

A message from the PPG Committee to all patients

Dear VMC and LPMC Patients,

Over the last few months the Practice Team and the Patient Participation Group committee have been working together to see how the practice can be more effective in reaching out to all patients regardless of their age, state of health or ability to navigate the new technology that is both a blessing and a curse. Together we are determined to improve communications between practice and patients to avoid the misery of patients feeling excluded from the best medical care.

PPG newsletters will be sent as text messages to patients with mobile phones but will also be available as printed leaflets in reception. New noticeboards will identify members of the team, who they are and what they do, as well as information about the clinics, the services available and how to access them. PPG noticeboards will give advance information about evening events, and there will be more daily activities taking place in the VMC Group Room. There will be a new, dedicated PPG phone number where patients can leave messages, and a suggestions box in reception. We want to listen to what you have to tell us so that we can all better respond to your needs.

With best wishes, *Mary Orr*, Chairman VMC PPG

VMC PRACTICE UPDATE

VACCINATIONS SAVE LIVES – PROTECT YOURSELF NOW

Autumn FLU and COVID-19 vaccinations are now available. In order of priority patients will get a text message inviting them to get vaccinated. If you are housebound or do not have a mobile phone we will arrange for you to be contacted by letter or the roving team.

Pre-bookable appointments for Flu Clinics at VMC

Over-65s Thursday 5 October 5 – 8 pm

Over-65s and patients at risk Thursday 26 October 5 – 8 pm

Walk-in Flu Clinics at VMC

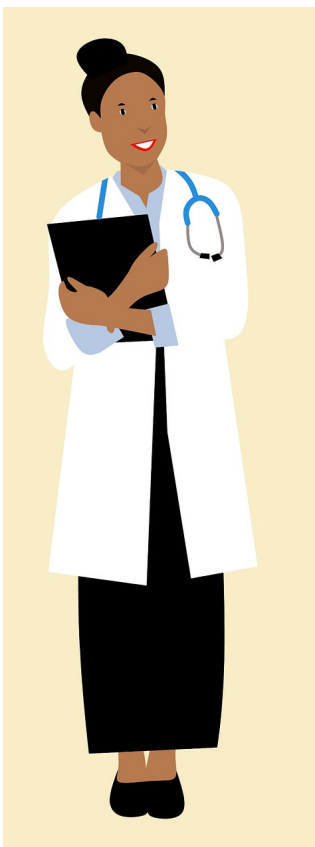
Over 65s. 7 October and 4 November 9 am – 12 pm

Patients who are deemed at risk can be vaccinated at VMC

Saturday 21 October and Saturday 18 November from 9 am – 12 pm.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

If you are 65 or over you will receive a text message inviting you to get vaccinated at a local pharmacy. If you do not have a mobile phone, you should ring 119 for help in arranging your vaccinations.



REPORT FROM THE PPG

You may not be aware that having a Patient Participation Group is a contractual obligation of every GP practice to which all patients and staff automatically belong. However, the VMC PPG committee is aware that more and more patients are being excluded from care because of the increasing tyranny of hi-tech solutions taking over simple day-to-day activities. The PPG intends to champion simple, inexpensive access to health care needs that reach out to all patients through more human contact and less hi-tech barriers.

Over the next few weeks you will see the PPG notice boards transformed – with advice on the best way to get the most out of your GP practice and what help is available from South Westminster charities that support vulnerable patients in our community. There will be information about services you probably never dreamed were available, and invitations to take part in a variety of sociable activities in the safety of the VMC Group Room.

The next PPG evening event will be at 6.00 pm on 16 November in the Group Room

It will focus on the topic of **LOOKING AFTER YOUR LUNGS IN WINTER** – how to prevent yourself falling ill, what to do if you have a bad cough or suffer from asthma, how to get a chest X-ray etc. A panel of clinicians and pharmacists will be there to talk about Prevention, Diagnosis and Managing your condition. Save the date, everyone is welcome to take part in the Question and Answer session.

Gadgets to the rescue

Meanwhile, if you are challenged by routine day-to-day activities, here is a list of simple gadgets that can make a big difference. Don't be resigned to your condition, there may be a simple way to transform your daily life. Consider getting a gadget, stay independent and improve your well-being and safety.

- * If you are a bit wobbly – get a walking stick
- * If your shopping is too heavy to carry – get a trolley on wheels
- * If you struggle to put shoes on – get a long-handled shoe horn
- * If your memory is not as good as it was – write things down
- * If you have trouble with small print – get a magnifying glass
- * If you can't see the numbers – get a phone with large buttons
- * If you can't hear the doorbell – get a bell with a visual alert
- * If you have difficulty opening jars – get a bottle and jar opener

If you can name just one simple thing that has changed your life for the better, or a story that may help other patients cope with their health problems, please tell us about it by leaving a message in the PPG Suggestions Box. It will help us to help you.



Community Link Alarm (pendant alarm)

If you are resident in Westminster you may be entitled to a free emergency pendant or wrist alarm. To request an alarm, ring Westminster Adult Social Care Services on 020 7641 2500 and someone from the Contact Centre will ring you back and help you complete the referral form. You will need to explain your reason for needing one.