

Monthly Patient Newsletter



Continuity of Care

We recognise the importance of Continuity of Care for our patients so are launching a project to help improve this commencing on the 6th of June 2026.

We have recently reviewed all our patients to ensure they are registered to a GP at their most local surgery. Where patients have been seeing a GP regularly but are not currently registered to them as their 'named GP', we have reviewed and allocated appropriately.

What does this mean for you?

- Each patient has a named GP
- Wherever possible, patients should be booked with their named GP for ROUTINE appointments
- If not available, care should stay within a small, consistent team (buddy system)
- The aim is to make care more consistent, joined up, and personalised.

We will continue to allocate appointments to the multi-disciplinary team for example, First Contact Physios, Acute Practitioners, Clinical Pharmacists and Mental Health nurses.

This Issue includes:

PPG:Patients
Supporting Patients

A guide to screen time:
Help little brains
develop healthy habits

Monthly Message from
Avon and Somerset
Police

SWIFT: Free Self-harm
Support Services

Congresbury Carers
Community Transport –
Volunteer drivers
needed

And much more!

For urgent/same day appointments we will aim for continuity, but this is primarily for routine GP appointments.

What does “continuity” means in practice?

Continuity of care means patients see or speak to the same clinician or small team whenever appropriate, especially for ongoing or complex needs. It improves outcomes, reduces duplication, and builds trust.

In a personal lists system, each patient is linked to a named GP (or small clinical team) who is primarily responsible for their care.

This helps:

- Build long-term clinician–patient relationships
- Create clearer ownership and accountability
- Make care feel more joined-up and consistent

Why continuity of care matters?

Continuity of care means patients are able to see or speak to the same

clinician (or small team) over time. This isn't just a preference—it has real impact:

- Better health outcomes – clinicians who know the patient well can spot changes earlier and manage conditions more effectively
- Safer care – fewer missed details, less duplication, and clearer follow-up
- Stronger relationships – patients feel heard, understood, and more confident in their care
- More efficient use of appointments – less time repeating history, more time making decisions
- Lower pressure on the system – fewer repeat contacts and avoidable appointments

For patients with ongoing, complex, or sensitive issues, continuity can make a significant difference to their experience and outcomes.

Please keep an eye out for further updates in the next newsletter.



Routine Appointment

For non-urgent health concerns, follow-ups, or ongoing care (e.g. medication reviews, chronic condition check-ins, general health advice). These appointments are typically scheduled in advance – within 2 weeks of requesting an appointment..

Urgent Appointment

For issues that are not life-threatening but require attention within a short time frame (e.g. new symptoms, infections, worsening of a known condition). These are offered on the same day through our Duty Doctor list. You may be asked to visit an alternative surgery instead of your preferred site.

Please phone for an urgent appointment. Do not complete an eConsult



Emergency

For severe or life-threatening conditions that require immediate medical attention (e.g. chest pain, severe difficulty breathing, suspected stroke). These situations should involve calling 999 or going to A&E.



Patients Supporting Patients

You Spoke. We Listened. Now We're Acting

Over the past year, more than 3,000 patients registered with Mendip Vale Medical Group (MVMG) took part in our survey, with over 1,700 also sharing detailed feedback in their own words. This level of engagement reflects a strong sense of trust, which we have taken seriously. Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) in North Somerset — Patients Supporting Patients — has carefully reviewed this feedback to understand where services are working well and where improvements could further strengthen patient experience and safety.

NHS England's Primary Care Patient Safety Strategy (February 2025) highlights the importance of involving patients in shaping safer care, and the PPG is contributing to this aim. While national data indicates that avoidable harm can occur in general practice, we have not identified specific incidents within MVMG; rather, our focus is on reducing potential risks and improving systems proactively. In the coming months, the PPG will share their findings with MVMG and look forward to working together on the opportunities identified. If you would like to be involved sharing your experience, joining a conversation, or simply knowing your voice has been heard — please get in touch. This work belongs to all of us.

Email the PPG: mendipvaleppg@gmail.com

**Found in
33.6 million
pockets across
England**



NHS

A GUIDE TO SCREEN TIME

UNDER 5s



How to help little brains develop healthy screen habits



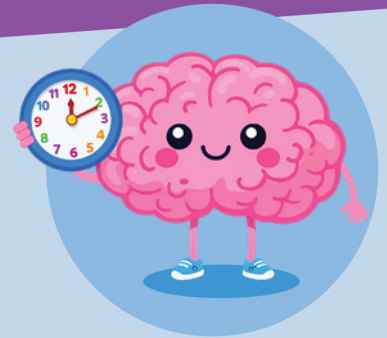
How much screen time

should my child have?

Limit total screen time, wherever possible.

Under 2 yrs: Avoid screen time except shared activities with family that encourage bonding and interaction.

2-5 yrs: Try to keep to 1 hour a day. Less if possible.



Young children's brains are over-stimulated more easily than adults', so they need specifically tailored content.

Slow paced content: Choose content with simple stories and clear, slow speech, so emotions are easy to follow.



What content is better content?



Safe content: Use parental controls to block inappropriate, harmful material.

Social media: This isn't made for young brains, so it should be avoided.

AI: Don't let them use AI toys, tools, or chat-bots until we know more about their effects on children.

Safe screen swaps: Switch fast-paced style videos for slower-paced content with simple stories.

How does my screen use

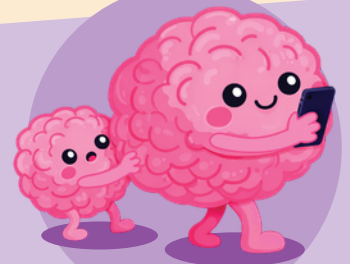
affect my child?

Set clear boundaries for screen use. This gives children time for activities and play that help them develop.

Avoid young children using screens alone. Try to keep bedrooms and mealtimes free from screens.

Why not try... watching and discussing content with your child? Conversation helps their development.

Lead by example: Children's brains are like sponges – they'll copy your screen use habits. Be mindful of how often you use screens around your child.



Children with disabilities or special educational needs may benefit from tailored screen use. And for some, assistive technology can be an important tool for communication and everyday participation.

My child has SEND.

Is the advice the same for us?

Safe screen swaps:

Mealtimes: Swap screens for music, games or conversation – make it social.

Bedtimes: Swap screens for bedtime stories 1 hour before sleep.

When and where

is it okay for my child to use screens?

They also need ample time for interaction, play, and sleep. Try to avoid screen time for these activities.



How does screen time affect my child's development?

Large amounts of screen time are linked with negative effects on children's health and development. It can affect social, emotional, language & brain development, sleep, eyesight and weight.

Young children learn best through warm interaction with parents and carers – reading, play and conversation. These early moments build the foundations for life.





The government has published new, evidence-informed guidance to help parents and carers of children under 5 navigate screen time. With digital screens now a normal part of family life, this guidance offers practical advice to support informed choices to help little brains develop healthy screen habits. The guidance recommends:

- For under 2s - avoid screen time, other than shared activities like video calls with family or looking through photos together. For 2–5s: try to keep it to no more than 1 hour a day - less if you can.
- Choose slow-paced, predictable content with simple stories, fewer scene changes and characters who speak clearly. Avoid fast-paced, social media-style videos – these may affect a child's ability to concentrate.
- Children copy everything you do so try to limit your screen use around your child.
- Keep bedrooms and mealtimes screen-free. Try to swap screens before bed for a bedtime story and avoid screens for the hour before sleep as they can disrupt rest.
- Try not to let young children use screens alone – watching together means you can chat about what you're seeing and spot anything inappropriate.
- The key is making sure screens don't replace sleep, physical activity, play or quality time with you.

90% of brain growth happens before the age of 5. The interactions children have in these early years – the chats, the games, the stories, the back-and-forth conversations – lay the foundations for language, problem-solving, emotional understanding and self-control.

Large amounts of screen time have been linked to negative effects on social, emotional and language development, as well as sleep, eyesight and healthy weight. However, the good news is that small, simple swaps can make a big difference. 5 For more advice on how to help little brains to develop healthy screen habits visit the [Best Start in Life website](#),

Monthly Message from Avon and Somerset Police: Spotting Counterfeit Bank Notes

'Most people who encounter a counterfeit bank note do so without realising. Unlike the note above, it can be really hard to spot counterfeit notes. We have recently seen a rise in reports of the use of counterfeit notes. Knowing a few simple things to look for can help protect you from financial loss and worry.

.Trust Your Senses

Genuine UK bank notes (now made of polymer) have a distinct feel:

- They feel slick and flexible, not waxy or overly smooth
- Raised print can be felt on areas like the main wording and the Queen/King's portrait. If a note feels unusual, it's worth taking a closer look

Check Key Features: How to Spot a Fake Bank Note

- Look at the clear window Real £20 notes have a clear plastic window with a picture of the King or Queen in it. The edges should be sharp and clear, not cloudy.
- Tilt the note A shiny silver patch on the front should change words when you move the note, such as changing from "Twenty" to "Pounds".
- Feel the note Some parts of a real note feel slightly raised, especially the words "Bank of England" and the number.
- Don't trust marker pens Fake-note pens don't work properly on modern plastic notes and shouldn't be relied on.
- Compare if unsure If something feels wrong, compare it with a note you know is real. Differences are easier to spot together.
- Use safer payments if you can Bank transfers can be safer than cash. If you do take cash, check each note carefully before handing anything over

Look for Consistency

If you're handed multiple notes:

- Compare them with each other
- Genuine notes should look and feel the same A single note that looks different from the rest is worth checking.

If You're Unsure About a Note - If something doesn't feel right:


- Don't spend it or accept it
- Take it to your bank, who can check it safely and advise you
- Banks deal with this regularly and can help without judgement
- Be conscious when selling things via social media or taking cash payment for any item




SWIFT: Free Self-harm Support Services

We are a Bristol based charity that supports people across the UK affected by self-harm. We provide free Listening Services via phone, text and email in partnership with the Lottery Community Fund. We also provide Peer Support Services by referral, in partnership with the NHS.

You can contact Swift:




Phone Us
0808 8008088
Monday & Thursday: 6-9 pm



Text Us
07537 432444
Monday to Friday 6-9 pm



Email Us
tess@sift.org.uk
Email any time, we'll reply within a week.

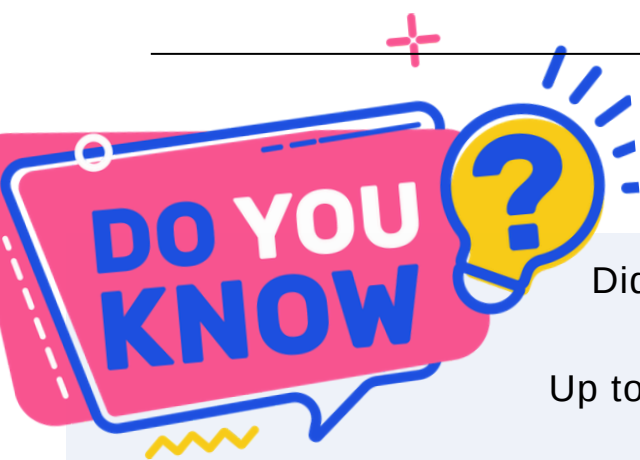


Write to Us
14 Upper Maudlin Street, Bristol,
BS2 8DJ
Write any time, we'll reply within a week.

What happens when you contact Swift?

- You'll speak with one of our specialist-trained volunteers.
- It's a safe, confidential space to share your experiences and emotions around self-harm, and anything else you wish to talk about.
- We can share information and resources with you if you want us to.
- We won't judge or tell you what to do.
- We are here to support anyone of any age or gender affected by self-harm.

For more information go to the SWIFT website: [Listening support for self-harm - Sift Self-harm helpline](#)



Did you know you can order your prescription in advance?

Up to **10 days** for **controlled drugs** and **14 days** for **repeat prescriptions**.

Working days are **Monday to Friday** only. Please note, **Bank Holidays** are **non-working days** and should be considered when ordering your medication.

If you have any concerns regarding a patients prescription, please contact our Prescriptions Team at - bnssg.mvmg.nh.prescriptions@nhs.net



Congresbury Carers Community Transport – Volunteer drivers needed

Congresbury Carers Community Transport service helps those who are unable to use conventional public transport to attend the surgery, hospital or dentists for their important appointments. They provide door-to-door service to those who have limited transport options, mobility issues, or don't have the support for transport from friends or family.

The need for community transport is growing, and increasingly we Congresbury Carers are seeing patients who rely on the service. Unfortunately, the availability of volunteer drivers has not kept pace with this demand.

Can you help?

We are urgently encouraging members of our community to consider volunteering as a driver.

You don't need any special qualifications—just:

- A valid driving licence
- Access to a reliable vehicle
- A friendly, patient approach
- Some spare time, even occasionally

You'll be making a genuine difference to someone's life—often helping those who would otherwise have no way to attend their appointment. Make a Real Difference Locally. Even a small amount of your time can have a big impact. By volunteering, you're helping ensure that no patient misses the care they need due to lack of transport.

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer driver, or would like more information about accessing the service, please contact Congresbury Carers, Margaret for more information on 01934 834663

Weston Fibromyalgia Support Group

The Weston Fibromyalgia Support Group meets regularly to support individuals living with fibromyalgia and other chronic pain conditions.

Meetings:

- Held at HALE Community Hall
- Third Monday of each month for general support.
- Thursday mornings for coffee and additional support activities.
- Weekly hydrotherapy group and organized trips and meals.

For more information, you can call Val at 07411989478 or Jules at 07840189641, or email wsmfibro@gmail.com.

This group aims to provide a supportive environment for sharing experiences and coping strategies.

There is also an exercise course available at Hutton Moor Leisure Centre in Weston (can google the Better Health North Somerset site to self-refer to start the course)

Fibromyalgia course

Steps to Get Active is a funded programme for adults in North Somerset living with a long-term health condition/s, offering up to 12-weeks FREE physical activity group classes.

There might not be a cure for some long-term health conditions, but there are treatments such as taking part in exercise which can help relieve some of the symptoms and make certain conditions easier to live with.

About the Steps to Get Active programme

The programme offers weekly group support to help you make gradual increases to your physical activity levels.

The programme is FREE for a duration of up to 12 sessions of weekly group support (funded by North Somerset Council) to residents living with a long-term health condition, who have been signposted to the programme by a local health care practitioner, or self-referred (condition dependent).

After the initial funded 12 weeks, participants will be required to fund sessions, we will aim to keep sessions as affordable as possible.



Bristol Parent
Carer Forum
Shaping the Future *Together*

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT WITH KOOOTH



WITH KOOOTH AND BRISTOL
PARENT CARERS



Wednesday 20th May

7pm to 8pm

Online



Book here! or
www.linkbristolparentcarers.org.uk/gethelp

Did you attend our Together for SEND event in March?

Give us your feedback!



Self Compassion for Single Parent Carers

The Park Centre
Knowle, BS4

Friday 8th & 15th May
10AM-12:15PM



Peer Support

Online

Tuesday 12th May
7PM-8PM



Let's Talk About Resource Bases

Online

Wednesday 13th May
10AM-11:30AM



Scan here for details on these sessions and more



<https://linkbristolparentcarers.org.uk/gethelp>

Peer Support

Fishponds Old Library
Thursday 14th May
9AM-11AM

Inns Court, BS4
Thursday 14th May
10:30AM-12:30PM

Greenway Centre, BS10
Thursday 21st May
9:15AM-10:30AM

Global Majority SEND Session

Junction 3 Library
Easton, BS5

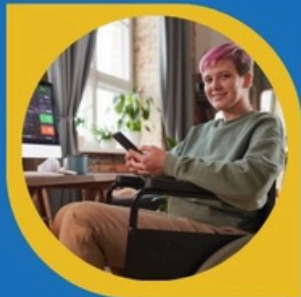
Thursday 14th May
10AM-12PM



Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

Online

Wednesday 20th May
7PM-8PM



Confidence and Resilience for Parent Carers

Online

Thursday 21st May
7PM-8:30PM



Previous attachment

STRAWBERRY LINE +Cycles

FREE, FRIENDLY SESSIONS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU REGAIN YOUR CONFIDENCE ON A BIKE. USE ONE OF OUR BIKES, SUPPORTED BY OUR EXPERIENCED TEAM, AND ENJOY CYCLING ALONG THE TRAFFIC-FREE STRAWBERRY LINE

Four individual training sessions are available on the following dates

Sunday 3rd May - 10am-1pm

Wednesday 6th May - 10am-1pm

Wednesday 13th May - 10am-1pm

Sunday 17th May - 10am-1pm

These supportive sessions are ideal for people who haven't cycled for many years or who are looking to build confidence

EMAIL STRAWBERRYLINEPROJECTS@GMAIL.COM FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER

Delivered in Partnership with National Highways



Yatton Wellbeing Lifestyle Club

We're delighted to invite you to our Wellbeing Lifestyle Group, a welcoming space to move, connect, and learn practical ways to support your wellbeing, **10am at Yatton Methodist Church Hall**. Free to join and refreshments provided. The next dates are:

🔵 **Thursday 28th May – Sleep for Self-Care with Sarah, Health and Wellbeing Coach**

Sarah, Health and Wellbeing Coach, will guide you through the importance of good sleep for both physical and mental wellbeing. Discover practical techniques to improve your sleep routine to wake feeling more refreshed.

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, or have something you would like to share, we'd love to hear from you.

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:

[Click here for your feedback](#)