Richmond Surgery
Fleet, Hampshire

Armed Forces veteran friendly accredited GP practice

Dementia Friendly



Winter Newsletter 2025

With the days getting darker earlier and the jingling of Christmas bells, here is what you need to know for this Winter period.

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Keeping Well In Winter



Stay well this winter

Winter conditions can be bad for our health, aggravating any existing health problems, increasing the risk of a fall, and making us more vulnerable to respiratory winter illnesses. People aged 65 or older, and people with long-term conditions such as heart or kidney disease, COPD (including emphysema and chronic bronchitis), asthma or diabetes are at higher risk. Being cold can also cause your blood pressure to rise, potentially increasing the risk of strokes and heart attacks.

But there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

Stay strong with winter vaccines

Getting vaccinated helps keep you and your loved ones safe by reducing your risk of serious illness, hospitalisation and passing an illness on to others. Every year thousands of older adults, people with certain health conditions and children under 5 need hospital care for flu, COVID-19, RSV and other preventable illnesses. Sadly every winter thousands of people die. The risk from these viruses is greater during winter when they circulate most as people spend more time indoors.



Clare, Pharmacist

Keeping yourself and your home warm

Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems such as heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression.

Age UK and UKHSA suggest heating your home to a temperature that is comfortable for you. This should be at least 18°C in the rooms that you regularly use such as your living room and bedroom. Low indoor temperatures can have a serious impact on your health, especially if you have medical conditions or are older.

With the rising cost of living, there are some simple changes that can help to keep you and your home warm:

- Try to reduce draughts – fit draught excluders around doors cheaply, or alternatively use an old towel to cover a gap under a door.
- Keep your bedroom windows closed at night.
- Wear several layers of thinner clothing – this will keep you warmer than one thicker layer.
- Ensure you are eating enough and having hot drinks.

Check that your heating and cooking appliances are safe. Contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to make sure they're operating properly. Visit **www.gassaferegister.co.uk** and **www.nationalfirechiefs.org.uk** for more information. If you live in rented or social accommodation, you can check that your landlord is meeting minimum standards around energy efficiency, damp and mould.

Check for safety concerns around your home

Age UK advises older people to make some simple changes around your home to make it a safer place. For example, moving rugs and mats at the top or the bottom of the stairs out of the way, installing a night light near the bed to make sure you can see where you're going if you wake up in the night, and removing trip hazards like trailing wires or clutter from your home.

Fire Safety

Most fires in the home start accidentally. Having working smoke alarms on every floor of your home can provide the vital early warning should a fire start. Smoke alarms should be tested monthly. Get a **carbon monoxide alarm** for each room of your home that contains appliances that burn gas, oil, coal or wood.

You can complete an online home fire safety check at **www.ohfsc.co.uk**. It will provide fire safety advice specific to you and tips on how to keep you and your household safe from fire.

Seeking financial support

Make sure you're receiving all the help you're entitled to this winter.

There are grants, benefits and sources of advice available to help you make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating or help manage energy bills.

If you're eligible for Pension Credit you could also get a Winter Fuel Payment. Check what benefits you could be eligible for at **www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators**

The government has also published energy saving tips to help save money on bills at **helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk**

For further advice on these support measures, visit Age UK's website or call 0800 169 6565.

Mental health support

We all feel down from time to time, no matter our age. You can find information and tips on keeping mentally healthy at **www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters**

Speak to your GP practice about NHS Talking Therapies if you are anxious, depressed or struggling to cope. They can help you – physically and mentally – and can refer you to the right service. You can also self-refer by visiting **www.nhs.uk/talk**

If you live with serious mental illness, you are entitled to a free NHS annual health check – talk to your GP, key worker or mental health service to book it.

If you or a loved one are experiencing a mental health crisis, you can call NHS 111 and press Option 2 for 24-hour mental health advice and support. Information and contact details are available on **www.nhs.uk/urgentmentalhealth**

Check your medicine cabinet

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help you and your family this winter.

Many over-the-counter medicines (including paracetamol and ibuprofen) are available to relieve symptoms of common winter illnesses such as colds, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache).

To manage winter illness symptoms at home, you should keep warm, rest, drink plenty of fluids, have at least one hot meal a day to keep your energy levels up and use over-the-counter medicines to help give relief. For more information, speak to your local pharmacist; find yours at **www.nhs.uk/find-a-pharmacy**

Keep active

There's strong evidence that people who are inactive have an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression and dementia. Regular exercise can help improve your physical and mental health, reduce the risk of falling and can be beneficial for recovery if you do get ill.

Try to reduce the amount of time you spend sitting down during the day.



Liam, Physiotherapist

There are many activities you could do at home to keep active. For tips and ideas on keeping active go to **www.nhs.uk/keepactive** or have a look at **www.ageuk.org.uk/active**

Hand washing

Cases of infectious illnesses can increase over winter, including highly contagious infections such as flu and norovirus, also called the 'winter vomiting bug'.

Washing your hands with soap and water is one of the easiest ways to protect yourself and others from catching these viruses and help reduce the pressures on healthcare services.

Hand washing is particularly important when you're visiting someone in hospital or another healthcare setting.

If you do not have immediate access to soap and water, then use alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

Make sure to wash your hands for at least 40 seconds, and find out more about how to wash your hands most effectively at **www.nhs.uk/handwashing**



Jaza, Nurse

Prescriptions

Make sure you get your prescription medicines before your pharmacy or GP practice closes for holidays.

And, if you've been prescribed antibiotics or any other medication, make sure you take them as directed.

You can order prescriptions via GP or pharmacy websites, by calling them, or via NHS-approved apps. Ask a friend, relative or volunteer to collect medicines for you.

A list of NHS-approved apps is here **www.nhs.uk/approvedproviders**

You can also order your repeat prescriptions via the NHS App, as well as make GP appointments. The NHS App is available on the App Store and on Google Play. For more information visit **www.nhs.uk/nhsapp**



Look out for other people

Remember that older neighbours, friends and family members, may need extra help over the winter. Keep in touch with them, especially if they live alone.

Make sure they're stocked up with enough food supplies for a few days, in case cold, ice or snowy weather stop them from going out. If they do need to go out in the cold, encourage them to wear shoes with a good grip and a scarf around the mouth to protect them from the cold air, and to reduce their risk of chest infections. Make sure they get any prescription medicines before the Christmas holidays start and if bad weather is forecast. If they need help over the holiday period when the GP practice or pharmacy is closed or they're not sure what to do, NHS 111 can help. The service is available online at 111.nhs.uk and also by phone. By answering questions about their health problem they will be told what to do and where to go.



For further advice on how you can help, visit www.ageuk.org.uk or call 0800 169 6565.

Please take care this Winter and look through this leaflet.

Flu cases are increasing this year, please see the below link

NHS England » NHS ready for double whammy of winter flu-demic and strikes[1]

If you are attending an appointment or visiting Richmond Surgery, we recommend that if anyone is experiencing symptoms of a respiratory virus such as a cough, a cold or flu-like symptoms, we ask that you please wear a mask.

Please help us to protect all our patients and members of staff

[1] https://www.england.nhs.uk/2025/12/nhs-ready-double-whammy-winter-fludemic-strikes/

Blood Pressure



Did you know that Pharmacies can help you take your blood pressure if you do not have access to a machine at home?

Blood pressure is an important indication of your health, as having high blood pressure can increase your risk of:

- Heart Disease
- Heart Attacks
- Strokes
- Heart Failure
- Kidney Disease
- Vascular Dementia

We often send out blood pressure diaries, and we like to ask for 4 or 7 days worth of readings to get an overall understanding of your blood pressure.

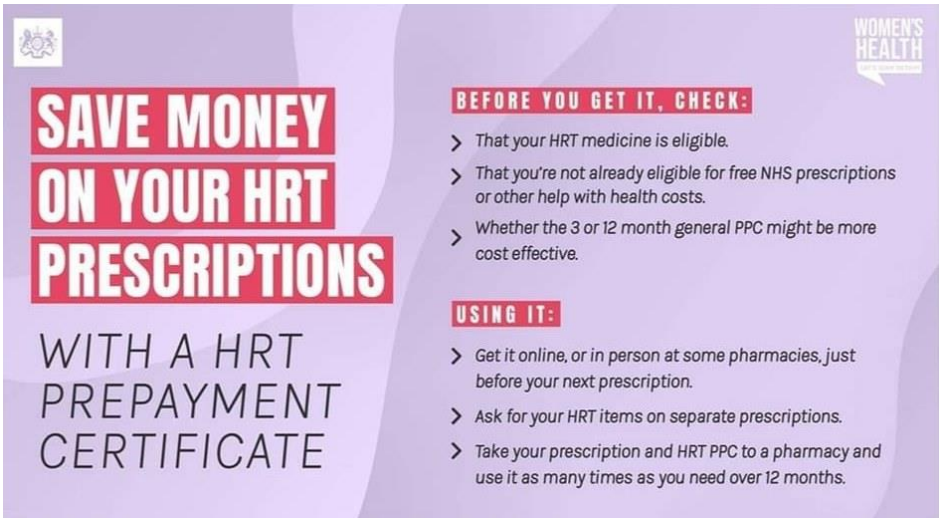
Pharmacies are able to help you take your blood pressure if you do not have a machine at home. If you go to the pharmacy for a reading, the results are also passed to us.

HRT NHS Exemption

It has been brought to our attention that the HRT Exemption does not include testosterone.

Please use the link below to see what medication is covered under the HRT PPC:

Medicines covered by the HRT PPC | NHSBSA[2]



[2] https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/nhs-hormone-replacement-therapy-prescription-prepayment-certificate-hrt-ppc/medicines-covered-hrt-ppc

Contraception Service



We would like to advise you that Pharmacies, including the on-site Wellbeing Pharmacy, who work very closely with us, provide a free contraceptive service, which includes emergency contraception.

You can bypass the need for an appointment with your GP, and go directly to the Pharmacy.

Patients who access the Pharmacy service are notified to your GP so that your medical records remain up to date.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)



The Patient Participation Group allows patients to feedback constructive comments and suggestions for improvements to services provided by the practice. It is run by volunteers who give up a bit of their time to be the voice of the patients to the surgery.

We have recently welcomed a new member to our PPG, Neil Heslop, who you may have met at one of our Saturday COVID clinics, back in October.

If you would like to apply to join our PPG, please use the link below to apply:

Patient Group - RICHMOND SURGERY[3]

Opening Hours

With the Christmas period upon us, please see the below opening hours for Richmond Surgery and Wellbeing Pharmacy.

Please use the link below to see what services are available over Christmas and New Year

NHS Frimley - Plan ahead for the festive Bank Holiday weekend[4]

[3] https://www.richmondsurgeryfleet.com/patientgroup
[4] https://frimley.icb.nhs.uk/news/1061-plan-ahead-for-the-festive-bank-holiday-weekend

	Richmond Surgery	Wellbeing Pharmacy
24/12/2025	08:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 14:00, 15:00 - 21:00
25/12/2025	CLOSED	CLOSED
26/12/2025	CLOSED	CLOSED
27/12/2025	CLOSED	12:30 – 16:00, 17:00 - 21:00
28/12/2025	CLOSED	10:00 – 17:00
29/12/2025	08:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 14:00, 15:00 - 21:00
30/12/2025	08:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 14:00, 15:00 - 21:00
31/12/2025	08:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 14:00, 15:00 - 21:00
01/01/2026	CLOSED	CLOSED
02/01/2026	08:00 – 18:30	08:00 – 14:00, 15:00 - 21:00

Goodbye...

This December we said goodbye to one of our longest standing members of staff, Rachel.

Rachel initially joined Richmond Surgery in 2011 with the intention of working here for only 1 year, which turned in 14!

She began in reception, progressed to clinical scanner, then Practice Administrator before becoming Senior Administrator with her wealth of knowledge of all things Richmond.

Rachel will be greatly missed, and we wish Rachel well as she moves north of the country and starts her new life and work.



And with Rachel leaving, Hayley will be joining our Richmond Surgery team in February as an Administrator.

Hayley comes to us as a qualified GP Assistant having worked in Primary Care for many years.

We can't wait to welcome Hayley to our team.

Job Vacancies

We are currently looking to recruit some new members to join our team.

We are looking for Reception Care Navigators and a Bank Phlebotomist.

Please visit our job vacancies on our website for more details at Job Vacancies - RICHMOND SURGERY[5]

[5] https://www.richmondsurgeryfleet.com/jobvacancies



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[6].

You can also use our website: Feedback - RICHMOND SURGERY[7]

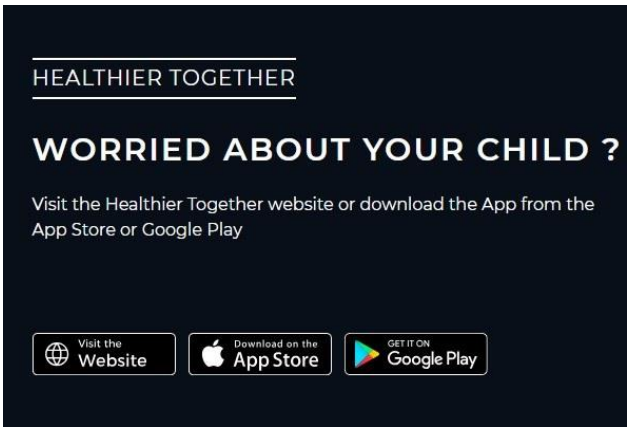
Please note that we do not discuss complaints in person, or by telephone. Speaking to a member of staff will not record your complaint or concern and therefore you will be asked to put your complaint or concern formally in writing BEFORE it can be dealt with.

[6] mailto:frimleyicb.richmondsurgery@nhs.net
[7] https://www.richmondsurgeryfleet.com/feedback

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.







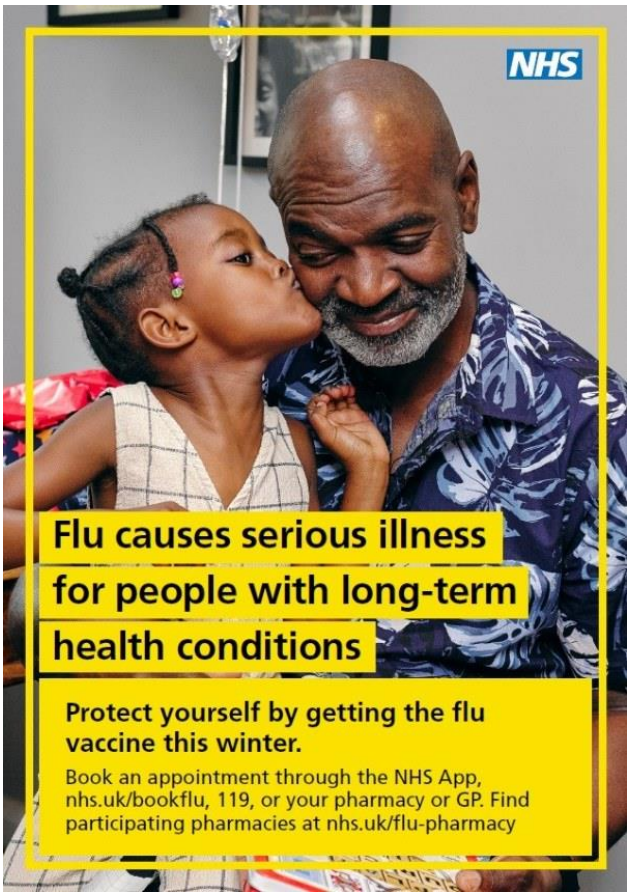


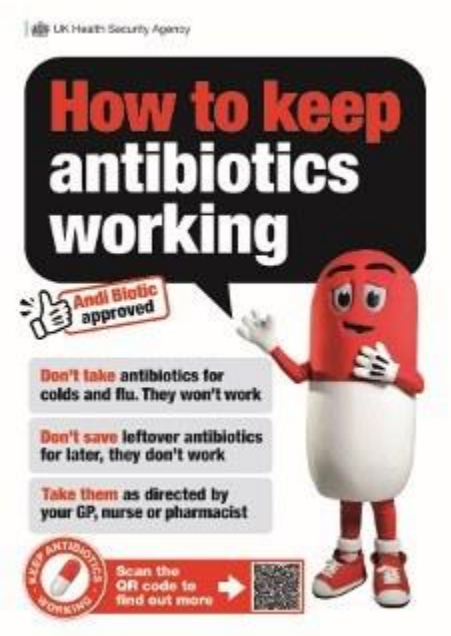
Use 111

If you need urgent medical help but you're not sure where to go, use 111 to get assessed and directed to the right place for you.

Call, go online or use the NHS App.

111 Help us help you


NHS
Flu causes serious illness for people with long-term health conditions
Protect yourself by getting the flu vaccine this winter.
Book an appointment through the NHS App, nhs.uk/bookflu, 119, or your pharmacy or GP. Find participating pharmacies at nhs.uk/flu-pharmacy


UK Health Security Agency
How to keep antibiotics working
Andi Biotic approved
Don't take antibiotics for colds and flu. They won't work
Don't save leftover antibiotics for later, they don't work
Take them as directed by your GP, nurse or pharmacist
KEEP ANTIBIOTICS WORKING
Scan the QR code to find out more


Did you know?
Why the NHS needs GP partners
GP BUSINESS PART 3
GP partners...
... have a sense of ownership
... aren't faceless management
... are approachable & accountable
... have knowledge of local community
... are all leaders in their field
... provide long-term stability & continuity
GP surgeries...
... are mostly run by GP partners
... are efficient by design & necessity
... can innovate rapidly for patient benefit
... deal with 1.5 million NHS patients daily
Derby & Derbyshire LMC