

Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2025

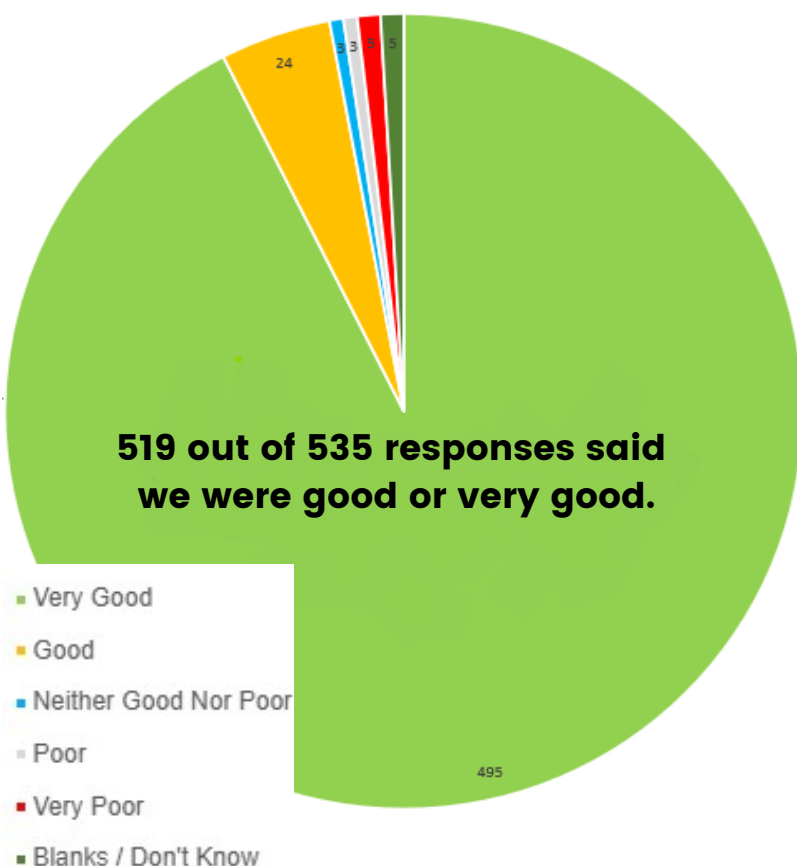


Team Update

We are delighted to welcome a number of new staff to the Wallingbrook team:

- Dr Khalid Abdelshafy – Trainee GP
- Dr Kean Amin – Trainee GP
- James Buckett – Paramedic
- Sam Field – Practice Nurse
- Kirsty Aubrey-Smith – Business Services Coordinator
- Karen Chennell – Patient Services Advisor
- Chloe Bonner – Patient Services Advisor
- Jessie Burgess-Farrant – Dispensary Counter Assistant

We would like to congratulate Amber Leach on completing her level 5 Nursing Associate apprenticeship over the last 2 years. This has led to her obtaining a distinction Foundation Degree (Science) awarded by the University of Greater Manchester and registration with The Nursing & Midwifery Council.

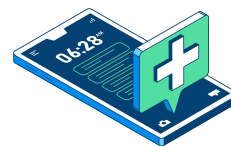


Family and Friends Test October 2025

In October 2025 we received 535 responses to our Family and Friends Test. Over 95% of these said we were good or very good! Thank you to all our patients who completed our survey. This is a hugely valuable tool for us to check how we are doing.

We review all feedback and share with the practice team. Your input helps us learn and continue to improve the service we provide. You can also feedback to us by completing a comments slip in the waiting room, speaking to our Patient Services Team or emailing us at: d-icb.wallingbrookbsc@nhs.net

Book an Appointment with us



We have a number of ways for you to book appointments at Wallingbrook. For some appointments we will send you a link via SMS or email inviting you to:

- Book online enabling you to choose a time that suits you and book instantly
- Complete a questionnaire. For some appointments, you may be asked to complete a questionnaire. This is reviewed and followed up by our clinical team
- Fill out an eConsult to book an appointment with us, this can be used for medical issues both new and ongoing and administrative queries. Our eConsult service is available Monday to Friday from 7am to 6.30pm (excluding Bank Holidays)
- Call or visit the surgery and speak to one of our receptionists should you wish to do so

Voluntary Car Services



Do you struggle getting to and from your medical appointments?
There are voluntary car services in our area that can help:

Lapford Voluntary Car Aid (LVCA)

LVCA is a charity with a team of volunteer drivers covering Lapford, providing transport to medical appointments as well as a medication collection service from pharmacies.

The cost of this service is £6 return to Crediton, Bow, Chulmleigh, £7 for Winkleigh and £4 to Morchard Bishop.

To arrange a booking contact Grace Hill on 01363 83178.

Winkleigh Volunteer Service

Volunteers take people to hospital and other medical appointments, collect shopping, take people to the shops, care homes and other essential journeys.

Volunteers give their time for nothing but there is a charge of 50p per mile.

To arrange a journey please contact Angie on 01837 682626. If you do not receive a response within 24 hours please ring or text 07455 365144.

Please give as much notice as possible.

South Molton Voluntary Car Service

South Molton and District Volunteer Bureau is a volunteer car service for anyone who cannot provide their own transport to attend appointments for any medically-related reason, including hospital, GP, dental, chiropractor and podiatry appointments. They cover a number of villages within the Wallingbrook area, including Chulmleigh and Chawleigh. They can provide transport to hospitals throughout Devon. The cost is 45p per mile plus a £3 admin surcharge.

For full details visit <https://www.smvb.org.uk/> or call 01769 573167 and leave your name, phone number and a short message about your appointment to book.

Chawleigh & Chulmleigh Community Car Service

This service provides transport to Wallingbrook Health Centre and Chulmleigh Dentist from surrounding areas including Wembworthy, Cheldon and Kings Nympton. Volunteers will take you to your appointment, wait for you and transport you home.

The cost depends on location. From £3 for Chawleigh to £5 for Wembworthy.

- To arrange this service from Chawleigh call 01769 581234 or 01769 580440.
- To arrange this service from Chulmleigh call 01769 581746 or 01769 580236.
- Please try to give at least one week's notice where possible.

Can you help?

These groups are always in need of new volunteers to keep these vital services running. South Molton Voluntary Car Service, who require drivers from Chulmleigh and Winkleigh Volunteer Service are particularly in need of anyone who would be able to give their time to help take patients make these vital journeys.

If you feel you would be able to offer your time, please contact:
Steve Wilkinson on 01769 573167 for South Molton Voluntary Car Service
Angela Fidlay on 01837 682616 for Winkleigh

Patient Transport in Devon



Planning a journey to an NHS medical appointment?

You may be eligible for patient transport assistance, if you....

- are currently too unwell to use a car or public or community transport
- need skilled help to leave your home
- will require extra support on the journey



Patient Transport Advice Service

 **0345 155 1009***

*Local rate call charges apply and are included in mobile bundles

Vaccinations

Our Autumn/Winter vaccinations are well underway and ensures patients are protected over Winter. See below for information on what is being offered this year.



Flu

The flu vaccine is offered every Autumn to those at risk of getting seriously ill from flu. The eligibility for the flu vaccine this year is:

From September 2025:

- pregnant women
- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2025
- primary school aged children (from Reception to Year 6)
- secondary school aged children (from Year 7 to Year 11)
- all children in clinical risk groups aged from 6 months to less than 18 years

From October 2025:

- those aged 65 years and over
- those aged 18 years to under 65 years with long term health conditions
- those in residential care homes
- carers in receipt of carer's allowance or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- front line Health and Social Care workers

COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccinations are offered because viruses change and protection fades over time, it is important to maintain your protection if you are at higher risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19.

Autumn 2025 COVID-19 vaccinations will be offered to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in care homes for older adults
- individuals who are immunosuppressed aged 6 months and over

Shingles

Shingles is a common condition that causes a painful rash. It can sometimes lead to serious problems such as long-lasting pain, hearing loss or blindness.

You are more likely to get shingles and it is more likely to cause serious problems, as you get older or if you have a severely weakened immune system.

The shingles vaccine helps reduce your chances of getting:

- shingles
- serious problems if you do get shingles

This year the eligibility criteria for the shingles vaccine has changed, the updated criteria are people:

- who turn 65 on or after 1 September 2023
- aged 70 to 79
- aged 18 and over with a severely weakened immune system

If you meet the criteria for the vaccine you will be invited to book an appointment, if you do not meet the criteria and consider you are eligible for a vaccine, please contact the surgery.

More information about the Shingles vaccine can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/shingles-vaccine/>

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

RSV is a virus that is a common cause of coughs and colds. Most people catch it several times during their life.

It usually gets better by itself, but in some people, especially babies and older adults, it can lead to more serious illness. These can cause serious breathing problems. They may need to be treated in hospital and can be life-threatening.

You can get a free NHS RSV vaccination if:

- you are 28 weeks pregnant or more. This will help protect your baby for the first few months after they are born
- you are aged 75 to 79
- you turned 80 years old after 1 September 2024

It helps reduce the risk of RSV causing serious problems, e.g. pneumonia and bronchiolitis.

More information about the RSV vaccine can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/rsv-vaccine/>

2025 Flu Clinics & Practice Updates

This year we have held multiple vaccination clinics, including some taking place over the weekend. The clinics have been busy and we are delighted to have given 2,615 vaccines so far! Our biggest change this year after listening to patient feedback was our first ever Flu and Covid clinic at Winkleigh Surgery.

It was a huge achievement and we would like to thank all staff and patients for ensuring its success. We are grateful to the patients who were able to find parking away from the surgery to ensure the safety of others.

Due to the positive feedback we have received, the Winkleigh Flu Clinic will run again in the future, thank you again for all your feedback!



Westbank Health Walks

Westbank's Health Walks offer regular short walks each week across various locations across Devon, including Chulmleigh. Walks are graded by difficulty and length to help you choose the best for your ability. Anyone can turn up and join in – it's free, fun and friendly. Explore the outdoors, get to know the local area and meet new friends. Full details can be found at <https://www.westbank.org.uk/healthwalks>

The Chulmleigh walk meet at The Pavilion car park, EX18 7JL fortnightly throughout the year at 9.30am. The walk is 3 miles through woods and farmland, taking in spectacular views. Dogs on leads are welcome. For more information on the Chulmleigh Health Walk contact 01769 580819.



If you are aged 40 to 74 and do not have certain pre-existing health conditions, you are eligible for an NHS health check every 5 years. The NHS Health Check is a free check-up of your overall health. It can tell you whether you are at higher risk of getting certain health problems, such as: heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease and stroke.

Your NHS Health Check will be carried out by a healthcare professional and will take about 20 to 30 minutes. It usually includes; measuring your height, weight and waist, blood pressure and cholesterol tests and possibly a blood sugar level test. Your healthcare professional will ask you some questions about your health and lifestyle.

To book your free, NHS Health Check contact Wallingbrook Health Group.

Meet your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Our PPG consists of voluntary patient representatives who are actively involved in the planning and development of new and existing health services provided by Wallingbrook Health Group. The PPG meet regularly with practice staff to consider improvements in healthcare service provision supplied by the practice to patients.

Our PPG members are always keen to receive feedback and hear patient experiences. You can contact the PPG at wallingbrookppg@gmail.com or speak to members within your community.

Maggie Samuel – Chulmleigh (Acting Chair)

Maggie is an advocate for an active retirement. She lives in Chulmleigh and participates in a wide variety of activities including keep fit, yoga and being a local walk leader.



Bill Graham – Lapford

In addition to the PPG, Bill is a member of Lapford Parish Council, the PCC of the Parish Church, as well as other village committees. He had a career in technical disciplines in theatre, conferences and major events.



Mary Bavidge – Chulmleigh

Mary had a career in nursing, including psychiatric nursing. She managed nursing homes, caring for patients suffering with dementia. Mary has three children, two stepchildren, many grandchildren and one great grandson!



Andrew Warner – Winkleigh

Andrew's time on the Parish council along with an understanding of the pressures of the medical profession led him to volunteer for the PPG. Andrew was a Veterinary Surgeon and has lived in Winkleigh since 1980.



Jack Earnshaw – Burrington (Vice Chair)

Jack joined the PPG as a result of his interest in how services are delivered and the use of IT systems. He enjoyed a career in Aerospace and Financial Services and has been involved a number of in charities and public services.



Rosemary Rives-Roberts – Chulmleigh

Rosemary has a background as a teacher, charity outreach worker and civil servant. All of which have proved useful experience for her work with the PPG. She is married with two adult children who live locally.



Monthly Wallingbrook Dispensary Closures

To accommodate training for all our dispensary team it will close for one hour a month. This takes place in the second week of each month, alternating between a Monday and Friday, from 1pm until 2pm. For a full list of closure days and times please visit:

<https://www.wallingbrook.co.uk/opening-hours>



Follow us on Facebook to stay up-to-date with Practice news and latest health information:

<https://www.facebook.com/WallingbrookHealthGroup>

Practice Training Times

2026 Practice Training afternoons are on:

- Wednesday 12 February 2026
- Tuesday 9 June 2026
- Thursday 10 September 2026

On the above dates we will be closed from 1pm. Reopening as usual the next day.

If you have an urgent medical need during a training afternoon, please continue to phone the usual telephone number for the practice and you will be put through to the duty service.

Please do not phone for routine appointments and queries during that afternoon.

For more information on closures and where to access medical assistance when we are closed, please visit:

<https://www.wallingbrook.co.uk/opening-hours>

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.

Wallingbrook Health Group Contact Details

Phone – 01769 580295

Website – www.wallingbrook.co.uk

For health advice outside of practice opening hours please dial 111

Wallingbrook Health Group

Christmas Opening Hours

For Wallingbrook Surgery, Wallingbrook
Dispensary & Winkleigh Surgery

Monday 22 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Tuesday 23 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Wednesday 24 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Thursday 25 December CLOSED

Friday 26 December CLOSED

Saturday 27 December CLOSED

Sunday 28 December CLOSED

Monday 29 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Tuesday 30 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Wednesday 31 December OPEN USUAL HOURS

Thursday 1 January CLOSED

Friday 2 January OPEN USUAL HOURS

**If you require urgent same day
attention please call 111 or in an
Emergency call 999**