Richmond Surgery
Fleet, Hampshire

Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice

Dementia Friendly



September Newsletter 2026

So this edition was written in a week when the National Drought Group announced the East Midlands, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, Kent and East Sussex, and Solent and the South Downs were the latest areas moved into drought status.

This meant that most of England - away from northern areas - were in official drought, with 45 million people living in a drought area and over 27 million with water restrictions, according to the group.

In our last newsletter we included an article on living in a heatwave and would recommend that it be reread with the drought in mind. Keep cool, keep safe, but also enjoy the weather where you can!

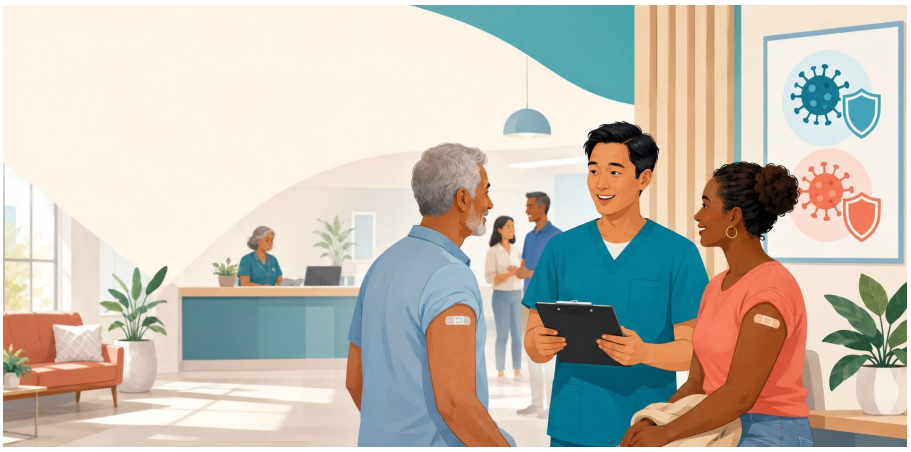
Lots to read in this edition, hopefully you will find it interesting.

In this issue:

1. **Flu and Covid**
2. **Suicide Prevention Day**
3. **Sign Language**
4. **New Technology**
5. **September Links**

6. **Ordering Repeat Prescriptions**
7. **Change of Personal Information**
8. **PPG**

Flu and Covid



Its almost that time of year…..**RICHMOND IS PLANNING FOR FLU AND COVID SEASON!!**

Once again we will be undertaking a number of vaccination clinics for Flu and Covid vaccinations. We have been sending out invitations to eligible patients over the past few weeks and will continue to do so throughout September. It will state from Richmond Surgery and will offer appointments only at the surgery.

Uptake has been incredible this year and we have had to put on many additional clinics due to demand. Those that have received notification that they are eligible and have yet to book, please do so as soon as possible to ensure your space. You can book online or call our reception team.

Please support us and book your appointments with us, we have to pay upfront for the vaccines and without your support we will be unable to continue this vital service!

Thank you!

Suicide Prevention Day



It is world suicide prevention day on 10th September 2026. Suicide is not an easy subject to discuss but it is important that we do. Please note these stats from the charity Mind:

- In 2024 there were **200,000** suicide attempts.
- **125** People pass away by suicide every week in the UK.
- For men the suicide rate was the highest for those under 50 and the suicide rate for young women under 24 increased.
- workplace suicide estimates **650** suicides in the UK each year could be work-related.

1. *CALM, (life saving stats),* https://www.thecalmzone.net/life-saving-stats
2. *CALM, (life saving stats), https://www.thecalmzone.net/life-saving-stats*
3. *CALM, (life saving stats), https://www.thecalmzone.net/life-saving-stats*
4. *MHFA England*

These deaths are preventable if we can get over the stigma and get people talking. We have councillors that work within the surgery but the service is limited. Fortunately, here are plenty of services out there available for anyone feeling suicidal or anyone worried about a loved one.

They can give support and advice through the most troubled times.

Mind's 4 helplines provide information and support by phone and email.

- Support line: 0300 102 1234 Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm
- Infoline: 0300 123 3393 Email: info@mind.org.uk Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm

- Welfare benefits line: 0300 222 5782 Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm
- Legal line: 0300 466 6463 Email: legal@mind.org.uk Monday to Friday, 9am-6pm

The Campaign Against Living Miserably provides online support

- Campaign Against Living Miserably | Suicide prevention charity

The Samaritans helpline open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- Call free on 116 123

Suicide destroys lives, please see Minds newsletter on the subject of Suicide Awareness day 2026 PowerPoint Presentation

Sign Language



The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) was established on 23rd September 1951. It is a federation of 135 national associations of deaf people, representing approximately 70 million deaf people's human rights worldwide.

Since 2018, and in remembrance of this date, the International Day of Sign Language is celebrated each September 23rd.

The United Nations website says: "The International Day of Sign Languages is a unique opportunity to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and other sign language users. All people have an inherent right to human rights from birth. For deaf people, sign language rights are fundamental for the full enjoyment of their human rights as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As we mark the Day we recognise the progress made and the challenges that remain in ensuring equality for all. The achievements are leading towards the goal of a world where deaf people everywhere can sign anywhere."

It continues: "Sign languages are fully fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from the spoken languages. There is also an international sign language, which is used by deaf

people in international meetings and informally when travelling and socializing. It is considered a pidgin form of sign language that is not as complex as natural sign languages and has a limited lexicon."

For information about learning British Sign Language please see [British Deaf Association – The BDA stands for Deaf Equality, Access and Freedom of Choice.]

For anyone wanting to have an insight into what it is like being deaf, please see this video from Strictly Come Dancing https://youtu.be/QejOzrlovTQ?si=I2ZuN4tPUj8OI0Bu

New Technology



In July 2025 the Government published its "10 Year Health Plan for England", part of its health mission for the future of the NHS. One of the main points in the plan was the importance of technology in the NHS and its growth in the future.

Many of you will be already using the NHS App and we would urge those that are not to download it and explore what it offers. You can see your NHS records, view and make appointments, request repeat medication and many other things all in one place.

At Richmond we have been using an AI system called Heidi for sometime now helping our clinicians ensure the accuracy of your medical records. Some of you may have received medlinks, a system that allows us to monitor patients in a quick and efficient way saving significant admin and clinical time.

Internally we are investing in new IT to help staff undertake their roles and have recently purchased software for staff and room rotas. We have also purchased induction software to enable HR to put together induction programs for new staff at the touch of a button.

What we are really excited about though is our new health hub which has just been installed in the waiting room. This will be replacing the current blood pressure machine and will allow the collection of data, from blood pressure to height and weight, in a private setting. It will

allow us to monitor and collect vital data about your health whilst preserving GP and Admin time.

We will be calling the health hub MIA (Monitoring Information and Assessment). We will be starting to utilise it for some areas of health checks. Invitations via text will say "appointment with our health kiosk "MIA". You will be able to use it adhoc if they are in the surgery.

Technology is the future of the NHS and Richmond is keen to embrace it fully!

Target Training Afternoons



Approximately four times a year we close our doors for an afternoon of protected learning and training of staff, you may well have seen or heard on the phone system our notifications.

You may well have noted that they fall under the title TARGET. What does TARGET actually mean? It stands for Time for Audit, Research, Governance, Education and Training.

As you would expect all clinical staff are required to maintain their training, keeping themselves up to date with any mandatory training such as BLS (Basic Life Support and Resuscitation) for example. But all other staff in the surgery are also required to keep their mandatory CPD (Continuing Professional Development) up to date.

Each TARGET afternoon, we select a training package for each member of staff to complete that helps develop their personal knowledge, as well as helping you, our patients.

Examples of past packages include, Safeguarding Children, Dementia Awareness and the Mental Capacity Act. Once a year we meet with the other members of the Fleet Primary Care Network and invite speakers to come in to train en masse. These TARGET afternoons are an essential part of keeping all staff up to date on matters concerning their in dividual roles.

Our next TARGET afternoon is 24th September 2026.

Carers



Are You a Carer? Please Let Us Know

Do you look after a family member, friend or neighbour who relies on your help and would find it difficult to manage without you? If so, you may be a carer – even if you don't think of yourself as one. At Richmond Surgery, we understand the important role that unpaid carers play. By letting us know that you are a carer, we can record this on your medical record and make sure we are aware of your caring responsibilities. This helps us to offer appropriate support and let you know about information and resources that may be available to you.

This applies to **all unpaid carers, including young carers under the age of 18**.

If you are a carer and have not already told us, please let the Surgery know or complete the Carers Registration Form available on our website.

Caring for someone else is important – and so is looking after your own health and wellbeing. Please make sure we know that you are a carer.

Our Senior Administrator, Hayley Woodhouse, is our internal Carers Lead.

September Links



This is an interesting article on living with Tourettes Syndrome [The Cambridge University lecturer who kept her Tourette's secret - BBC News]

Hepatitis C update [NHS England » 100,000 people receive treatment to cure deadly hep C virus on NHS in just ten years]

[England set to be one of the first countries to eliminate hepatitis C - BBC News]

Pain Awareness Month [Pain Awareness Month - International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP)]

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month [Childhood Cancer Awareness Month 2026 | CwC UK]

Ordering Repeat Prescriptions

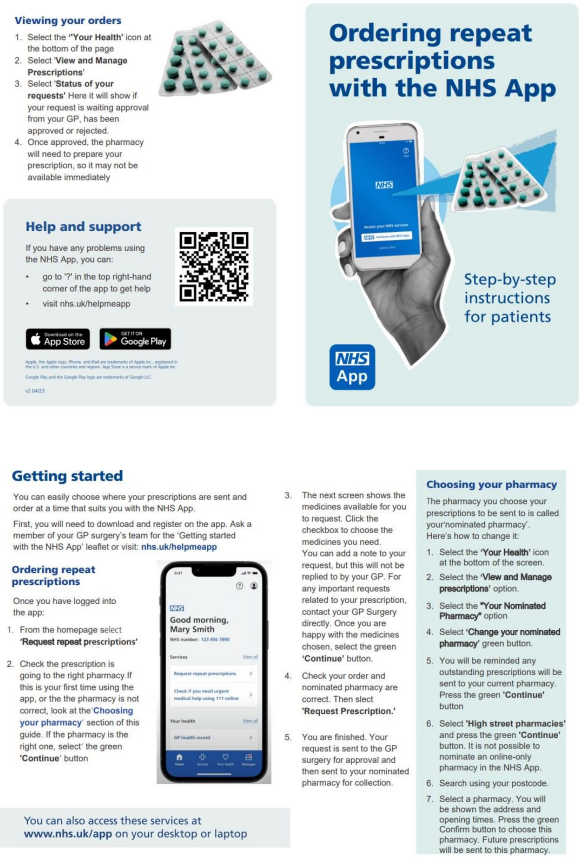
There are three ways you are able to order your repeat prescriptions:

1. Via NHS App
2. Via our online webform
3. Requesting via your pharmacy

Please remember that prescription requests take 3-5 working days, and they can be ordered up to two weeks in advance.

Via the NHS App

Please see the below photos on how to get set up.



Via Our Online Webform

If your medication is not available via your app (not on repeat), please visit our website www.richmondsurgeryfleet.com and navigate to the green repeat prescription button. This will lead you to a separate page; select the webform, fill in the information, and click submit.

This request comes directly to our prescriptions team.

Requesting Via Your Pharmacy

You can call your nominated pharmacy to place your medication request.

Change Of Personal Information



Your medical record is more than just notes on a screen — it helps us give you safe, effective care. When information is missing or out of date, it can lead to delays, confusion, or even the wrong decisions being made.

Please let us know if anything has changed including:

- Your Name
- Mobile Phone
- Email Address
- Home Address

To do this, please either, email us at frimleyicb.richmondsurgery@nhs.net or alternatively, please come into the surgery to complete a Change of Name or Address Form.

Please remember not to send any clinical emails to this, or our secretaries, email address.

PPG



Your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Did you know that every GP surgery in England must have a Patient Participation Group? Richmond Surgery's PPG has been here for many years, but were you aware of it? We are volunteers, all patients at the Surgery, and our job is simple: to see the Surgery — and the wider NHS — through patients' eyes, and to help make things work better for us all.

It's also worth noting that the directive for PPG structure was set so all patients are PPG members by default, and that the activities are managed by a small sub-set, who form a committee. We hope to evolve to this model over time.

For now, here's an update of where we're at currently:

What we do:

- pass on your (non-medical) questions, feedback (good and bad!), suggestions and problems to the Practice team — and let you know the outcomes. You can use the Suggestion Box in the surgery or contact us directly.
- work with the Practice team on changes that make things easier for patients — clearer information, and simpler ways to book, cancel, order prescriptions and understand test results
- keep in touch with other PPGs, the NHS Care Board and hospital teams, so patients stay informed as the wider NHS changes — and so we can spot the glitches patients meet and feed them back to the people who can fix them
- help patients get the best from the NHS App and other online services, with 'How to…' guides and, we hope, hands-on help sessions – watch this space

- lend a hand at events such as the flu and COVID vaccination clinics and wider health-related campaigns

What we've been up to — and what's coming

The PPG has grown to six members — three joining in the last eight months — and we have been busy. We've been taking a close, patient's-eye look at how easy (or not!) it is to contact the surgery, cancel appointments, order prescriptions and make sense of test results, and the Practice team is already acting on what we've found together.

1. *One change you can use today:* ***to cancel an appointment, just phone the surgery and press 1****.*

More improvements are in the pipeline, and we'll report the results here and on our refreshed PPG page on the surgery website — do keep an eye on it.

PPG Noticeboard

We have a Notice Board in the Surgery and will be posting information there which we hope you find helpful!

Patient Suggestion Box – Have Your Say!

Did you know that there is a suggestion box above the table under the information TV screen in the waiting room? It's managed by the PPG, and every suggestion gets a personal response — with the suggestions and outcomes published on our PPG page (unless you ask us not to, of course!).

Here's a recent example:

Waiting room clock

A patient asked whether a waiting room clock could be provided to replace the previous one.

Working with the Practice Support Lead, a large digital clock now appears regularly on the waiting room TV screen. The patient was contacted on 17 July to confirm the update.

If you have a non-clinical suggestion or comment about Richmond Surgery that you think the PPG might be able to help with, leave a note in the box with your contact details and we'll take it forward for you.

Contacting the PPG

We have a dedicated email address, so please use this to contact us with any questions: RichmondSurgeryPPG@gmail.com

Please note, this email is not for personal medical queries and is not connected to Richmond Surgery - it is run by our PPG members. If you have any other queries, complaints or

grievances that do not relate to our PPG, please email the Practice on frimleyicb.richmondsurgery@nhs.net

Could you add value? Yes!

Do you ever think "*there must be an easier way to do this*"? Then you are exactly the person we are looking for! You don't need any special knowledge — just your own experience as a patient and a little time. We would especially love to hear from younger adults, parents with young children and working family members, so the group reflects everyone the surgery serves.

To find out more, complete the short form on our PPG page and tick the box saying you'd like to play a more active role — or simply email us at RichmondSurgeryPPG@gmail.com.

Facebook



Follow Us on Facebook

Did you know we have a Facebook page? We regularly share practice updates, health advice, service information, and important announcements.

Following our page is a simple way to stay up to date with the latest news from the practice.

Please note, our Facebook is for information and updates only. For appointments, prescriptions, or urgent medical matters, please use the appropriate practice channels or call NHS 111.

Search for us on Facebook or follow the link provided to keep informed.

www.facebook.com/richmondsurgery

Compliments, Complaints and Feedback



If you have any concerns you wish us to investigate or wish to feedback negatively, please be aware that the internal formal processes involve several lengthy steps and therefore may take a considerable amount of time and work, both with management and the GP Partners before you receive a response. We respectively ask therefore that you carefully consider if your concern is significant to warrant the level of investigatory work and delays to both Richmond and yourself.

If you have any feedback or significant concerns, please put this in writing, either by letter or email to our Patient Liaison Manager, Lavinia Pollard, who will investigate: frimleyicb.richmondsurgery@nhs.net.

You can also use our website: Feedback - RICHMOND SURGERY

Please note that we do not discuss complaints in person, or by telephone. Speaking to a member of staff will not record your complaint or concern and therefore you will be asked to put your complaint or concern formally in writing BEFORE it can be dealt with.

Please provide your name and contact details. If your complaint or feedback is anonymous, we are unable to fully investigate, or respond to you. Therefore, anonymous complaints or feedback are not actioned in full.

We really do appreciate all feedback, good or bad, as it helps us understand what we are doing well and what we need to improve.