Balmoral Surgery Newsletter April 2025

We are thrilled to announce that we are transitioning to a new online consultation provider, Anima, to enhance your experience with us.

What you can use Anima for?

* Seeking advice on new or ongoing medical issues
* Requesting appointments
* Asking for sick notes
* Getting help with administrative matters

Click on the Anima box on our website.

(Please note that this service is only available 8am to 10am to start with, and then we hope to transition to all of our core hours in the near future)

Why Anima?

User-Friendly Interface: Anima offers a seamless and intuitive platform for all your consultation needs.

Enhanced Features: Enjoy improved functionalities that make managing your health easier and more efficient.

Secure and Reliable: Your privacy and data security are our top priorities, and Anima ensures robust protection.

To help you get started, Anima have prepared a short video on how to submit an Anima consult. Watch it here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vy\_vkM615YE

Anima is NOT suitable for urgent requests - Your request may not be seen for several working days. Please do not use Anima if you have an urgent medical problem.

As a reminder:

* The NHS app is the best place to request your repeat medication
* Anima is available in different languages - check your settings page!
* The Pharmacy First Scheme has now started. This means that we may suggest you are seen by your local pharmacy for treatment for 7 new conditions. See below for more information.

# Pharmacy First

Community pharmacists are now able supply prescription-only medicines, including antibiotics and antivirals where clinically appropriate, to treat seven common health conditions without the need to visit a GP.

* Sinusitis
* Sore throat
* Earache
* Infected insect bite
* Impetigo (a bacterial skin infection)
* Shingles
* Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women

You can get treatment for these conditions by walking into the pharmacy or contacting them virtually. GP receptionists, NHS 111 and providers of emergency care will also be able to direct patients to pharmacies that offer the service, if contacted.

Patients can still choose to visit a GP if they wish to. Pharmacy First offers alternative access for these seven conditions and we encourage people to make the most of this service and to consult the highly trained professions in their local pharmacy.

**Changes to Annual Review Invitations for Long-Term Conditions**

We are updating the way we invite patients for their annual reviews for long-term conditions such as Asthma, COPD, Diabetes, and others.

Going forward, we aim to schedule your review during your month of birth. This approach will help us manage appointments more efficiently and ensure timely care for everyone.

As we transition to this new system, you may be invited earlier than usual for your next review. We kindly ask that you book your appointment when invited.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

**Enhanced Access**

It has now been one year since the Deal & Sandwich PCN decided to provide Enhanced Access via the practices, rather than sub contract out this to an alternative provider.  This means that patients in Deal and Sandwich have access to GP appointments until 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9-1pm on Saturdays. We are pleased to say that this has gone extremely well and the majority of the appointments that we offer are fully utilised.   When we started to provide Enhanced Access ourselves, we also recruited a First Contact Physiotherapist (FCP) to be part of this team, and this has been extremely positive.  Patients with musculoskeletal problems will be directed to the FCP who is able to request scans, refer on to orthopaedics or refer to physiotherapy if needed.  This service is available 6 days a week, and all surgeries have an allocation of appointments each day.

# PCN Social Prescribing Directory of Services

Stay in the know with the Social Prescribing Directory of Services! Find information to keep track of upcoming local events and the range of services available to patients in the Deal and Sandwich PCN. Check regularly to stay informed and connected! For further support you can contact the team via telephone 01304 744075 or via email social.prescriberpcn@nhs.net. Website link for full range of services:

https://padlet.com/socialprescriberpcn/pcn-social-prescribing-directory-of-services-6rzm1jgi84iwuady

**DNAs (did not attend appointment)**

We are having a significant amount of patients not attend their booked appointments. There is always considerable pressure on our nurses and doctors for appointments and missed appointments mean that time is wasted and not available to other patients who may need it. We would be grateful if you could make every effort to attend or let the practice know in advance if you cannot attend to your appointments.

**DNAs from 1st January- 30th April = 639**

**Do you have a mobile number?**

Please be sure to update your mobile numbers in our system to ensure you receive timely appointment reminders and text messages from the team. Keeping your contact information current allows us to send you a message or reminder via text or call. If you need assistance with updating your details, please don't hesitate to contact us.

**Closures**

Bank Holiday - 26/05/2025, 25/08/2025

PLT (training afternoon) - 22/05/2025, 18/06/2025, 24/07/2025, 21/08/2025, 24/09/2025