



Newsletter

A message from Dr Stephen Gray

As we move into the autumn and winter months, we traditionally see an increase in coughs, colds, sore throats, flu-like illnesses and stomach bugs. While these illnesses can be unpleasant, many can be managed safely at home with rest, fluids, over-the-counter remedies and advice from trusted NHS sources.

Before contacting the practice, I would encourage you to visit the NHS website for reliable self-care advice and information on when further medical help may be needed. The NHS Conditions A-Z provides guidance on a wide range of common illnesses and symptoms and can be accessed at www.nhs.uk/conditions.

Many common conditions can also be treated through the **Pharmacy First** service. Community pharmacists are highly trained healthcare professionals who can provide advice and treatment for a range of minor illnesses without the need for a GP appointment. In many cases, they can help you access the care you need more quickly and conveniently.

Of course, we are here when you need us. However, by making use of NHS self-care resources, your local pharmacy, NHS 111 and the NHS App where appropriate, you can help ensure that GP appointments remain available for patients with more complex or urgent medical needs.

If your symptoms are severe, worsening, or you are concerned about your health, please seek medical advice promptly.

Dr Stephen Gray, GP Partner



Think Pharmacy First

Your local pharmacy can provide expert advice and treatment for many common conditions, often without the need for a GP appointment.

Pharmacies may be able to help with:

-  **Earache (children)**
-  **Sinusitis**
-  **Sore throat**
-  **Infected insect bites**
-  **Impetigo**
-  **Shingles**
-  **Urinary tract infections (UTIs)**

→ Not sure where to go? **Think Pharmacy First.** Learn more at www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/pharmacies/

Congratulations to Laura

We are pleased to share that Laura Cuff, Lead Practice Nurse at St Austell Healthcare, has successfully completed the Specialist Practitioner Qualification (SPQ) in General Practice Nursing and gained her Non-Medical Prescribing qualification.

Over the past two years, Laura has developed advanced clinical skills and knowledge that will help enhance patient care across our community.

This achievement will support improved access to expert nursing care, strengthen the management of long-term conditions, and increase prescribing capacity within the practice, helping patients receive the care and treatment they need more efficiently.

Laura would like to thank colleagues, mentors, and the wider team for their support throughout the programme and looks forward to using her new skills to benefit the people of St Austell and the surrounding area.



In this newsletter:

The fastest way to contact us

Integrated Neighbourhood Team

Prescription tips

Patient feedback

PPG meeting

And more...

Strengthening Continuity of Care

Over the last 18 months, we have increased the number of GPs working across our practice as part of our commitment to improving access and continuity of care for our patients.

We are particularly pleased to have expanded our team of **list-holding GPs**. In addition to seeing patients in clinics, list-holding GPs take responsibility for a range of ongoing care activities, including reviewing test results, managing clinical correspondence, and coordinating care for patients with more complex health needs. This helps support continuity of care and enables patients to build an ongoing relationship with a GP who is familiar with their health and care needs.

We are delighted that **Dr Katy Willis** and **Dr Bosira Ahmed** have now joined our team of salaried list-holding GPs, alongside **Dr Fungai Mashingaidze**, **Dr Emmanuel Idenyi**, and **Dr Keny Shrestha**.

Dr Katy Willis will hold a patient list alongside her important work supporting our Mental Health Team. Dr Bosira Ahmed will continue her women's health clinics on Tuesdays while also working as a list-holding GP on Wednesdays and Fridays.

We are also pleased to share that, from October, **Dr Catherine Martin** will become a list-holding GP, further strengthening continuity of care across the practice.

Dr Jen Farrance, **Dr Fiona Hickey** and **Dr Josie Simpson** will continue to support the GP partners as non-list-holding GPs, alongside our regular locum doctors.

Thank you for your support as we continue to strengthen our clinical team and invest in high-quality, patient-centred care.

Our Practice in Numbers



Here's a look at the care and support we've provided for our patients.



AUGUST 2026



REQUESTS

Total requests received

10,511



Online

6,669



Phone / Walk in

3,842



CONSULTATIONS

Total consultations

16,286



With GP

5,031



CALLS



Calls
Received

16,855



Calls
Made

17,740



OTHER ACTIVITY



Med 3s

404



Referrals

989



DNA's

504

These are missed appointments where we did not receive notice.



AVERAGE WAIT TIMES WHEN CALLING



Reception

8m 28s



Prescriptions

3m 27s



Thank you for your patience and understanding.
We're here to help and continue to improve the care and service we provide.

Thank you ♥

♥ Caring for our community, every day.

For the fastest way to access our team, contact us online

Need help from the practice? The quickest way to get in touch is through **SystemConnect**.

Using SystemConnect means you can send us your request online.

Why use SystemConnect?

- ✓ The fastest way to contact the practice
- ✓ Clinical requests are reviewed by our triaging team
- ✓ No need to wait in a telephone queue
- ✓ No need to travel to the surgery
- ✓ Available on your smartphone, tablet or computer
- ✓ Submit a request for yourself or on behalf of someone else, such as a child, family member or someone you care for
- ✓ No account required

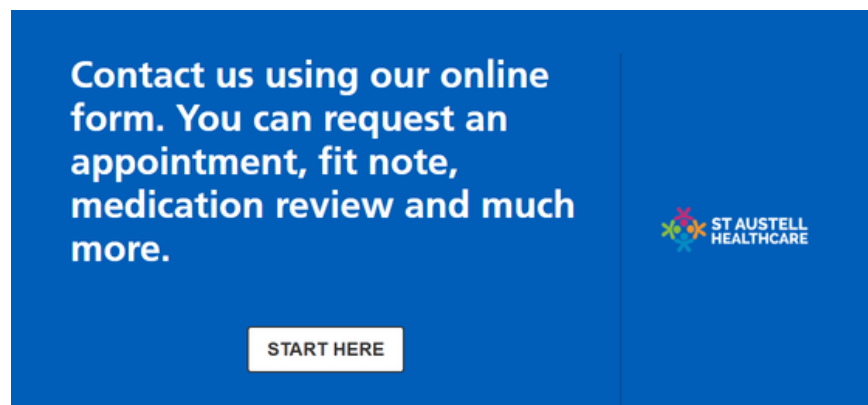
Did you know?

Requests made by telephone are entered into SystemConnect by our reception team and sent to the same triage queue as online submissions. Completing the form yourself online can help your request reach the team more quickly.

Visit our website **staustellhealthcare.nhs.uk** and select **START HERE**, as pictured below.

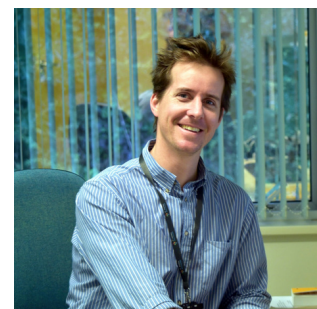
You do not need to log in to use SystemConnect.

If you have an NHS Login or SystemOnline account, you can sign in to pre-fill some of your details, but this is entirely optional.



Dr Lockwood

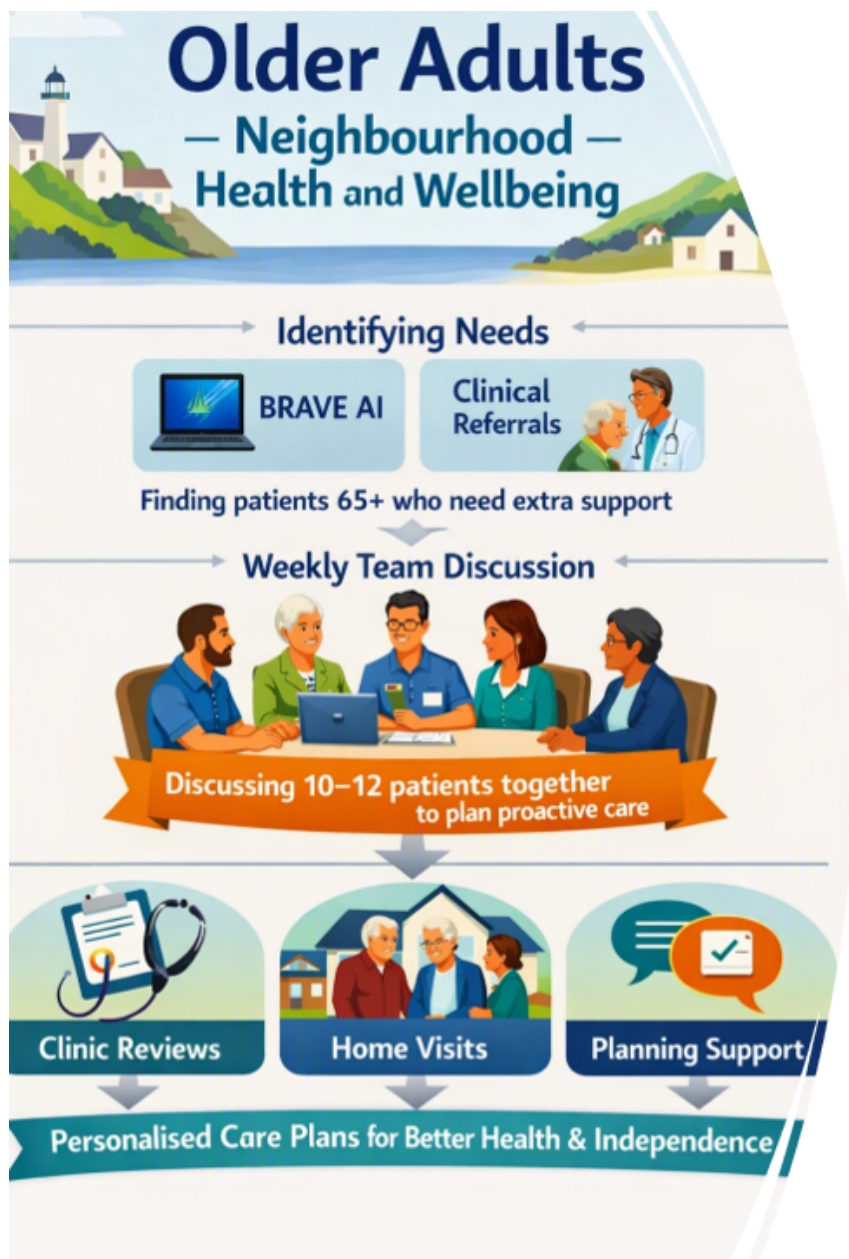
Dr Alistair Lockwood left St Austell Healthcare in June, as he explores other aspects of working in General Practice across Cornwall.



Dr Lockwood has been a valued colleague and a steady, reassuring presence within the practice. His dedication to patient care, kindness, and commitment over the years have made a lasting and meaningful impact on both patients and staff alike.

We are grateful for all that Dr Lockwood has given to the practice, and we are sure that you will join us in wishing him every success and happiness for the future.

We will ensure that arrangements are in place to maintain continuity for all patients.



Integrated Neighbourhood Team



Every week, something important happens behind the scenes for patients at St Austell Healthcare. Our Neighbourhood Team meets to discuss older adults in our community who may need a little extra support to stay well and independent.

We use digital tools, including **BRAVE AI**, which looks at information already in a patient's medical record: medications, recent contacts with the surgery, long-term health conditions, and other key details. It creates a **risk score** showing how likely someone is to have a hospital admission in the next 12 months. This helps us identify which patients may benefit from extra support, so we can offer help earlier.

Our **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)**, including a Lead GP, Nurses and Pharmacists from St Austell Healthcare, Adult Social Care colleagues, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust community teams, and voluntary sector organisations such as Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change, comes together to review around 10–12 patients and agree the next steps.

The outcome from the MDT may be an **appointment at the surgery for a review**, a **home visit if you are housebound**, or a **conversation about future plans** and what support might make life easier. It's compassionate, proactive care designed around you.

Our aim is simple: **to help people aged 65 and over stay healthy, independent, and well for longer.**

For further information, please contact the surgery.

Prescription Tips

- ✓ Order repeat prescriptions online where possible
- ✓ Check whether you could save money with a Prescription Prepayment Certificate
- ✓ Find out if you're entitled to free prescriptions or help with costs

Ordering your repeat prescription online is the quickest and easiest way to manage your medication. You can use the NHS App or SystmOnline.

A Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) can save you money if you regularly pay for NHS prescriptions. For example, a 3-month PPC costs £32.05 and will save you money if you need more than 3 prescribed items in 3 months.

There are 3-month, 12-month and HRT-specific PPC options available.

Free prescriptions are available to eligible people through an exemption certificate. This may be due to age, health condition, pregnancy status, income or other circumstances.

Please visit the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions for more information.



Prescriptions in the NHS App



- ✓ Request your repeat prescriptions
- ✓ Check if medicines are ready to collect
- ✓ See past and current medicines
- ✓ Choose a preferred pharmacy
- ✓ Use a digital barcode instead of a paper prescription

Tap the NHS App



Free NHS flu vaccinations for 2 and 3 year olds

Children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2026 are eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination at their GP practice.

The vaccine is usually given as a quick, painless nasal spray and helps to protect your child from flu, while reducing the spread of infection to family, friends and the wider community.

There are still appointments available on Saturday 26th September and during the October half-term holidays.



If your child is eligible and you would like to book an appointment, please speak to reception or contact us on 01726 626801 between 9am - 3pm, Monday to Friday, and our team will be happy to help.

- ✓ Quick and easy appointment, made fun by our lovely nurses
- ✓ Helps protect your child from flu
- ✓ Helps reduce the spread of flu to family and friends

Flu and Covid vaccinations

Our vaccination clinics are available throughout the autumn.

We will be holding Saturday clinics as well as additional weekday appointments at both Wheal Northey and Mevagissey. Eligible patients will be offered both their flu and Covid vaccinations.

You may be eligible for a FREE NHS flu vaccine if you:

- Are aged 65 and over
- Are pregnant
- Have certain long-term health conditions
- Are a carer
- Live with someone who has a weakened immune system
- Work in frontline health or social care roles

Covid vaccination eligibility includes:

- Adults aged 75 and over
- Residents in care homes for older adults
- People with a weakened immune system due to a health condition or treatment

Booking links are being sent to eligible patients by text message and email.

If you have not received your booking link, or would prefer to book by phone, please contact us on 01726 626801 between 9am and 3pm, Monday to Friday, and our team will be happy to help.

Important: Stay registered with our practice

NHS England is currently checking GP patient lists across the country to make sure records are up to date. This helps identify patients who may no longer live in England or within their registered practice area. The aim is not to remove genuine patients from GP lists.

If you have not visited the surgery or ordered a repeat prescription in the last 18 months, you may receive a text message, email, or letter from NHS England or from our practice asking you to:

- Confirm your contact details
- Confirm that you still live within our practice area

Please do not ignore these messages.

If you do not respond, NHS England may remove you from our patient list. This is part of a national NHS England process and is not controlled by the practice.

If you still live within our practice area, there is no need to worry. Simply reply to the message as soon as possible and your registration will remain active.

In the unlikely event that you are removed in error, you may need to re-register with the practice before you can access routine GP services.

Thank you for helping us keep your records and registration up to date.

PPG Annual General Meeting

The St Austell Healthcare Patient Participation Group (PPG) invites you to attend its Annual General Meeting.



Thursday 1 October at 10:00 am at the St Austell Bowling Club.

This is a great opportunity to meet members of the PPG, hear about what has been achieved over the past year, and discover ways to get involved in representing the patient voice. Everyone is welcome.

Thank you for reading!



ST AUSTELL HEALTHCARE



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