

Newsletter for our patients

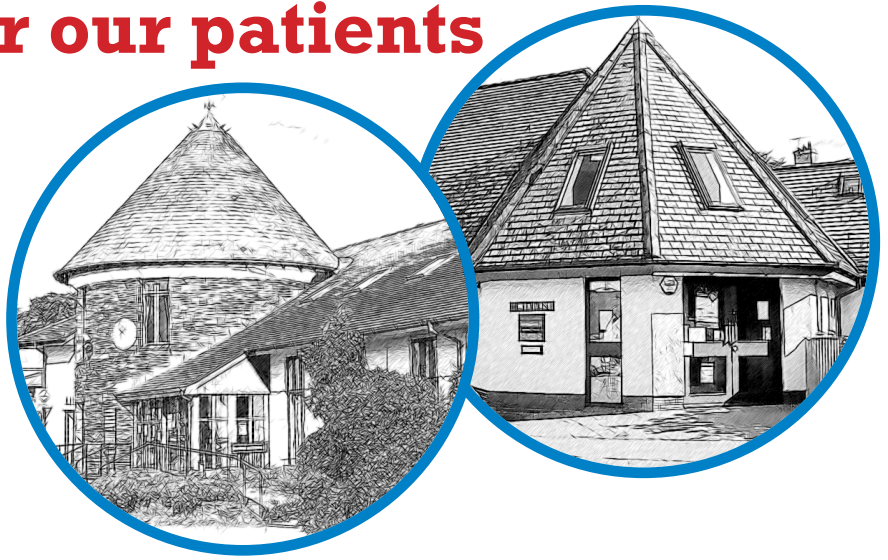
July 2025

Riverside Surgery
Bovey Tracey
01626 832666

Tower House Surgery
Chudleigh
01626 852379



Scan to go to our website



Sheep in Chudleigh

Chudleigh Town Council recently received a grant to help enhance business in the high street, and, because Chudleigh is an ancient wool town, they decided to commission Jonathan Valentine (who is one of our patients) to produce sheep themed plaques and planters.

Some of the Chudleigh sheep are specific to individual premises. Our Surgery in Chudleigh acquired the direction sign shown below.



Need oral contraception?

If you're already taking oral contraception (the pill) or looking for your first supply, you can now arrange a confidential consultation at a local participating pharmacy.

You can walk into a participating pharmacy to

find out more, or you may be referred by local medical services.

No charges

This is a free NHS service, including any supply of oral contraception. You do not need to be registered with a GP to use this service.

You can use the service:

- ❖ If you need to start the pill for the first time
- ❖ If you need to take the pill again after a break from using it
- ❖ If you need to access an ongoing supply of your pill

What to expect

You'll speak to a pharmacist in a private consultation room. They'll ask about your health and may check your height, weight and blood pressure.

If you're starting the pill for the first time, the pharmacist will help you to consider and select an appropriate option.

The pharmacist will explain how to take the pill and will also discuss possible side effects. They can refer you to your GP or sexual health clinic if needed. You may be offered:

- ❖ a combined pill (up to and including 49 years of age)
- ❖ a progestogen-only pill (up to and including 54 years of age)

If the pharmacist gives you the contraceptive pill, they will tell your GP, but only if you give them permission to do so.

Local pharmacies offering the service

Bovey Tracey pharmacy, Chudleigh pharmacy, and several Newton Abbot pharmacies, offer the Contraception Service and will see patients for their contraceptive pill check.

The service is available for walk-in patients, or you can book in for a telephone consultation to go through a pre-consultation questionnaire and then have a blood pressure check when you go to collect your prescription.

Other pharmacies offering this service can be found using this link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/find-a-pharmacy-offering-contraceptive-pill-without-prescription/>

Staff news

Lucy has joined our Nursing team as a Healthcare Assistant (HCA) and brings with her valuable experience from working in primary care, both in GP practice and community pharmacy. We have welcomed Rachel, Fiona and Kelly who

have joined our reception team as care coordinators. They will be some of the welcoming faces you will meet both at Riverside and Tower House surgeries.

Care coordinators will assist you with any queries, and ensure that you have a smooth and positive experience when you visit our Practice.

Hazel, pharmacy technician, has successfully completed her Primary Care Pharmacy Education Pathway course, receiving exceptional feedback along the way (this pathway builds on the success of clinical pharmacists in general practice and gives pharmacists and pharmacy technicians the required knowledge, skills and experience to work in various patient-facing roles in primary care networks as part of a multidisciplinary team.

Hazel's accomplishment is true testament to her dedication, hard work and expertise in her role.

We congratulate Hazel on this outstanding achievement. We're proud to have such a committed and talented member of our team.

A local award

At the Bovey Tracey Town Council annual town meeting held earlier in the year, the Community Champion Award went to Riverside Surgery Befrienders who perform the much valued service of providing transport to some of our patients who would not otherwise be able easily to travel to appointments.

Lung cancer screening

The NHS Lung Cancer Screening programme for Devon and Cornwall is part of Phase 3 of a national rollout and will invite an estimated 270,000 patients for lung cancer screening.

The programme aims to diagnose lung cancer at an

Using SystemConnect at Reception or by telephone

For those unable to complete online forms, we want to reassure you that help will always be available.

You are still able to contact Reception, whether on the telephone or in person, and our receptionists will happily assist you by completing the SystemConnect forms on your behalf.

Please help other patients

If you have relatives, neighbours or friends who rely on phoning Reception rather than using online facilities, please reassure them and emphasise they're not being left behind and that we will help them all we can.

If you know of someone who needs special assistance in order to be able to contact us, please give them a hand, or let us know about them.

We are here, we are listening

We are committed to being accessible and inclusive, and we will ensure that no patient feels alienated because they are unable to use the online system.

We are dedicated to providing care that works for everyone.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Thank you for your support: we will always strive to deliver the best possible care to our patients.

early stage when treatment may be more successful.

The service is being provided by ***In Health*** which extracts relevant patient data from GP Practices.

How the programme works

In Health writes to any patients aged from 55 to 74 who are recorded as having smoked regularly, or ever smoked, to invite them to have a health check.

There's also an 'open invitation' to other patients who fit the age range but have not been recorded as smokers or as having ever smoked.

Patients will have an assessment over the phone about their medical/smoking history and either be deemed high risk, and will be offered a low dose CT scan, or deemed low risk, and will leave the programme.

Local CT scanning

The CT will be carried out in a mobile CT van parked

local to the patient, and with easy access to bus routes etc (supermarket car parks are often used).

All the CT scans will be individually assessed by the lung cancer screening team

Letters giving the results will be sent out to patients within four weeks, with a copy to their GP.

History of the project

The NHS Lung Cancer Screening programme for Devon & Cornwall began in the East of Cornwall in August 2022 and has since expanded to a second site in Plymouth.

The team running the project are pleased that the screening can now be made available to Torbay and South Devon.

Giving up smoking

If you're a smoker and you'd like to stop, there is a lot of help available to you at <https://stopforlifedevon.org>

People in Devon who currently smoke could be

eligible for free support to help them quit. Just register on the site <https://stopforlifedevon.org> and you can start the process of quitting smoking.

SystemOnline v. NHS App

While both allow you to manage your healthcare, there are some key differences:

Ordering repeat prescriptions

SystemOnline—Log in via the website to request repeats direct from your GP practice.

NHS App—Request repeats via the app. There's an option to track their status too.

Accessing medical information

SystemOnline—View your full medical records, test results, and appointments.

NHS App—Access a summary of your GP record, including allergies, medications, and appointment history.

Which one should you use?

Both options allow you to manage your healthcare, but the **NHS App** offers additional features, such as NHS services nearby.

Some patients prefer the more detailed view of their records provided in **SystemOnline**.

Music Can a valuable dementia care resource

Music Can, managed by the National Academy of Social Prescribing, is a website that supports people living with dementia, and their carers, to use music as part of dementia care.

Have a look at the site <https://www.musiccan.co.uk/>

There are activities and guides, and useful resources, for professionals working with people living with dementia. There's also a comprehensive directory of more than 350 organisations across the whole

country that provide music-based support.

Do you know any stubborn men?

We ask the question because some men, possibly the majority, who think they've might have a health problem seem unwilling to visit a GP, even when their partner or their close relatives encourage them to obtain a GP appointment.

This difference between the way in which men and women approach GP contact is often put down to the fact that most women experience frequent GP appointments from quite early on in their lives.

Nag if you have to

If you know a man who is worried about his health in any way, and who fails to see his GP about his worries, do please do all you can to get him to book an appointment. You might save his life.

The HOPE programme

The *Help Overcoming Problems Effectively (HOPE)* programme is a free course that supports you to manage your health and wellbeing and to explore what is important to you.

To find out more, look at: <https://myhealth-devon.nhs.uk/local-services/hope-programme/>

Leaflet

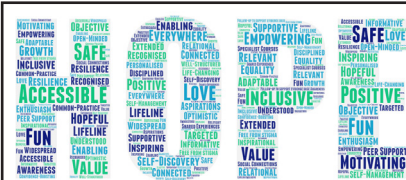
You can download a leaflet about the HOPE programme from:

<https://myhealth-devon.nhs.uk/images/HOPE/HOPE-Participant-Leaflet-2021-2.pdf>

In Devon, the course is delivered in three ways, face to face, online using Microsoft Teams, or digitally using an online platform.


Booking your free course

For information on all the available courses,



Help Overcoming Problems Effectively

Take a positive approach to looking after yourself



NHS **the hope programme**

please contact the HOPE coordinator:

01803 320600

hope.devon@nhs.net

What can you expect?

The HOPE programme covers a variety of topics including:

- ❖ mindfulness
- ❖ goal setting
- ❖ gratitude diaries
- ❖ stress management
- ❖ healthy eating
- ❖ dealing with setbacks
- ❖ fatigue management

You will notice that courses are designed around a specific condition or group of people, for example, people living with chronic pain or parents with young children. This is to ensure that all participants get the best out of the programme.

Please note that the HOPE programme does not replace medical care: it is not therapy, but it certainly is therapeutic!

Make your own booking

You can refer yourself to the HOPE programme if you feel that it would be of benefit to you.

You can start the process at: <https://myhealth-devon.nhs.uk/local-services/hope-programme/>

Always keep an eye on your skin

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK, and it can be tricky to spot in its early stages. Keeping an eye—*all year round*—for any changes in moles or skin marks could save your life.

Understanding skin cancer

Skin cancer develops when the skin cells grow abnormally and form a tumour. There are two main types:

Non-melanoma skin cancers: these are more common and typically easier to treat.

Melanoma is less common but more dangerous and can spread to other parts of the body if it is not caught early enough.

Prevention: sun protection

One of the most effective ways to reduce your risk of skin cancer is by protecting your skin from harmful UV rays.

The sun's rays can damage your skin even when it's not sunny, so if you spend a lot of time in the open air, it's important to apply sun cream daily, especially during summer.

Use a high SPF sunscreen (at least SPF 30 or higher). Reapply every two hours, and more often if swimming or sweating.

Some of the cheaper sunscreens have been found to be more effective than some of the very expensive ones.



Seek shade between 11 am and 3 pm when the sun is at its strongest.

Wear protective clothing such as hats, sunglasses, and long sleeves.

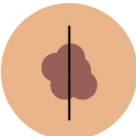


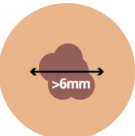

Avoid tanning beds—these can increase your risk of skin cancer.

Early detection saves lives


Monitoring your moles, freckles and birthmarks for



When checking moles, know your ABCDE

A	B	C	D	E
Asymmetry	Border	Colour	Diameter	Evolution
				
Both halves don't look the same.	The mole has blurred or jagged edges.	The mole has more than one colour.	Grows larger than 6mm.	Changes size, shape or colour.

If you find any new moles or changes to existing ones, book an appointment with your GP as soon as possible.



help us help you

signs of skin cancer is crucial. Skin cancer is highly treatable when caught early. Simple, routine checks can help identify potential problems before they become serious.

Although the risk of skin cancer increases with age, anyone can develop it, so it is important for all ages to be proactive about skin health.

Checking your moles

The diagram above illustrates a simple rule which is easy to remember: **ABCDE**.

A for Asymmetry: One half does not match the other.

B for Border: The edges are irregular or jagged.

C for Colour: The colour is uneven, with shades of brown, black, or other colours.

D for Diameter: The mole is larger than the size of a pencil eraser (about 6mm).

E for Evolution: The mole changes in size, shape, or colour.

If you notice any of these warning signs, it is important to get your mole checked by a doctor.

Your GP or a dermatologist can assess whether further action is needed, such as a biopsy to check for cancerous cells.

When to see a GP

- ❖ If you spot a new mole.
- ❖ If an existing mole changes in size, shape, or colour.
- ❖ If the mole becomes itchy, painful, or bleeds.

If you are unsure about a mole, or concerned about sun exposure, make an appointment with your GP.

We are here to help with advice and, if necessary, guide you through further testing or referral to a specialist.

Be vigilant, always

The best way to stay ahead of potential risks is to practise sun safety and keep a very watchful eye on your skin—*all year round*.