



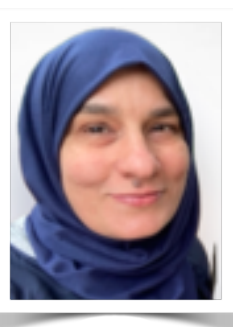
Your good health

FOR ALL STAFF
AND PATIENTS

A new practice manager arrives

THE SURGERY has a new practice manager. Hamida Khan started work towards the end of October and has already made a strong impression on staff and the surgery's patient participation group.

"We have had a very promising introductory meeting with Hamida," said Patrick Morgan, chair of the patients group. "She greeted our proposals for improving the website and developing our relationship with staff in a very enthusiastic and positive manner."



Hamida Khan:
'Patients come first for me'

Khan joins Addison Road from Loxford Surgery in Ilford, a giant polyclinic with 32,000 patients, where she was practice manager for five years. Before that, she worked at a surgery in Newham that was pioneering an online system to enable patients to book appointments.

She was brought up in Luton, graduated in healthcare and joined the civil service. In 2007, she moved to north-east London but then had a career break to raise her family: she has two daughters and one son. When she returned to full-time work, she committed herself to health administration.

"My aim is to give the best possible service to the patients," she said, "meeting them to find out their frustrations and needs. I am committed to improving their experiences at the surgery by providing easy, efficient access."

Dr Jan Crofton, senior partner at Addison Road, said: "Finding the right person to manage a surgery such as ours is not straightforward: you need the right balance of skills and personality to blend with a big staff in a busy workplace. We think Hamida is a very good choice, a local resident and very open and enthusiastic about making a difference."

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Have your say

This quarterly publication is edited by Neil Levis, a retired journalist and teacher who is deputy chair of the surgery's patients group. If you have any ideas, comments or story suggestions, contact him on neil48levis@gmail.com

Easier reading

To display this newsletter showing page spreads, as if you were reading a printed, paper version, change your pdf reader settings. Go to View, Page Display, then click Two-page view and Show cover page.



FAMILY HUB LOCATIONS

Open Monday – Saturday,
check Hub website for timetables

- 1 Chingford Family Hub**
5 Oaks Grove,
Chingford, E4 6EY
- 2 Walthamstow Family Hub**
313 Billet Road,
Walthamstow, E17 5PX
- 3 Leyton Family Hub**
215 Queens Road,
Leyton, E17 8PJ
- 4 Leytonstone Family Hub**
2-8 Cathall Road,
Leytonstone, E11 4LF

There are play sessions
happening in your
neighbourhood.

Please contact your hub
for details

YOUTH SPACES LOCATIONS

To see all opening days and
times, please visit:
walthamforest.gov.uk/familyhubs



Find out about family activities
and sessions in your area

Contact our Family Information
service advice line on
020 8496 4965

Visit
walthamforest.gov.uk/familyhubs
for more information.





Noticeboard

Download the NHS app to get better treatment

ADDISON ROAD surgery is mounting a big drive this month to get more patients to make use of the NHS app. People can access their medical records, order repeat prescriptions, check appointment details and read their test results all on their mobile phones. It's more convenient for you and saves the surgery money in staff time.

Hamida Khan, the new practice manager, is driving the campaign with a series of coffee sessions in the surgery reception room where using the app will be explained to patients who are unsure about its benefits.

The campaign starts on Monday December 9.

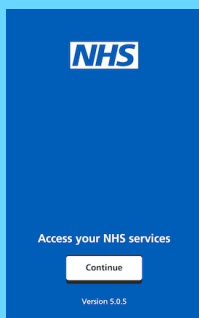
Monday 9th: 11am -12 noon

Tuesday 10th: 5 - 6pm

Wednesday 11th: 11am - 12 noon

Thursday 12th: 2 -3pm

Friday 13th: 2-3pm.



Prescriptions the easy way

A LOT OF time is wasted and a lot of frustration experienced by both patients and surgery staff in sorting regular, repeat prescriptions.

The simplest way to reorder is on the NHS app where all your regular medicines can be listed. You should have a regular pharmacist also listed on the app and, within 2-3 days, the medicine can be collected direct from the shop. No trips to the surgery, filling in forms etc.

All you have to do is contact the surgery via the app when your medicine is running low. Don't forget to press Submit, an easy mistake to make.

Any queries, ring the prescription clerk on 0208 176 9110, option 3, 10.30-12.30, Mon-Fri.

Join the patients group to keep in touch

THE PPG (patient participation group) at Addison Road has about 400 members on its list. Its aim is to reflect and voice the views of patients on the services delivered at the surgery and suggest ways, if any, that it could be improved. In October, Dr Crofton, the managing partner for the surgery, said how much he valued the good relationship built between staff and patients.

If you want to be put on the mailing list for the group, email the chairman, Patrick Morgan on jegarcia.pm@gmail.com.

We meet six times a year on the last Tuesday of every odd-numbered month between 5.30-7pm. The dates for 2025 are: January 28; March 25; May 27; July 29; September 30; November 25.

Neil Levis

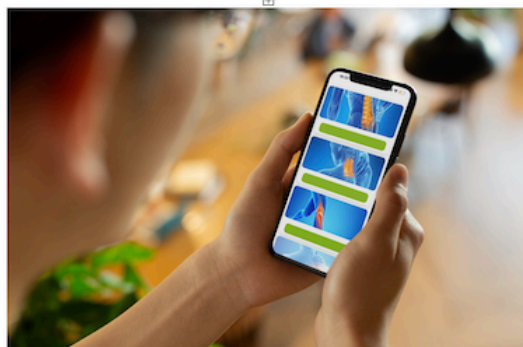
A new jab for pregnant mums and the over-75s

VACCINATIONS against RSV (the respiratory syncytial virus) which can make older people and babies seriously ill are now available. The programme was launched in September and by now many people eligible will have been called in to the surgery to receive the jab. It is not available in pharmacies like covid and flu jabs.

Among the elderly, all over 75s are being contacted. In the age group 60-74, those with chronic heart or lung disease, weakened immune systems, diabetes, obesity or who are living in a nursing home should seek advice about whether they should have the jab.

Pregnant woman past 28 weeks are also being contacted to receive the jab to protect their babies in early life. Infants can also receive an RSV antibody after birth.

Need help with muscle or joint problems?



Here's a free app to help you!

Full of tips, advice and exercises to relieve aches and strains all over your body!

Legs, neck, back, shoulders, elbows, ankles, knees and hips!



A fully NHS-backed app to help patients find relief from musculoskeletal problems. Ask at reception in your surgery



Walthamstow Village Walk



TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH, WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS

FREE every Wednesday

2-3pm

WALTHAM FOREST COMMUNITY HUB
18a Orford Road, E17 9LN



WF Community Hub

ADDISON ROAD
MEDICAL PRACTICE

RAMBLERS
**WELLBEING
WALKS**
Waltham Forest
Feel Good Walks

The Walthamstow WELCOME

Join us for:

**KNITTING
SEWING
CROCHET
COLLAGE
& MORE...**

EVERY THURSDAY
10-12.30



info:
thewalthamstowwelcome@gmail.com

Walthamstow Library
High Street, E17 7JN

Waltham Forest Type 2 Diabetes Support group

Meets 2nd Tuesday every month

DATE: Tuesdays Dec 10; Jan 14; Feb 11

TIME: 6-8pm

WHERE: The Firs Surgery, Stephenson Road, Walthamstow E17 7JT

An informal peer support group open to anyone living with, or caring for someone with type 2 or pre-diabetes. Regular talks from local health professionals and visitors of interest.

Contact the volunteer team on wfdiabetes2uk@gmail.com
www.diabetes.org.uk



The British Diabetic Association operating as Diabetes UK, a charity registered in England and Wales (no. 215798) and in Scotland (no. SC039195). A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with no. 03339181 and registered office at Wells Lawrence House, 125 Black Church Lane London E1 1PF, UK. Diabetes UK 2020

DIABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.



VIEWPOINT

Too many apps put patients off

The health secretary Wes Streeting's big consultation about the future of the NHS raises many serious issues. I want to make a plea about a subject that affects us all at Addison Road. My concern is the proliferation of apps patients are expected to navigate. There are so many that it causes confusion and delay. You have problems just remembering all your logins and passwords.

To make an appointment we have to use Klinik. Even if we call in to the surgery for an appointment or ring up, Klinik is the only way it is registered in the surgery's system for it to be properly recorded for medical records and financial purposes.

The NHS app tells patients it can be used to book appointments. But it can't – because it doesn't link to Klinik. In fact, the NHS app links to only one of the many online systems for booking appointments in the UK.

Its main purpose at Addison Road is to allow patients to access their medical records and order repeat prescriptions. However, many people use Patient Access, another app, to read their medical history. And there is yet another app, Patients Know Best, which is also designed to let you access medical information. Except it is not really an app because it can only be accessed through the NHS app. Why such duplication, pray?

The way we are told about our treatment is confusing, writes **Patrick Morgan**



The information it provides originates from hospitals and is not available to GPs.

Check out the Apple Store or Play Store for Android mobile phones, and you will see plenty of other medical apps: Pharmacy4U (for renewing prescriptions) and My GP, which The Firs surgery near St James Street urged patients to use for booking appointments.

The government has said it wants to move away from analogue to digital. There will always be tech-phobic patients who find such systems difficult to navigate – and there is no shame in that – but digital does seem to me to be a sensible and more efficient means of communication. But just make it less complicated by cutting out unnecessary alternative routes

It ought, therefore, to be possible to design a system that can do all these things: make appointments, send messages, hold medical records – and be available to all patients wherever they are in the country.

The current situation is over complicated and misleading. If the NHS wants all of us to use a digital system, then it has to simplify the means of doing this. We need one app that can be navigated easily and can perform all the necessary functions. I will certainly be making this argument to Wes Streeting.

Patrick Morgan is chair of Addison Road Patients

HOPE GARDEN, 75 metres from the surgery on the corner of Orford and Beulah Roads, will hold a winter open day on Sunday December 8 from 11am-1pm. Seasonal refreshments will be served.

The patients group at Addison Road set up the Hope Garden, which I regularly work on, to create an attractive space to be enjoyed by all. We made it in

Welcome to our winter garden

collaboration with Change Grow Live, the charity that supports people with addiction issues. The garden surrounds its premises.

There are clear benefits to gardening, both physical and mental, and we

welcome anyone who would like to join us.

Our group also looks after the community vegetable patch outside CGL on Beulah Road. We meet every Wednesday from 10am to 12 noon, ably assisted by Cathy McLaughlin, from the Community Apothecary.

Watch out for future winter events in the Hope Garden. **Patrick Morgan**



Right under our noses:

FOCUS ON DEPRESSION

If I told you there was mental health treatment, freely and fairly promptly available on the NHS in Waltham Forest and that you could go through your GP or refer yourself, you probably wouldn't believe me. If I then told you that more than two thirds (67%) of the people who use this service report that they find the treatment very effective, and that just over half (51%) are "cured" after one course, you'd think I was pulling your leg.

But then I, too, back in January, had never heard of Talking Therapies and it took me another few months to learn of its success rate and how easy it is to get treated.

It is designed for those who have what is called low-level depression, which is not to trivialise their condition. It is definitely not for the schizophrenic or psychotic, serious mental conditions that require drugs to control behaviour. Talking Therapies is for those struggling with feelings of depression, excessive worry, social anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder.

The programme started in October 2008, the brainchild of Professor David Clark, chair of experimental psychology at Oxford, and Richard Layard, an economist who had long held an interest in mental health. The two men persuaded government ministers to give them enough money to train 10,500 therapists properly to start a new psychological therapy service.

Talking to patients, they had found they preferred psychological therapies rather than medication by a ratio of 3:1. However, back then the public was not getting what it wanted. Very few people with depression or anxiety disorders were being offered therapy. Waiting lists were inordinately long.

The new service introduced digitally assisted therapies: patients receive regular support and sessions with a therapist but

Help is at hand for people who feel life is getting on top of them, writes **Neil Levis**

they also learn many of the key lessons of psychological therapy online and by reading.

"The average number of sessions needed was 10 per person," Clark explains. "Some obviously needed more, some less. But the waiting time is also important. The treatment is most effective if patients can be seen within six weeks.

"Coming for psychological therapy is quite challenging for people. They know they're going to have to work through difficult issues. So it is important that, once referred, they do not have a long wait." Waiting times for therapy back in 2008 were 18 months; today they are only a few weeks.

The service has grown each year since 2008. In 2019 it saw more than 1 million people nationwide; the target for 2024 is 1.9 million. Around 550,000 have a course of therapy. The others receive an assessment, advice and signposting (if appropriate).

The 50% recovery rate initially proved an elusive target but was achieved in January 2017 and has been maintained since.

In 2012 an editorial in the science journal *Nature* stated that the programme "represents a world beating standard". It has received much international praise and has been copied or inspired similar services in Norway, Australia, Sweden and Canada.

Hats off to a great British success story.

OTHER CONTACTS

[Every Mind Matters](#) Explains how different therapies help you

[Age UK](#) Help for older patients

[For the under 18s](#) or those seeking help for a young person.



a treatment that works

Photograph: amdecarlo83/Flickr



Positive thinking thanks to therapy

Nishat Uddin tells me about the 120 staff – therapists, psychological wellbeing practitioners and admin staff who provide Talking Therapies for Waltham Forest from the South Forest Centre, in what used to be Langthorne hospital in Leytonstone. The therapists each see 25 patients per week who are suffering from all kinds of conditions: depression, stress, anxiety, panic attacks, agoraphobia. or more. The therapists are well qualified to offer constructive help.

“Many patients are overwhelmed by problems in their lives,” says Uddin. “They find it difficult to go out and mix in society. They stop socialising or stay off work. Our job is to help them take a more practical approach to their problems.

“We help them prioritise the tasks that are causing them stress. We teach them relaxation techniques and how to control their

worries: they might keep a worry diary and have a worry time, a specific slot when they can focus on their problems.”

The Five Areas model is an important framework in cognitive behaviour therapy, which is commonly used in Leytonstone. Therapists guide patients to consider wider aspects of difficult situations that are troubling them. They focus on thoughts they remember; how they feel, their moods and emotions. And how they behave; what they do but, equally important, what they don't do. The idea is to help them realise that all five aspects are connected and affect each other. By appreciating this, they can come to see a way to break their pattern of negative thoughts.

Talking Therapies in Waltham Forest
0300 300 1554, opt 4



Spark**2**Life



Free & Low-Cost Counselling

At Spark2Life, we understand that life's challenges can be overwhelming, but we believe that everyone deserves the chance to heal and grow.



Who is it For?

Our free and low-cost counselling service is open to anyone aged 18+ that reside within the areas listed below.

| St. James | High Street | Markhouse | Lea Bridge |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| E17 7 | E17 7 | E17 7 | E10 7 |
| E17 8 | E17 9 | E17 8 | E10 6 |

If you are seeking support for emotional or mental health issues. Whether you're struggling with something specific or you simply need someone to talk to, this service is for you.

Session Fees (per session)

Free

- Individuals Receiving Benefits
- Students
- Low-Income Individuals (London Living Wage)
- Individuals Affected by Youth Violence
- Individuals Referred Through Charity Partners

Low-Cost

£10

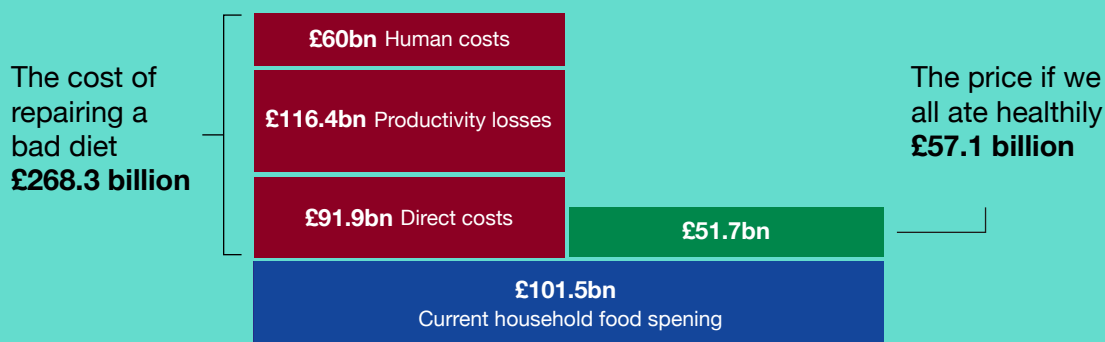
How it Works

Simply email counselling@spark2life.co.uk or call **07977948319** to enquire. We'll ask you to complete a referral form and have a brief assessment. You'll then be allocated a qualified counsellor and receive up to 12 counselling sessions.

HEALTH STATISTICS

The hidden costs of our unhealthy diet

How good, expensive food could work out cheaper



A good diet is expensive. Healthy food would add **£37 per week** to the average household budget, an extra 55%. The commission stops short of recommending government subsidies, but an annual outlay of **£57.1bn** could make a big dent in the extras we already pay.

Source: Food, Farming and Countryside Commission

Graphic: David Man

FIGURES released by the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission last month reveal the true bill for treating people who eat unhealthily. It costs the UK £286bn annually, an amount that dwarfs the total NHS budget, which will be £192bn next financial year.

This is the first academic research into the subject. The commission is a charity set up in 2017 to find practical solutions to tackle the climate, nature, health and economic crises of our time. It asked Professor Tim Jackson, an economist, not a nutrition expert, at Surrey University, to investigate British diet. "The total staggered me," he told The Guardian newspaper. "But £286bn is a very, very conservative estimate of the costs."

He calculated £67.5bn was spent treating people for conditions such as obesity or diabetes. Another £14.3bn covered social care for those who developed chronic conditions. On top of that is £10.1bn in benefits for people who can no longer work.

Most politicians accept this total – £92bn – as a reality. But Jackson also calculated the

indirect costs, which triple the bill. The extra £194bn came mainly from productivity losses and the human costs in terms of the physical and mental suffering caused by obesity.

The government wants to eradicate smoking, to ban junk food adverts on TV before 9pm, and stop sales of energy drinks to the under-16s. Such measures are almost irrelevant if you let the food industry produce ultra-processed products or meals high in fat, sugar and or salt, not to mention deliberately making foods addictive. It is in reality poisoning. Most people would consider that a crime, but Big Food gets away with it.

The World Health Organisation reported last month that cases of types 1 and 2 diabetes worldwide have now reached 800 million. The proportion has doubled between 1990 and 2022 from 7% of the human race to 14%. And that rate of change is accelerating fast. Which, the WHO says, reflects the increase in obesity, the marketing of unhealthy food, lack of exercise and poverty.

Is there a connection here? **Neil Levis**



A hearty welcome in Community Living Rooms



Every Thursday 10am-3pm: free, filling, nutritious and vegan food

Photographs: Kake/Flickr

The Hornbeam is one of a whole network of Community Living Rooms in Waltham Forest where you can relax, meet familiar faces and make new friends. They all host regular social and creative activities and many offer food support or a hot meal.

You can also access information and advice about health and wellbeing, debt management, welfare benefits and energy.

Find out more about the Community Living Rooms [here](#)

Find out more about the Hornbeam [here](#)

OTHER LOCAL COMMUNITY LIVING ROOMS

Walthamstow Welcomes at [The Welcome Centre](#). Alternate Wed and Sat

[Waltham Forest Community Hub](#) in Orford Road. Wed 10.30-12-30

[The Lloyd Park Centre](#). Fridays 10am-2pm



DEBATE

Can doctors justify strike action?



Dr Mathumai Kanthasamy and Neil Levis
go head to head over an emotive issue



Dr Mathumai Kanthasamy: GPs have not gone on strike; they are taking industrial action or working to rule. Our decision has not been taken lightly. Our motivation is to fight for better services and staffing so that we do not compromise the care we deliver.

Neil Levis: I respect that totally, Mathu, but what concerns me is that after 14 years of the Conservatives running down the NHS – it was in reasonable condition back in 2010 – you're taking industrial action under a new Labour government. The last time GPs took such action was in 1964, – under a new Labour government. Am I detecting a pattern here?

Kanthasamy: We are facing severe problems in terms of an overwhelming workload on GPs. We are seeing more patients than ever before, with practices regularly exceeding their capacities. This is not sustainable and can compromise the quality of care provided. In addition, many older doctors are retiring early, reducing their NHS commitments or leaving the profession because of the unsustainable workload. That's putting those still working under even more pressure.

Levis: Again, I have total respect for moderate and measured industrial action, Mathu. Seeing 40 patients a day is madness. Even the 25-per-day maximum puts staff under great strain in terms of record keeping, follow-ups and just the sheer variety of social interactions. But it's the inappropriateness, as I see it, of hitting hard against Wes Streeting who very early on promised to steer more money away from hospitals to primary care where you work.

Kanthasamy: When we took action in the 60s, Harold Wilson granted us a Family Doctor Charter: much better pay, back-up

staff, better facilities and conditions. We feel the need to restore such terms to stop the leakage of staff from the front line. Many people appreciate we are working with inadequate resources: Despite rising costs, practices have not received sufficient funding to match the increased demand and inflationary pressures. A great financial strain.

Levis: But everybody knows that GPs got a great pay deal from Tony Blair, another Labour prime minister, back in 2006 but that didn't solve much because senior GPs had to assume big financial responsibilities and working patterns changed: many, women in particular, wanted to work part-time for family and/or career reasons. Sorting out GPs' problems today is complex. There are no easy answers.

Kanthasamy: The current GP contract, combined with years of structural underinvestment in general practice, has led to a significant backlog of care and GP practices not resourced to look after our patients to the standards we would like to. 'Working to rule' means focusing strictly on tasks outlined in our contract and deprioritising those outside its scope and stopping work that we are not funded to carry out. Most of these changes have little to no direct impact on patients. Throughout this time, we remain committed to prioritising the clinical care our patients need, while advocating for the resources necessary to provide the best possible services.

Levis: Most of my comments have been political, contesting the timing of industrial action under a government that is at least going to do business with you. Your arguments have been practical – and I can only applaud that. Good luck.



Lobby your MPs to rescue funding for the new Whipps Cross

Sign our petition [here](#)



Calvin Bailey, Labour MP for Leyton and Wanstead, and Stella Creasy, Labour MP for Walthamstow, the two constituencies that border the hospital, are crucial in putting pressure on the government, now undertaking a review of the programme for the 40 new hospitals promised by the last Conservative government.

To find out more, click [here](#)

Please share the links (above) as widely as you can.

Every signature counts!