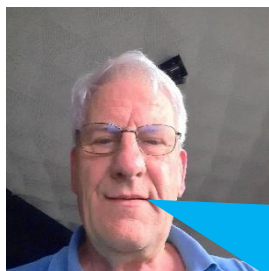




# UPDATE



John Hall  
PPG Chair

A reminder that our next **PPG** meeting with the surgery is  
23<sup>rd</sup> April at 18.30

The meeting will be held within the surgery and on TEAMS

For those unable to make the 18.30 start,  
you are welcome to join us at any time during the meeting

Below is an **UPDATE** list from both Rushbottom Lane Surgeries. This shows the number of wasted appointments last month (March 2025), where patients just **Did Not Attend**.

| St Georges Medical Practice March 2025 DNA's |             |            |                   | Dr Khan & Partners March 2025 DNA's |             |              |                   |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Clinician                                    | Appointment | Minutes    | Hours             | Clinician                           | Appointment | Minutes      | Hours             |
| GP                                           | 6           | 105        | 1hr 45min         | GP                                  | 98          | 1,428        | 23hr 48min        |
| ANP                                          | 13          | 188        | 3hr 08min         | ANP                                 | 4           | 60           | 1hr 0min          |
| Nurse                                        | 27          | 375        | 6hr 15min         | Nurse                               | 64          | 980          | 16hr 20min        |
| Pharmacist                                   | 0           | 0          | 0hr 0min          | Pharmacist                          | 0           | 0            | 0hr 0min          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                 | <b>46</b>   | <b>668</b> | <b>11hr 08min</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>                        | <b>166</b>  | <b>2,468</b> | <b>41hr 08min</b> |

## Combined total number of **Did Not Attend**

| WASTED:  | Appointments | Minutes | Hours        |
|----------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| March    | 212          | 3,136   | 52hrs 16mins |
| February | 223          | 3,286   | 54hrs 46mins |

**Don't need or Can't make your appointment?**

Cancel it so that someone else can be seen.

Call the surgery number and select option 6 - OR -

Text **CANCEL** in response to the appointment text reminder from the surgery



**Rushbottom Lane Surgery  
has 19,607 patients**

**The Surgery received  
14,865 Incoming telephone  
calls in March 2025**



Rushbottom Lane  
**P**atient  
**P**articipation  
**G**roup

**Rushbottom Lane PPG  
have 468 members**

## Here are just three of the awareness events taking place in April 2025

### 2<sup>nd</sup> April World Autism Awareness Day

**Autism** is a lifelong neurological condition that manifests during early childhood, the term Autism Spectrum refers to a range of characteristics. The definition of autism has changed over the decades and could change in future years as we understand more. Some people feel the spectrum is too broad, arguing an autistic person with 24/7 support needs cannot be compared with a person who finds supermarket lights too bright. We often find that autistic people and their families with different support needs share many of the same challenges, whether that's getting enough support from mental health, education and social care services or being misunderstood by people close to them. Appropriate support, accommodation and acceptance of this neurological variation allow those on the Spectrum to enjoy equal opportunity, and full and effective participation in society. Government prevalence surveys last estimated that around one in 100 people are autistic.

### 25<sup>th</sup> April World Malaria Day

**World Malaria Day** is an international observance commemorated every year on 25 April and recognizes global efforts to control malaria. Globally, 3.3 billion people in 106 countries are at risk of malaria. While the disease is uncommon in temperate climates, malaria is still common in tropical and subtropical countries. Each year nearly 290 million people are infected with malaria, and more than 400,000 people die of the disease. Malaria is a disease caused by a parasite, and this is spread to humans through the bites of infected mosquitoes. Protective clothing, bed nets and insecticides can protect you while traveling. You can also take preventive medicine before, during and after a trip to a high-risk area. *However, it has been found that many malaria parasites have now developed resistance to common drugs used to treat the disease.*



### Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) Awareness Month

**Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)** is the most common disorder of the digestive system, with up to one third of the UK population experiencing symptoms. There are often many presumptions and misunderstandings when it comes to IBS, as there is a wide variety of reasons why patients develop the condition. There does not seem to be a genetic cause and there appears to be many factors that can provoke symptoms. Some people find that stress makes their symptoms worse. In some people, eating irregularly or eating an abnormal diet may be responsible. Some drugs, particularly when taken long term for chronic conditions, can cause IBS type symptoms such as diarrhoea. Overall, there seems to be some interaction between the nervous system in the gut and brain, emotional state, the gut microbes and the immune system of the gut.

Not every illness is visible, and you don't have to look a certain way to have IBS.

**Guts UK** is the national charity for the digestive system.

*Our guts have been misunderstood, undervalued and underfunded for too long.*

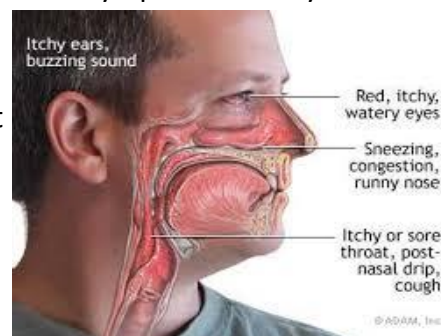
*We exist to change that.* <https://gutscharity.org.uk/>



# Hay Fever

Hay fever, otherwise known as seasonal [allergic rhinitis](#), is caused by an allergy to pollens and fungal spores. It happens when your body makes antibodies in response to certain triggers, such as pollen. It is estimated that as many as nearly 18 million people have hay fever in the UK, with common symptoms usually including sneezing, itchy and watery eyes, and a stuffy nose.

Symptoms are usually worse between late March and September, especially when it's warm, humid and windy. This is when the pollen count is at its highest. However, if you happen to have symptoms that start as early as January or February for example, and continue until late March, it may be that you're allergic to early flowering trees, such as the hazel and alder. In fact, many trees and grasses are flowering sooner and for longer, creating more of the pollen which is the main trigger of hay fever.



Hay fever is a common allergy, you cannot cure it, but there are things you can do to help your symptoms. Speak to a pharmacist if you have hay fever. They can give you advice and suggest the best treatments to help with symptoms, such as: [antihistamine](#) drops, tablets or nasal sprays, steroid nasal sprays.

Most people with allergic rhinitis are successfully managed with allergy avoidance and medical therapies. However, there are certain situations in which surgery may have a role. These would be as follows:

- If you suffer from persistent symptoms resistant to medical treatment
- If you suffer from anatomically large, swollen intranasal tissue (inferior turbinates)

Both of the above can be improved with the right surgery, although by and large surgery is not the only solution as the underlying allergy will still remain. Good anti-allergy management is therefore key.

## This shows the number of wasted appointments over the past 12 months (April 2024 to March 2025) where patients just **Did Not Attend**

| Month    | GP  | ANP | Nurse | Pharmacist | Appointments | Minutes | Hours       |
|----------|-----|-----|-------|------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Apr-2024 | 96  | 25  | 122   | 20         | 263          | 4,903   | 81hrs.43min |
| May-2024 | 105 | 26  | 123   | 18         | 272          | 4,384   | 73hrs.04min |
| Jun-2024 | 109 | 20  | 109   | 1          | 239          | 3,839   | 63hrs.59min |
| Jul-2024 | 97  | 21  | 84    | 0          | 202          | 3,173   | 52hrs.53min |
| Aug-2024 | 88  | 17  | 81    | 0          | 186          | 2,820   | 47hrs.00min |
| Sep-2024 | 92  | 20  | 69    | 0          | 181          | 2,755   | 45hrs.55min |
| Oct-2024 | 90  | 22  | 108   | 0          | 220          | 3,173   | 52hrs.53min |
| Nov-2024 | 124 | 26  | 126   | 0          | 276          | 4,054   | 67hrs.34min |
| Dec-2024 | 100 | 27  | 80    | 0          | 207          | 3,009   | 50hrs.09min |
| Jan-2025 | 131 | 48  | 114   | 0          | 293          | 4,541   | 75hrs.41min |
| Feb-2025 | 110 | 24  | 89    | 0          | 223          | 3,286   | 54hrs.46min |
| Mar-2025 | 104 | 17  | 91    | 0          | 212          | 3,136   | 52hrs.16min |

## The 12-month total number of **Did Not Attend** is:

| GP           | ANP        | Nurse        | Pharmacist | Appointments | Minutes       | Hours               |
|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|
| <b>1,246</b> | <b>293</b> | <b>1,196</b> | <b>39</b>  | <b>2,774</b> | <b>43,073</b> | <b>742hrs 53min</b> |

# PAINKILLERS DON'T EXIST.

## They're only a short-term solution

**The term 'painkiller' is misleading – it implies that medicine will kill the pain completely. Although they can play a part in managing persistent pain, they do not work for everyone, and even if you get some benefit, after 3 months they're probably not working, and addiction becomes a serious issue.**

For many people, managing pain with prescribed medications is a routine part of life. However, it's essential to understand that our bodies' response to pain changes over time, and long-term opioid use is not as safe and effective for chronic non-cancer pain as originally thought.

Although opioids provide effective pain relief for acute pain and in palliative care, there is little evidence of benefit for long-term opioids in patients with persistent non-cancer pain with regards to pain, quality of life or functioning. Further, there is now a better understanding of the risks, including dependence and opioid-related mortality.

Short-term pain, or acute pain, is often in response to injury or trauma. In these cases, medications can be effective, helping to reduce pain while the body heals. Generally, this pain lasts a few days or weeks, subsiding as the body recovers. However, after 3 to 6 months, if pain continues, it may no longer be due to the original injury. Instead, the body can become more sensitive, continuing to send pain signals even after healing. This persistent or long-term pain (chronic pain) is complex, and medications that once helped may no longer be effective.

Opioid medications like codeine, tramadol, and morphine carry high addiction risks, especially with extended use. Over time, these drugs may become less effective, leading to increased dosages and side effects. Some side effects of long-term use include drowsiness, constipation, nausea, and sleep disruptions, which can impact quality of life.

### The scope of pain medication uses in mid and south Essex



Data shows that more than 35,000 individuals in Essex depend on strong opioid medications to manage chronic pain, yet only 1 in 4 experiences any substantial relief. In mid and south Essex alone, approximately 22,000 people are prescribed strong opioids, of which 1,267 receive high doses, equivalent to 120mg or more of morphine daily.

Managing persistent pain can feel overwhelming, and the fact that between a third to a half of the UK population (about 28 million adults) live with chronic pain shows how widespread the issue is. Despite this, long-term pain medications typically benefit only 1 in 4 individuals, usually only offering a 30% reduction in pain.







**STRM** – Sending The Right Message  
Registered Charity 1193572

<https://strmsupport.co.uk/>

# Supporting Your Neurodiverse Child

**What is Neurodiversity?** 'Neurodiversity' is an umbrella term which is used to describe people who have brains and thinking styles which work in a slightly different way to 'neurotypical' people.

It includes a wide range of differences, such as **Autism**, **ADHD**, **Dyspraxia**, **OCD**, **Tourette's Syndrome** and **Literacy & Numeracy difficulties**.

We (STRM) believe that being neurodiverse provides our children with strengths that should be nurtured, and challenges that should be effectively supported. Because no two children are the same, all neurodiverse children will experience the world differently and it is important to think about how approaching things in a different way may minimise challenges and benefit your child in a neurotypical world.

## **STRM (Sending The Right Message)**

Have a well written and informative booklet available on the subject. It can be downloaded as a PDF via the following link.



In the correct environment and with the appropriate support there can be many positives to being neurodivergent:

- ✓ Great attention to detail
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Hyper focus
- ✓ Thinking outside the box
- ✓ Analytical thinking
- ✓ Passion for fairness and social justice
- ✓ Acceptance
- ✓ Questioning outdated ideas and ways of doing things

<https://strmsupport.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ECC-Supporting-Your-Neurodiverse-Child-Oct-2022-v3.pdf>



## Dementia Services

<https://www.mse.nhs.uk/dementia-services>



**In need of support and information on dementia?**

**Drop by the MSE-Trust monthly Dementia Hubs, no appointment needed.**

Our Dementia hubs run monthly, offering support and information to family, friends, carers and recently diagnosed patients. No appointment needed, drop in and visit the team at one of our sites.

**Basildon Hospital:** The Retreat, first Monday of the month 2pm to 4pm

**Broomfield Hospital:** The Atrium, outside costa last Thursday of the month 11am to 1pm

**Southend Hospital:** Day Assessment Unit, Prittlewell Building, first Tuesday of the month 9.30am to 11am.

**For more information you can email the team: [mse.dementiadelirium@nhs.net](mailto:mse.dementiadelirium@nhs.net)**

## Monthly Dementia Hubs to support You!

## No appointment needed.

## ENGLISH LESSON

Tsunami ——— T is silent

Honest ——— H is silent

Psychology ——— P is silent

Knife ——— K is silent

Wife ——— Husband is silent

Class dismissed ...

When you are stressed  
you eat ice cream, cake,  
chocolate and sweets.

Why?

Because 'stressed' spelt  
backwards is 'desserts.'



While out at a posh all you can eat buffet last week, my wife said; *"that's the 4th time you've gone back for dessert! Doesn't it embarrass you?"*

I said, *"No, I keep telling them it's for you."*



## PPG Quiz Night

Last month we held our first **Rushbottom PPG** Quiz Night, and what a great night it was too! We had 76 people take part, with a maximum of 8 to a table. Everyone brought their own nibbles and drinks for a fun and social evening. The quiz started at 7.30pm and finished at 10.30pm, with the winning team each receiving a bottle wine. We also held a raffle on the evening with many prizes being won.

We charged £5 per person for the quiz and £1 per strip of raffle tickets. So, after all expenses, i.e., Hall hire, leaflet and poster printing, raffle tickets and prizes, plus other miscellaneous items. This leaves our PPG with a grand total of **£370.29** for us to use on future projects and events.

A big thank you goes to Sue and David Palmer for all their hard work compiling the questions and answers as well as marking the papers. Also, none of this would have been possible without the time and effort put in by our Coordination Team members. John, Kathryn and Louise.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/8128412363840904/>

# Benfleet Community

## First Responders

Benfleet | Daws Heath | Hadleigh | Thundersley

Volunteering for



East of England  
Ambulance Service  
NHS Trust



Benfleet First Responders are a team of unpaid volunteers that work closely with the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) and are trained by them to provide care and support to time critical medical emergencies in and around the Benfleet and Castle Point area. They are called out to provide the necessary care and respond to those in distress as soon as possible before the ambulance crew arrives.

Benfleet First Responders are a charity organisation and rely heavily on public donations and sponsorship from local companies to help pay for their equipment, uniforms and other expenses. They have many projects planned for 2025, several being the purchase and deployment of public accessible defibrillator units around Benfleet and Castle Point.

*If you would like to make a donation, then you can either make a bank transfer or scan the QR code to pay via card.*

**Benfleet Community First Responders**

Account: **50183028**

Sort: **82-12-08** Virgin Bank



Thank you on behalf of the Benfleet  
Community First responders for your support!  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/8128412363840904/>

## Last month's 2025 PPG AGM

John Hall was re-elected as Chair of Rushbottom Lane Surgery PPG

Kathryn Chandler re-elected as Secretary

Dallas Wilcox was elected as our first ever PPG Treasurer

Louise Kinsey and Terry Clarke both remain members of the Coordination Team.

It would be good to have more members in this group, to help with coordinating various events and bringing in fresh ideas to help us develop our PPG. If you are interested in joining our inner team of helpers, then please email: [rushbottomppg@gmail.com](mailto:rushbottomppg@gmail.com)



# Rushbottom Lane Surgery Opening Times

Mon to Fri 08:00 - 18:30\* Sat\* & Sun Closed

\*Out-of-Hour's appointments available. Ask at reception.

Appointments can be booked by Telephone from 8.00am Mon-Fri

Appointments can be booked in person by queuing outside from 8.30am Mon-Fri

As a registered patient at the Rushbottom Lane practices, you have access to a range of locally provided additional services through their partner organisations. Visit the surgery's **Attached Services** page to learn more. <https://www.thekhanpractice.nhs.uk/attached-services>



**e consult – is a digital triage and online consultation platform**

Mon to Fri 08:00 - 18:30

<https://thekhanpractice.webgp.com/>

<https://stgeorgesmedicalpractice.webgp.com/>

**e consult** Dr Khan & Partners

For patients registered at Dr Khan & Partners, click here to contact your doctors online, with eConsult.

GET STARTED

**e consult** St Georges Medical Practice

For patients registered at St Georges Medical Practice, click here to contact your doctors online, with eConsult.

GET STARTED

Check out this YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbg1AhkmZkU>

## Time to Learn Sessions 2025 - 2026

The surgery will close at 1.00pm on the dates below and re-open at 8.00am the following morning. This is protected time for clinicians and staff to attend training sessions.

**Patients should contact 111 with any medical issues during this time.**

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tuesday 1st April 2025 | Tuesday 7th October 2025  |
| Tuesday 13th May 2025  | Tuesday 4th November 2025 |
| Tuesday 3rd June 2025  | Tuesday 2nd December 2025 |
| Tuesday 1st July 2025  | Tuesday 3rd February 2026 |
| Tuesday 2nd Sept 2025  | Tuesday 3rd March 2026    |

**If you have any feedback or suggestions for articles in future issues of our UPDATE magazine, then please email us.**

**[PPG-RushbottomLane@gmx.com](mailto:PPG-RushbottomLane@gmx.com)**

*Disclaimer: "The information contained within the articles of this magazine, do not necessarily represent the views or advice given by the surgery or the NHS as a whole"*