remainder of the building in the future.

Once this phase of the refurbishment is fully complete, patients should be aware that **our services will continue to be provided at both the Medical Centre and the Ellen Badger Hospital**. The use of both sites is not simply a temporary arrangement while the building work is taking place.

It is therefore important to check which site your appointment is at before travelling.

You can find the location of your appointment in the NHS App and in the text message we send to remind you about your appointment.

Please take a moment to check the location before setting off, as different appointments and services may be provided at different sites.

Please don't assume that your appointment will be at the Medical Centre, even if this is where you have usually attended in the past.

Taking a moment to check your appointment location before you travel will help make sure you arrive at the right place and on time.

Once the electricity upgrade and the remaining reinstatement works are complete, we hope that will mark the end of this phase of the refurbishment.

Thank you again for bearing with us throughout the building work and for your patience when services, entrances and facilities have needed to change. We are delighted to be reaching the final stages and to be able to provide our patients and staff with significantly improved facilities.

ABTRACE - A NEW WAY TO HELP YOU KEEP ON TOP OF YOUR ROUTINE HEALTHCARE

We have started rolling out a new system called **AbTrace**, which will help us manage patient recalls and make it easier for you to see when aspects of your routine healthcare are due.

We are initially using AbTrace to recall patients for **blood tests and flu vaccinations**, with plans to use it for other areas of care in the future.

What does this mean for patients?
One of the benefits of AbTrace is its **patient portal**, which gives you a clearer view of the routine care that may be relevant to you.

For example, the portal may show when you are due for a particular blood test, how frequently this needs to be carried out, or when you are eligible for something such as a flu vaccination. It will help you see what is:

- **up to date**
- **coming due**
- **overdue**

This means that, rather than simply receiving an invitation from us, you will have more information about what is being recommended and can take a more active role in keeping track of your routine healthcare.

If you receive an invitation from us through AbTrace for a blood test or flu vaccination, we would encourage you to **take a look at the patient portal and familiarise yourself with it**. We are still in the early stages of introducing AbTrace and will gradually expand how we use it.

We hope it will make our recall system simpler and more helpful for patients, while giving you a convenient way to see what routine care is coming up.

VACCINATION UPDATE

Flu vaccinations



We are currently inviting eligible patients for their annual flu vaccination. As with many practices across the UK, we have experienced unexpected supply issues this year. Although we placed our flu vaccine order in January, a significant number of vaccine orders were cancelled by manufacturers in August, affecting practices nationwide. This has meant sourcing additional stock from alternative suppliers during a period of exceptionally high demand.

As a result, our flu vaccine supply is currently limited. If you are eligible for a flu vaccination, we strongly encourage you to book your appointment as soon as possible. Appointments will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and early booking will help avoid disappointment.

Patients who are also eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination will be offered this at the same appointment wherever possible, making it more convenient to receive both vaccines and helping to ensure you are well protected this winter.

Thank you for your understanding and support. We look forward to helping keep our community healthy throughout the flu season.

Meningitis B Catch-Up Vaccination Programme



The NHS Meningitis B (MenB) catch-up vaccination programme is currently being delivered through participating community pharmacies rather than GP practices.

Eligibility criteria are as follows:

- You were born between 1 September 2007 and 31 August 2008, or

- Born on or after 21 July 2001 and, are starting university for the first time in Autumn, or

- Born on or after 21 July 2001 and are starting some residential further education for the first time in Autumn 2026 as a residential student.

If you are eligible, please contact a local pharmacy offering the service to arrange your vaccination. This helps improve access and ensures patients can receive their vaccination conveniently and promptly.

RSV Vaccination Programme



The RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccination programme has now been expanded to protect more older adults at risk of serious illness.

Patients who turn 75 years old on or after 1 September 2024 are eligible for a one-off RSV vaccination, as well as pregnant women from 28 weeks of pregnancy to help protect their newborn babies.

If you are eligible and have not yet received your vaccine, please contact the practice to arrange an appointment.

ARE YOU LOOKING AFTER A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER?

The Practice, PPG and local partners continue to work together to improve the support provided to our patients who have caring responsibilities.

This includes young people (under the age of 18) who help to look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem.

Please do let the reception team know if this is the case so that we can respond appropriately when needed.

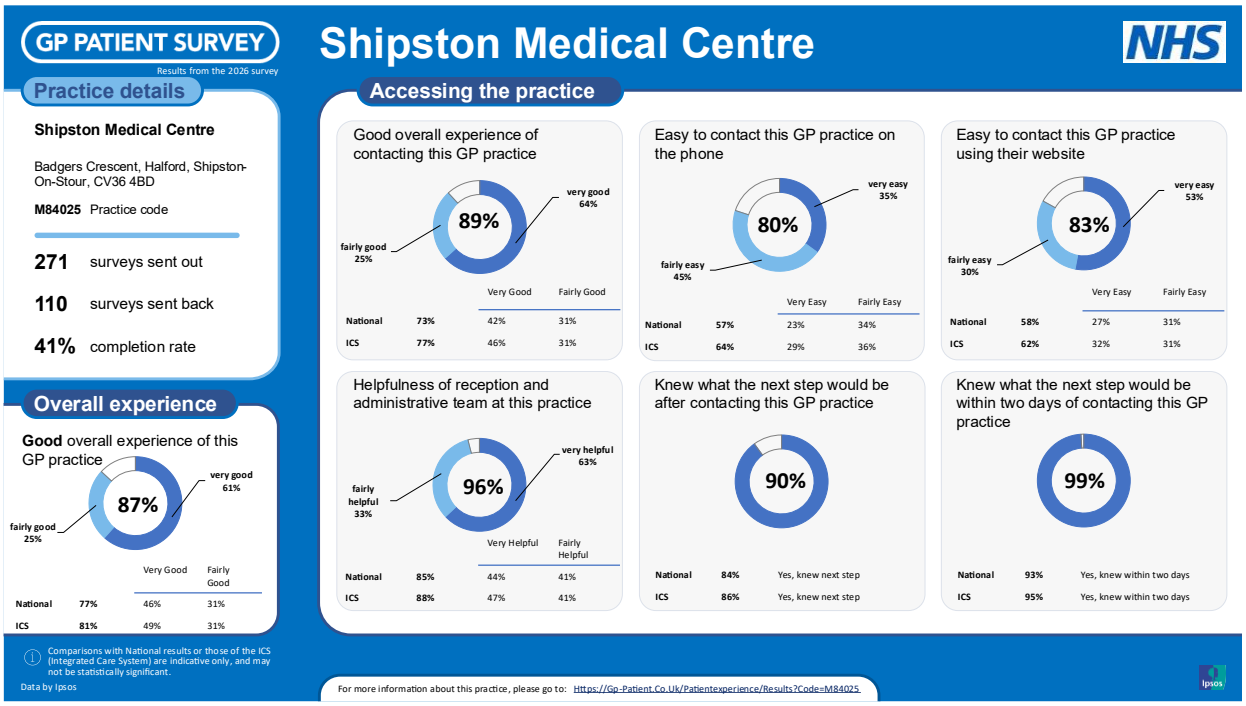
ANNUAL GP PATIENT SURVEY RESULTS FOR SHIPSTON MEDICAL CENTRE

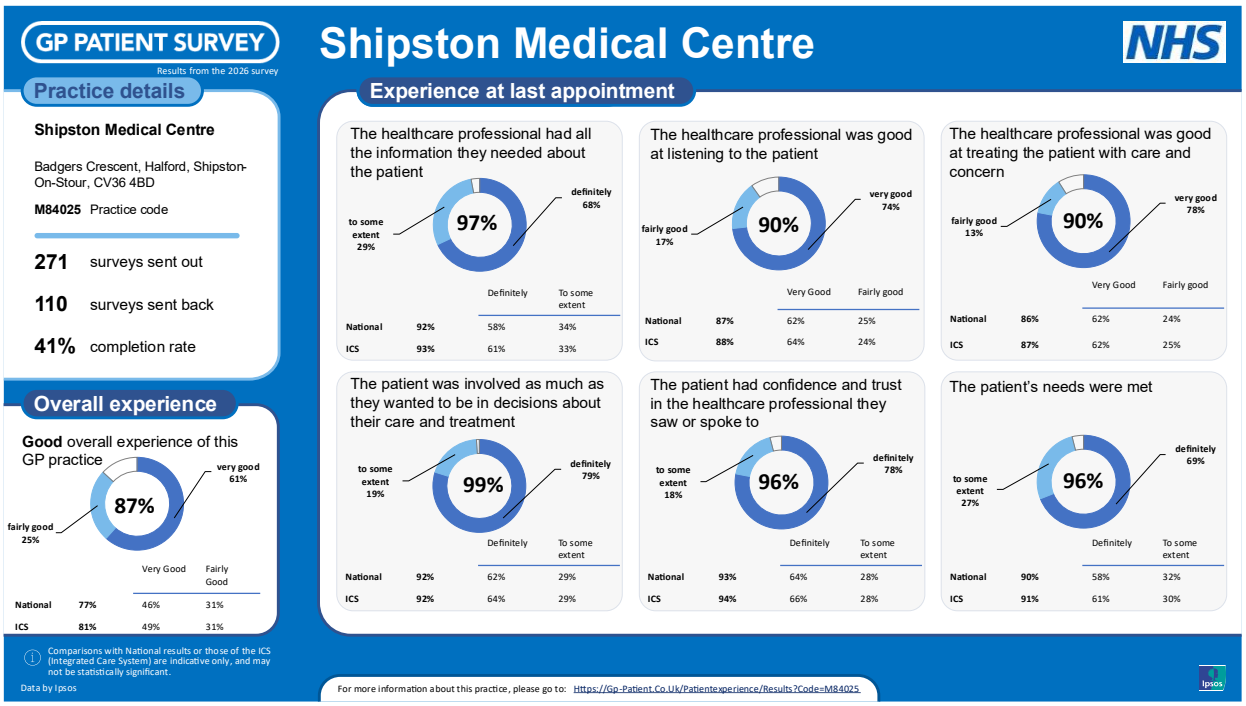
The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run by Ipsos on behalf of NHS England. The survey is sent out to over 2 million people registered with GP practices in England with the results showing how people feel about their GP practice.

Nationally, 22% of those who received a survey from 2nd Jan to 13th April 2026 responded – for Shipston Medical Centre the response rate was 41% so **thank you** if you took the time to complete the survey.

SMC's performance is summarised in the infographics below, and is compared to Coventry and Warwickshire ('ICS') and national results.

In all but three of the criteria, (ability to speak to a preferred healthcare professional, choice of location, and level of support from local services or organisations), SMC exceeded the local and national performances:





Whilst these results are very pleasing, the Partners are now reflecting on them all to understand if there is any opportunity for further improvement.

ON-LINE TRIAGE



The AccurX on-line triage form which allows you to contact the Practice with a non-urgent medical or admin request can also be accessed via the **NHS App.**

Just log in to your NHS App as usual and follow the **appointment** link to take you through to the user friendly on-line form.

Experience with the AccurX triage process since February 2024 demonstrates that patients who complete the form themselves provide greater detail about their condition. This allows the duty team to more accurately determine the most effective response for each patient.

Receptionists are of course happy to fill in the form for people who are not comfortable using on-line services.

However, we are grateful to the Digital Champions who run regular NHS App training sessions at the EB community hub. In addition to showing you how to fill in the on-line triage form for yourself, they can also show you how to use the App to easily access your health record, order repeat medication or check test results.

If you are interested in attending a Digital Champions session, please call the Medical Centre, selecting option 6 and then option 1 for medical records and we will take your details.

SURGERY CLOSURES

Staff Training

Each month all Warwickshire GP surgeries are closed for one afternoon from 12.30pm for staff training. The next dates are:

Wednesday 23rd September
Thursday 15th October
Thursday 26th November

GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR PRACTICE?

Do you have ideas, feedback, or suggestions about how our services run? Or maybe you'd just like to share something positive with the team but aren't sure who to tell?

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) is here to help! They can:



SHIPSTON MC PPG

- Find answers to your questions
- Pass on your ideas to the right person
- Represent patient views to improve our services

To contact them, email the Chair, Carole Nossiter, on shipstonppg@gmail.com including your contact details and she or one of the team will respond to you.

NEW ACTIVITIES AND FAMILY FUN FROM THE STOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP

Two community initiatives are giving local residents more ways to get active, meet others and enjoy time together this Autumn.

New Tuesday evening pickleball session

A new weekly pickleball session is launching on Tuesday evenings from **6pm to 7pm** at **Townsend Hall, Sheep Street, Shipston-on-Stour**. Whether you are completely new to the sport or already enjoy playing, the session offers a friendly opportunity to get active and meet people in the local community.

The initiative will be **free for the first few months**, making it easy for residents to come along and give pickleball a try. After this introductory period, the activity will become chargeable; further details will be shared in due course.

Stour Toy Library continues to grow

The Stour Toy Library continues to grow and is more popular than ever. Young families and grandparents are making the most of the opportunity to borrow toys for children under four, offering youngsters variety while helping households save money and reduce clutter.

Our popular Toy Library is open every **Tuesday, 9.30am–11am**, and **Thursday, 11am–12 noon**. There is no need to become a member simply to visit, and annual membership to borrow toys costs just **£5**.

During the October half-term, the Toy Library will also host a special Tuesday event for older siblings at the **Ellen Badger Hospital Community Hub**, from **9.30am to 11am**. The event is a chance for families to enjoy an inclusive morning together while younger children explore the Toy Library.

What's On at the Ellen Badger Hospital

Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership has a busy programme of welcoming, affordable activities at the Ellen Badger Hospital Community Hub. Whether you would like to meet new people, find family support or simply enjoy a cup of tea and a friendly chat, there is plenty to discover.

Community Hub

Community Hub is every **Monday and Thursday, 10am–12 noon**. You will find a comfortable space, a friendly welcome and good refreshments—perfect for a chat, a pause in your day or finding out what support is available locally.

Parent Carers Support Group

Parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are warmly invited to this supportive monthly group, held on the **last Tuesday of each month, 9.30am–11am**. It is an informal opportunity to connect with people who understand, exchange experiences and access a little extra support.

Singing Down Memory Lane

Come along for music, memories and good company on the **last Friday of each month, 11am–12 noon**. This relaxed singing group welcomes everyone, with no experience needed—just bring your voice and enjoy a sing-song.

Bereavement Café and Repair Café

Following their summer break, the Bereavement Café returns to the Ellen Badger on the 1st Tuesday of the month from 11- 1pm. A friendly

welcoming space to talk about the loss of a loved one and share these experiences in a peer to peer setting.

Repair Café also returned from its summer holidays in September and is as popular as ever. The next repair café is on the 10th October from 10am - 2pm with the last bookings from 1pm.

SHARING THE INFORMATION

If you know of patients who aren't on Facebook do let them know that the newsletter is available for collection from the medical centre receptions, the Dispensary and waiting rooms. If they have their medication delivered, they can also ask the delivery driver for a copy.

The PPG distributes hard copies to various locations around Shipston including the community hub at the Ellen Badger Hospital, the library, post office and town council offices.

The newsletter is also published on our website under Patient News, and we alert on Facebook and X when it's published. If you would like an electronic copy of the newsletter emailed to you each time there is a new edition, (every 2 months) please contact reception.