

Be Clear on Bowel Cancer

Bowel Cancer Screening aims to detect bowel cancer at an early stage in people with no symptoms. In England the bowel cancer screening programme is offered to men and women between the ages of 60 - 69 every two years (anyone over 70 can request a screening kit by calling the programme's freephone helpline on 0800 707 6060 (Mon - Fri 9am - 5pm))

You don't need to wait until you are part of the bowel cancer screening programme if you are worried about any symptoms that you think might be caused by bowel cancer. Make an appointment with your doctor or call the Bowel Cancer UK Information and Support Service on 0800 8 40 35 40 or email: support@bowelcanceruk.org.uk

The symptoms of bowel (colorectal) cancer can be:

- Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo
- A change in bowel habit lasting for 3 weeks or more especially to looser or runny poo
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason
- A pain or lump in your tummy

You might experience one, some, all of the above or no symptoms at all. Remember most symptoms will not be bowel cancer.

Just remember you'll not be wasting anyone's time by getting checked out. If it isn't serious, you'll put your mind at rest. If it's bowel cancer, early detection can make all the difference. Over 90% of people who are diagnosed at the earliest stage are successfully treated. So a trip to your doctor could save your life.

About the Clinical Commissioning Group

NHS West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group covers a population of around 253,000 in West Cheshire. We are led by local GPs representing 37 GP practices who have agreed to work together as partners to improve care for local people. We use our budget of over £300 million to ensure the best possible healthcare for our population.

Meet us...

Dr Claire Westmoreland

"I'm a GP at Western Avenue Medical Centre and the clinical lead for Patient and Public Engagement for the Clinical Commissioning Group - that means ensuring we put patients at the heart of everything we do and that we listen and learn from what patients and their families tell us about their experiences of health services. I'd like to encourage local people to get involved with the Clinical Commissioning Group whether it's by doing a survey in your practice, coming along to one of our events or joining your practice participation group. Your views really can help to improve our local health service!"



Do you want to find out more about us?

If you've not had the chance to hear about our plans for the next five years and talk to local GPs at one of our recent roadshows you've still got the chance to join us in Chester on **6th September** or Ellesmere Port on the **8th November**, both starting at 6pm. Have a look at our website www.westcheshireccg.nhs.uk or get in touch with us to find out more. Our contact details are on page 2.

Join our West Cheshire Patients' Panel

Local people have helped us decide how to develop our current membership scheme to become the West Cheshire Patients' Panel. We want it to be bigger and better!

Anyone who lives, or is registered with a GP in West Cheshire, as a patient, carer, local organisation or a member of the public can sign up to be a part of the Panel. The only qualification is that you have an interest in local health services and want to be involved in influencing decision made about local health services. Look at our website www.westcheshireccg.nhs.uk or contact us to find out more and how to sign up!

NHS 111 Service - We need your feedback



A new telephone service for people, who need medical help fast when it isn't a 999 emergency, will be launched next year. The success of the service depends on a directory of our local services. This will let staff answering the calls see, at the touch of a button, what services are available, treatments on offer and opening times.

This is where we need your help. Over the last 12 months, have you rung for an ambulance? Gone to a hospital Accident and Emergency department? Phoned for a GP outside their normal working hours or gone to a pharmacy in the evenings? If so, what happened next? How were you dealt with? Our contact details are at the bottom of the page.

The Department of Health is also planning to use press adverts, posters and leaflets to promote the new NHS 111 Service next year. Would this work for you? Do you have other ideas about how people should be told about the new service? Let us know.

You Can Have Your Say

Here are some ways that you can get involved:

- All of our practices have set up a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Look out for more information in your GP practice
- Join our West Cheshire Patients' Panel - look on our website www.westcheshireccg.nhs.uk or contact us for more information



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West Cheshire CCG

You Said, We Did...

You told us that you were not always getting copies of the letters sent about your care between hospital doctors and your GP. In fact national survey results told us less than half of you who wanted to receive a copy of the letter sent to your GP following your last appointment actually got one.

We decided to check this out and during 2011/12 people using the out-patient department at the Countess of Chester were asked about their experience. In this local survey you told us that over the 12 months we had improved greatly with 70% of those completing the survey saying they had received a copy of their GP letter.

Leading the way - Patient Participation Groups in GP Practices

A Patient Participation Group based at a GP Practice at Ellesmere Port has had a major impact on the way the surgery is run. The group, based at Old Hall Surgery, was set up over a year ago and now meets every month to tackle some of the issues raised by its patients.

For example, when the group found out that the practice had a high number of patients failing to attend for their appointments, they decided to do something about it. The Group designed a questionnaire asking patients about their reasons for not attending their GP appointment. The Practice then sent out the questionnaires to all the patients who had failed to attend an appointment with a doctor in May 2012.

The results were discussed with the Patient Participation Group in July and posters displaying the results of the survey were displayed in the waiting area, along with messages encouraging patient to keep their appointments.

The Group have also put together a collection of healthy recipes for those with long term conditions, and met with local NHS staff to talk about current developments.

How to contact us:

West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group,
1829 Building, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1HJ

Website: www.westcheshireccg.nhs.uk

Email: wchc@nhs.net

If you have a concern about local health services or want to seek advice, you can contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01244 650368.