

The PPG is about  
PARTICIPATION  
your participation



Why not come along and join us  
next event and have your say

## CARING FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY DURING THE PANDEMIC

### CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE

Here is an important message from the Council's WESTMINSTER CONNECTS initiative:

If you need help or you know of someone who needs help as a result of COVID-19, please send their details to <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/corona-virus-how-you-can-help> or call us on 020 7641 1222.

If you are concerned about someone who might need social care and support at this difficult time, please ring 020 76411444 or 020 76411175 or email [adultsocialcare@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcare@westminster.gov.uk).

### WELLBEING AND CHAT SERVICE

VMC's Social Prescribing Link Worker, Charlotte Medway, (see Practice Profile on page 3) is helping with a 'Wellbeing Check-in and Chat Service' which has been set up by Westminster Council. If you are a patient of VMC and are having problems obtaining food or medication, or having problems with debts or housing, or if you would like to know more about the Wellbeing Check-in and Chat service, please let the practice know

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Here is an important message from Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust.

- Are you self-isolating and feeling down?
- Are you feeling anxious about the impact of the virus on yourself, or someone in your family or a friend?
- Would you like to talk to someone about your feelings and discuss strategies that will help you cope?

If so, please contact CNWL Talking Therapies Service and arrange a phone or video call to discuss how you are feeling and learn strategies for coping. To find out more about the Talking Therapies Service, contact us either by telephone on 030 3333 0000, or by email to [westminster.iapt@nhs.net](mailto:westminster.iapt@nhs.net), or fill in a self-referral form at <http://cnwl-iapt.uk/>

TO HELP KEEP  
YOURSELF AND  
OTHERS SAFE PLEASE  
WEAR A FACE  
COVERING IF YOU  
CAN WHEN  
ENTERING THE  
SURGERY PREMISES



Thank you

Contact Victoria MC and Lees Place MC by e-mail: [CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net](mailto:CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net)  
Contact the Patient Participation Group by e-mail (on PPG matters only.  
Not to be used for clinical or practice matters) [vmcpgg@live.co.uk](mailto:vmcpgg@live.co.uk)

# PPG

## Patient Participation Group



29 Upper Tachbrook Street,  
London SW1V 1SN  
tel: 020 7834 2298  
[www.victoriamedicalcentre.com](http://www.victoriamedicalcentre.com)  
email: [CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net](mailto:CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net)

Lees Place Medical Centre,  
11 Lees Place, London W1K 6LN  
tel: 020 7036 6060  
[www.leesplacemedicalcentre.com](http://www.leesplacemedicalcentre.com)  
email: [CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net](mailto:CLCCG.VMC@nhs.net)



## news

Dear VMC and LPMC Patients,

We are dedicating most of this newsletter to the latest measures that have been put in place at the practice as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. As a patient it is in your interest to keep up with the changes and take advantage of new ways of contacting the practice team, whatever your problem. If you have not yet viewed the short video 'VMC Is Open for Business', which was the result of a co-operative effort by the practice team and the PPG, click on the link: [VMC Open for Business](#) via the VMC website and watch it now.

Some of the changes to VMC's normal routine are only temporary but others are already proving so popular that they are likely to remain part of the new normal in future. As a result of VMC's new Safety First measures, some of the advice on the VMC website is currently out of date. The PPG is working with the practice team on updating the website as soon as possible, meanwhile this newsletter summarises the main changes.

I am sorry to say that Mark Platt the PPG's trusty IT guru, who for many years has been responsible for managing our mailing list and recently played a crucial part in making VMC's Open for Business

video, is relocating out of the area. As a result, we are appealing for a volunteer to take over his role. If you have the necessary experience and would like to be involved in sending out emails and making more videos for the practice please email the PPG at [vmcpgg@live.co.uk](mailto:vmcpgg@live.co.uk) and Mark will contact you.

Do not hesitate to telephone the surgery on 020 7834 2298. Whatever your problem the whole team is here to help. Your health and wellbeing are their priorities and they are waiting to hear from you.

Mary Orr

Chairman, VMC PPG

### VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Are you an IT whizz-kid?

Have you managed a mailing list?

Do you have expertise to create motion graphics and/or the software to stitch together video clips?

Would you like to be part of a team that helps to make changes at the practice?

If so, please support VMC's PPG by emailing Mark at [vmcpgg@live.co.uk](mailto:vmcpgg@live.co.uk)

The role of the Patient Participation Group is to improve communication between the practice and the patients to the benefit of both. If you are a Victoria Medical Centre or Lees Place Medical Centre patient and would like to keep in touch with our activities, please send us an email at [vmcpgg@live.co.uk](mailto:vmcpgg@live.co.uk) and ask to be put on the PPG mailing list.

## CORONAVIRUS (Covid-19)

If you think you might have coronavirus symptoms (persistent cough, fever, loss of taste) please DO NOT come to the surgery. Stay indoors and avoid close contact with other people. Call 111 and ask for the coronavirus service. Someone will tell you if you need medical help and advise you what to do.

## MAKING AN APPOINTMENT new procedures apply

The practice has introduced new ways to help you contact the right healthcare professional, either by phone or email. By working remotely we can promote a safer service for all.

1. For urgent appointments the system has not changed. Please ring the surgery on 020 7834 2298. The receptionist will ask for your phone number and one of the clinical team will ring you back the same day. Please stay by your phone.
2. Routine appointments cannot be booked online because of Covid-19 restrictions on face-to-face consultations. Please ring the surgery to book a routine appointment. The doctor will call you back at the time of the appointment and try to sort out the issue over the phone. If needed we can use a video link – and this option has been working well – or arrange to see you face-to-face if this is appropriate. The temporarily suspended online booking service will be restarted as soon as possible.

If you are booked to have a face-to-face appointment at the request of a clinician you will first be asked a few Covid-19 screening questions via a text message or phone call from a receptionist. Please consider wearing a face covering at all times whilst on the surgery premises.

## SAFETY FIRST at the surgery

New ways of working have shown that the practice can minimise the number of patients who need to attend the surgery in person and therefore reduce the risk of viral infection. If you have been invited to attend by a doctor, practice nurse or healthcare assistant, or if you need an urgent blood test, please note that the waiting areas have been rearranged to provide social distancing. The upstairs waiting area is now a designated clean zone for those patients who need routine treatment, antenatal clinics and childhood immunisations. The premises are thoroughly cleaned every day and every member of our practice team has been provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure that both you and the staff are protected.

## eCONSULT – a new service

VMC is offering a new email service – eCONSULT, which can be accessed direct from the website. For general or administrative problems or non-urgent conditions you can now email through eConsult and get a response by 6.30 pm the next day. Watch the demonstration video to see how it works and give it a try.

## PRESCRIPTIONS

In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, please order your medication via our existing online service or by email to [clccg.vmc@nhs.net](mailto:clccg.vmc@nhs.net). If you are unable to do either please contact the practice by phone for assistance. If you are collecting a prescription from the pharmacy on the surgery premises please bypass the reception desk. Thank you.

## CLINICS and SERVICES

CLINICS AND SERVICES NOW OPEN  
Asthma, Blood pressure checks, Contraceptive and Sexual Health, Diabetes checks, ECG Service, HRT, Maternity Child Health, Minor Surgery, Phlebotomy, Smears, Smoking Cessation, Talking Therapies, Travel Vaccinations, Warfarin (anti-coagulation), Wound Care. **Please book an appointment by calling the surgery on 020 7834 2298.**

## REFERRALS

Doctors continue to refer patients into secondary care or specialist services, although we expect delays in hospital appointments.

## SUSPENDED SERVICES

Exercise classes, Group Therapy classes, Health Checks, Pilates, Spirometry and COPD services, Well Woman Clinic.

## IMMUNISATIONS

If you have missed your cervical smear test or an immunisation for yourself or your child as a result of the coronavirus pause in services, please make sure that you contact the practice to make an appointment because these are so important.

## WINTER FLU VIRUS

VMC will be making every effort to get patients to have their flu jabs against the winter flu virus, which claimed over 17,000 deaths in the UK last winter. Look out for flu clinic times starting in September.

DOCUMENTS To request a Sick Certificate relating to Covid-19 or to collect a letter or document from your medical record you can either telephone the surgery or email us at [clccg.vmc@nhs.net](mailto:clccg.vmc@nhs.net) stating your full name, date of birth and address and we will email or send you a copy in the post.

## PRACTICE PROFILE



Charlotte Medway is our new Social Prescribing Link Worker. She works with a number of practices in South Westminster and is allocated to VMC on Thursday afternoons.

The original function of the Social Prescribing Link Worker role was to offer a service that works alongside GPs to provide voluntary and community sector help by connecting patients to services and activities that address their needs. Charlotte has been making calls to vulnerable residents with three core needs: access to food, their medication and wellbeing. Food – she can for example refer them to a foodbank if they cannot afford their food or with a volunteer from a local or national organisation who will shop for provisions. Medication – She can make sure that they have access to their medication, and help to set up deliveries/drop offs where appropriate. She can also help people with other needs such as debt and housing by connecting them to the available services that match their needs. Charlotte is also helping to connect patients with Westminster Council's Wellbeing Check-in and Chat Service.