

The Wem & Prees Medical Practice Newsletter



Aspiring to improve the health, well-being and lives of those we care for

Hello and Welcome to our Summer 2025 newsletter!

During another busy 12 months we have had the pleasure of welcoming a number of new staff to join us here at the practice, **Dr Emma Howard** joined us in April 25 as a newly qualified GP having spent the previous year or so here as a trainee. **Dr Zoe Hook** joined us in May to complete the maternity cover that **Dr Sara Day** started for us in July last year. We are very pleased to be able to say we are maintaining a **10 GP strong practice** with 3 Advanced **Clinical Practitioners**, Kathy, Nick and Colin. We continue to welcome Receptionists and Dispensers to our team as an ever growing practice. We have also had the pleasure of recruiting our second Apprentice having employed our first apprentice into a permanent position. We continue to support local students in either part-time work or work experience. We are a training practice with a number of GP Registrars receiving the benefit of the wealth of experience from our GP trainers. **Dr Oyatoye, Dr Williams** and **Dr Lovett** will be with us for the remainder of the year and beyond.

Sadly we said farewell to Dr Joy who is embarking on an exciting new career in Canada. We will miss Dr Joy but she has promised to let us know how she is getting on.

Meet the Partners and GP's



Dr Ruth Oldroyd
(Senior Partner)



Dr Catherine Rogers
(GP Partner)



Dr Emma Blunsum
(GP Partner)



Dr Emma Smart
(GP Partner)



Dr Marcus Philpott
(GP Partner)



Dr Alice King
(GP Partner)



Dr Nan Thornley
(GP Partner)



Mrs Caroline Morris
(Managing Partner)



Dr Emma Hindmarsh
(Salaried GP)



Dr Nicola West
(Salaried GP)



Dr Emma Howard
(Salaried GP)



We are passionate about diabetes care at Wem and Prees Medical Practice. Around 90 percent of people with diabetes have type 2 diabetes and our aim is to prevent type 2 diabetes where possible and help patients to manage their diabetes well.

In some cases we will detect a condition called 'pre-diabetes' these patients have slightly elevated blood sugars and are at risk of developing diabetes. This is great time to step in to try and prevent diabetes developing. At this point we will offer referral into the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme. Our highly skilled Practice Nurses will also be able to offer advice at this point. We also have access to Social Prescribers who can help patients to take control of their health and well-being- this can be really useful for our diabetic community.

For patients who have recently been diagnosed with diabetes we now have access to a programme called Counterweight. This is a year long programme that supports patients, with the aim of putting their diabetes into remission. We know that controlling diabetes well soon after diagnosis can have a great impact of complications down the line, this is a really exciting programme that is now available to us. Eligible patients will receive invites for this soon.

It is estimated that 1.3million people are currently living with diabetes but have not yet been diagnosed.

If you are aged 40-74 you are eligible for an NHS Health Check every 5 years; a diabetes risk assessment is included as part of this. If you have not yet had a health check and would like one please contact us.

Dr Emma Smart
Diabetic Lead



Are you a veteran?



Armed Forces veteran
friendly accredited
GP practice



If you are a Veteran please let us know, so we can tailor the very best possible pathways and care for you, including access to the veterans centre located at the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Hospital in Oswestry. We can also help you access specialised services at the QE Hospital Birmingham.

As a Veteran, you are meant to have quicker access to Orthopaedic services, however the reality is not always the case as service demand outweighs capacity but things are improving. Also through the Mental Health channels our veteran patients get speedier care. We can also help you access and contact the numerous veteran charitable organisations, such as The Veterans Charity, Help for Heroes and The Armed Forces Charity.

Our practice is an Armed Forces Veteran friendly accredited practice and I act as the lead clinician in this section as I retired in 2017 as Surgeon Commander RN. I served with all three services so have an appreciation of the Tri-service environment and their many differences!.

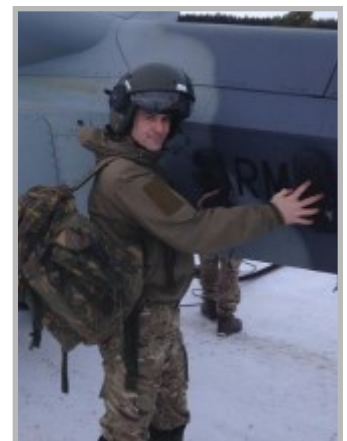
I Spent most of my time around Aviation and the Royal Marines and I served operationally in Iraq and conducted four tours on the ground in Afghanistan and deployed into jungles in Central America, Asia and the Arctic in Northern Norway.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the Armed Forces and will be delighted to get to know our fellow veteran patients to gain a better understanding of the backgrounds of where you came from.

Dr Marcus Philpott



The first call for help takes courage. If you or someone you know is struggling with their mental health or wellbeing, expert help is available from Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service. Click the logo for the link.



Dr Philpott in action!



THE CRAFT PROGRAMME – SUPPORT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

If you're living with or caring for someone who is struggling with their mental health, you're not alone. Help for Heroes offer CRAFT, a 12-session one-to-one intervention, for partners, parents or anyone who is directly supporting a veteran regularly (3 days a week or more). It is a programme delivered by the psychological wellbeing practitioners within the Hidden Wounds team.

If you feel the CRAFT programme may be of benefit to you, or to someone you know, **please complete the 'Get Support' form on their website** *(or click on the pair of boots for the link)*. If you already have a Help for Heroes case manager, ask them to be referred to Hidden Wounds. If you would like some help completing the Get Support form, you can call the helpline on **0300 303 9888** (available Mon – Fri, 9am-5pm).



SUPPORT THROUGH THE SUMMER FROM THE RECOVERY COLLEGE

Help for Heroes offer self-help guides which are online 24/7. The guides can support you with:
Anger # Anxiety # Low Mood and Depression # Sleep # Nutrition # Financial Wellbeing # Goal Setting # Making Positive Change # Wellness Action Planning # Your Recovery

These are FREE and completely open access, with no need to sign up or enter any details.

Prefer to learn with others?

They offer free, online group courses which start again in September where you can learn alongside others in the armed forces community. These sessions are led by staff in their recovery teams, including your peers with lived experience of the subject. Click on the medal for the link.



Behind the scenes: Managing 1,000 documents a week at our GP surgeries

Did you know that our GP surgery processes approximately 1,000 incoming documents every week? From discharge summaries & A&E reports to clinic letters from consultants, this mountain of paperwork is a crucial part of keeping our practice running smoothly.

Each document requires careful attention, accuracy, and timely handling to ensure patients receive the best care possible. Our dedicated administrative and clinical teams work tirelessly behind the scenes to manage this flow efficiently. Based at our Prees site on the Whitchurch Road, they perform a crucial role in keeping the practices informed and up to date.

This volume highlights just how complex and dynamic a modern GP practice is. It's not just about seeing patients; it's about managing information swiftly and securely, so our healthcare professionals have the right data at the right time.

Next time you visit us, remember there's a whole operation working diligently to support your care beyond the consultation room!

Thank you to our incredible team for their hard work in managing this essential task every day.



Prees Surgery



The Patient Participation Group (PPG) at Wem & Prees Medical Practice comprises volunteers from both practices

We:

- Consult with the practice on service development and improvement
 - Contribute to and are kept informed of practice decisions
- Represent the views of patients and provide feedback on their needs and concerns

The PPG welcomes the views of our patients; please get in contact with us by writing to the surgery or emailing us at: **PPG.wemandprees@gmail.com**

(please note the PPG does not assist with individual complaints which should be raised through the practice complaints system)



Spotlight on Wem & Prees Patient Participation Group

The Patient Participation Group consists of a group of patients who seek to make a positive contribution to the services offered to patients at the Wem and Prees Surgeries. The PPG meets at least four times a year.

The aim of the group is to provide Wem & Prees Medical Practice with the patient perspective on new and existing services and on proposed changes and to be a source of information for patients, and to promote local health services.

Highlights from the last 12 months...



On Saturday 28th September 2024, Andy and Brian from the PPG were on hand to support the Men's Health day held at the Wem Surgery. Throughout the day, many male patients were seen by clinicians and also had the opportunity to discuss the work of the PPG



On Saturday 18th January 2024, Female members from the PPG were on hand to support the Woman's Health Saturday, held at the Wem Surgery.



Meet some of our wonderful PPG volunteers (from left to right) Lynne, Becky, Mike, Brian, Sybil, Sylvia & Andy

A Local Hero on the Road

Celebrating Dave – Supporting Our Housebound Dispensing Patients



At Wem & Prees Medical Practice, we're proud to care for a wide and diverse community, and sometimes that care goes far beyond the surgery doors. This month, we're shining a spotlight on Dave, our incredible volunteer delivery driver, whose dedication makes a real difference to the lives of our housebound dispensing patients.

Each week, Dave travels across Prees and the surrounding areas, delivering medication directly to patients who are unable to collect their prescriptions whether due to age, illness, or disability.

Thanks to Dave, these patients receive their medications safely and on time, with the added bonus of a friendly face and a few kind words. For many, his visit is more than a delivery; it's a cherished moment of connection.

"It's not just about dropping off medication — sometimes it's the only friendly face someone sees all day," says Dave, who is no stranger to volunteering as he's spent over 10 years as a Blood Bike volunteer, transporting urgent medical supplies across the region and has already completed much of the training required for healthcare related support roles. His experience, reliability, and compassion make him the perfect person to take on this vital role within our community.

We are **truly grateful** for Dave's time, kindness, and unwavering commitment. His efforts ensure that some of our most vulnerable patients continue to feel cared for and supported.

Thank you, Dave — from all of us at Wem & Prees Medical Practice!

*If you're interested in joining our wonderful team of volunteers and making a difference in your local community, please speak to our reception team.
We'd love to hear from you.*



Patient Survey Coming Soon

We Want to Hear From you!

It's that time of year again when we ask for your feedback on how we're doing.

A big thank you to everyone who completed our 2024 patient questionnaire — we received over 1,000 responses! Your input last year helped us make real improvements, and we'd love to hear from even more of you this year. Your opinion genuinely makes a difference.

How you can share your feedback:

- Friends & Family Questionnaire:** After your appointment, you'll receive a text with a link to a short survey.
- Website:** Share compliments, concerns, or complaints online at any time.
- In Person:** Pick up a paper form from reception and hand it back when you're done or pop in the box.

This Autumn, we'll also be sending out our 2025 questionnaire asking for your thoughts on your GP Practice including the new appointment system, introduced in April 2024.

We love our Prees Dispensary Team!

This year we have welcomed Louise C, Jennifer, Megan and Frankie to the team waived a fond farewell to Karen as she moves to Wales after 16 years at the Practice and to Rachel who previously led the fab team in dispensary, taking over the mantle is Louise O who is really enjoying her new role and the opportunity.

For all our patients that live in the catchment area of Prees please remember to register to be a dispensing patient.

This not only means you can collect your prescription locally Monday to Friday (8.30am to 6pm (excluding lunchtime 1-2pm)) but ensures that the service remains viable and available to local people.

A gentle reminder to our Dispensing patients to please be kind to our staff, they are a busy team dispensing nearly 10,000 medicines per month. Whilst we recognise mistakes can happen it would help us to help you by checking you have the right number of items in your prescription bag, especially if it's a fridge item or controlled drug.

Our new Dispensary Manager Louise and her team are always happy to help and to answer any queries, they will also text to let you know the medication is ready for collection.

NHS
Shropshire, Telford
and Wrekin

Repeat prescriptions? ☒

**THINK TWICE
ORDER RIGHT**

Only request the
medicine you
need...

Bear Jones
12 High St
Wrekin

Prescription 1 ☒
Prescription 2 ☐
Prescription 3 ☒
Prescription 4 ☐

Just a reminder — before you order your next repeat prescription, please take a moment to check what you already have at home. Only order what you need. This helps reduce waste and keeps medicines available for everyone.

Impressive reception statistics!

Between April and June 2025, our reception team has been working hard to meet patient needs through both telephone and online services

Calls



Our reception team answered a total of **9,512** calls over the three-month period:

April: 3,071 calls

May: 3,262 calls

June: 3,179 calls

May saw the highest call volume, with an increase of 191 calls compared to April. June's total dipped slightly from May but remained higher than April.

Online Requests

Alongside calls, our reception team is also actioning all online requests once they have been triaged by our duty Doctor.

From April to June, we processed an impressive 31,319 online requests — a clear sign that many patients are now choosing to use our digital services.

We thank all our patients for their continued patience and understanding as our team works tirelessly to respond to every call and request.



CARERS' CORNER



Are you looking after or providing support for a relative, friend or neighbour? Often people don't think of themselves as carers but consider what they do is part of their role as a family member. We want to ensure that your GP has the most up-to-date information about you; this includes whether you are cared for or a carer.



This allows us to help our patients access the right services, information and support. We have updated our website and added a "Carers Corner"; there you will find all our new Carers forms and information about Shropshire Carers together with a link to the 2024 Shropshire Choices Support Finder.



We will be adding to this over the coming weeks, providing further helpful information, where our Carers can access the information they need when they need it. If you can't go online to get the information, the information is available to collect from the practice or by post. For more information please contact us by emailing wemandprees@nhs.net or go to <https://www.wemandpreeshealth.co.uk/carers-advice>

Volunteers needed



The Wem & Prees PPG Group would love to hear from you if you would like to join them. Please email ppg.wemandprees@gmail.com for more information





A spotlight on nutrition, brought to you by Brian Pullen from the PPG

Nutrition, at its core, is about providing the body with the necessary nutrients from food and drink to support health, growth and overall well-being. A balanced diet, rich in various nutrients, is essential for maintaining good health and reducing the risk of chronic disease.

Healthy eating patterns means following a balanced diet that includes a variety of foods from all food groups and is key to good nutrition.

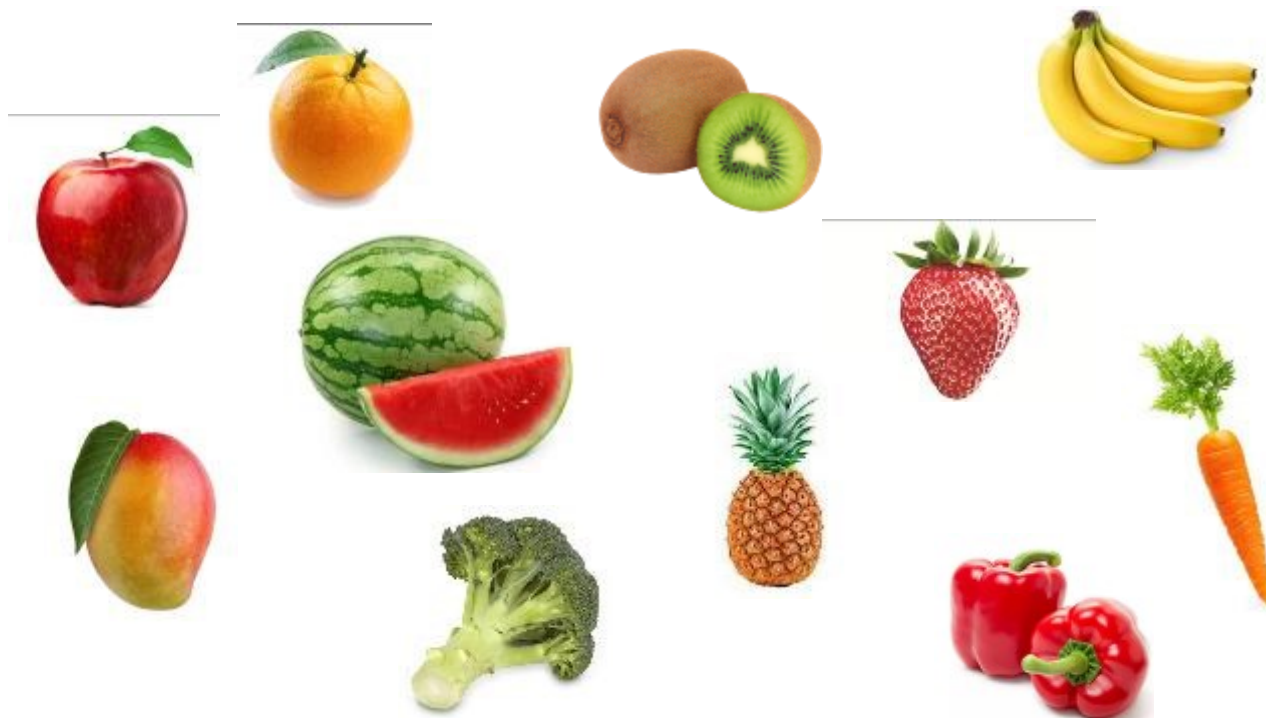
TRY TO FOCUS ON - Fruits, vegetables, whole grain, lean proteins and healthy fats

LIMIT - Saturated and trans fats, added sugars and excessive sodium

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Before making significant changes to your diet it is important to discuss with your healthcare provider, especially those with a chronic condition or taking prescribed medication.

We have put together a collection of recommended links to support nutritional guidance. Click on each of the fruits and vegetables to access the links:



Happy retirement Gail; Thank You for 35 years loyal service to Wem



Gail

Fresh—faced and ready for 35 years of service, caring for the people of Wem and Prees

You have been a Nurse at Wem since 1990 which really is an incredible achievement. What have been the highlights of your time with the practice?

Practice Nursing has always been a rewarding job with the role having lots of variety and autonomy. Over the years I have worked with some wonderful people within the surgery team and will take away lots of memories. When Dr's Smith, Bartlett and Tanous offered me the role of Practice Nurse in the old surgery at The Crescent I didn't envisage still doing the job 35yrs later. I was the first Practice Nurse at Wem and the role was very much in it's infancy, the surgery was not even computerised then. Practice Nurses are now an established part of the nursing profession and important member of the General Practice team and we have a brilliant team of nurses at the surgery. I have also been able to mentor and train some of the new generation of nurses who will keep up the good work.

What are your retirement plans?

As we are moving from Shropshire, my retirement will be spent exploring our new surroundings and time to spend walking, gardening and cooking.

What will you miss most about working at Wem Practice?

I have always enjoyed my job and it has been a privilege to work with so many of my patients. I have immunised babies and seen them growing up and having children themselves and there are not many nursing professions where you have such continuity.

I will miss colleagues past and present and also my patients. I won't miss getting up early and travelling in the winter in bad weather and short daylight days!

What advice would you give to yourself if you could time travel back to 1990?

On reflection I think I would advise not to be frightened of change as Primary Care is constantly changing and you will never stop learning. Look forward to making a difference, however small, and forging relationships with colleagues and patients.



"I wish everyone good health and happiness in the future"

Meet the team

Advanced Clinical Practitioners (ACP's)



Kathy Duffner

"So, what exactly is an ACP?"

This is a question often asked by my patients and I can see why this acronym could be confusing, so let me shed some light.

Advanced Clinical Practitioners are registered and experienced healthcare professionals who can independently assess, order tests, diagnose, form management plans, prescribe and refer to secondary care when required, which helps to add valuable increases in capacity at the surgery.

Often ACP's have undergone extra training, such as a Master of Science degree or equivalent and offer a high level of theoretical and practical knowledge.

ACP's are now seen across many different healthcare settings, from GP surgeries and hospitals to community and social care settings and can come from a diverse range of backgrounds also; many having initially trained as nurses, others as physiotherapists, paramedics or pharmacists.

I am a registered Paramedic by background with almost 20 years in the Ambulance Service. I hold very fond memories of these years, needless to say some very humbling to some far happier ones, thanks to the unexpectedly deliveries of more than a few bouncing babies. I left the Ambulance Service in 2017 to join Shropdoc where I spent a few years before finally settling into life in a GP surgery.

In 2022 I was lucky enough to have the chance to join the fabulous team that is Wem and Prees. Recently the surgery supported me in the completion of my Master's degree which is by far the biggest achievement in my career to date. Being a mature student however was no mean feat: it was a very fine balance of work, life and study.



Nick Berney

Today our ACP team consists of myself, Nick Berney and Colin Marlow. Colin is also a Paramedic by background and Nick is a registered Nurse who have both also spent time with Shropdoc and other GP surgeries in Shrewsbury before arriving with us here at Wem and Prees. I know I speak for us all when I say our aim is to offer high quality, safe and effective, person-centred care.



Colin Marlow

We work within a very supportive environment and form part of a multi-disciplinary team and although we don't profess to always have the answers, we often know a GP that does, so come try us!

Changes to Cervical screening



From July 2025, women and people with a cervix aged 25-49 in England will be invited for cervical screening every 5 years instead of 3 if they test negative for HPV, following changes to the NHS Cervical Screening Programme.

This change is based on evidence that those with a negative HPV test are at very low risk of developing cervical cancer in the following 10 years.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

Current Screening:

Previously, women and people with a cervix were invited for cervical screening every 3 years between the ages of 25-49.

New Screening Intervals:

From July 1st, 2025, if a person tests negative for HPV (Human Papillomavirus) during their cervical screening, they will be invited for screening every 5 years, rather than 3.

HPV Testing:

The NHS Cervical Screening Programme now uses HPV primary testing, which is a more sensitive and accurate way to identify those at higher risk of developing cervical cancer.

Who is affected?

This change applies to those aged 25-49 who are screened on or after July 1st, 2025, and test negative for HPV.

No Change for HPV Positive or Recent History:

If HPV is detected, or if there is a recent history of HPV, individuals will still be followed up sooner, as before.

No Change to Existing Invitations:

Individuals who have already been given a date for their next screening appointment will not have this date changed.

Why the change?

Research indicates that individuals who test negative for HPV are at very low risk of developing cervical cancer within the next 10 years, making the 5-year interval safe and effective according to the NHS.

From September, invites will be sent via text message and results will be available via the [NHS APP](#) so please ensure that you download the App and make sure your contact details are correct on your records at the GP practice. If you cannot be contacted by phone a letter will be mailed to your address.

Changes to Childhood immunisations



Starting **1st July 2025**, the UK's childhood immunisation schedule will undergo important updates. These changes have been recommended by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) to improve protection against infectious diseases and reflect the latest scientific evidence.

The majority of these changes only effect children born on or after 1st July 2024 as a parent or carer, it's important to understand what these changes mean for your child. Below, we've summarised the key changes.

Meningitis B (MenB) Vaccine:

Old Schedule: Given at 8 weeks and 16 weeks.

New Schedule: Now given at 8 weeks and 12 weeks. This change aims to protect babies earlier, when they are most vulnerable to this serious infection.

Pneumococcal (PCV13) Vaccine:

Old Schedule: Given at 12 weeks.

New Schedule: Now given at 16 weeks. This adjustment helps to reduce the number of injections administered at the 12-week appointment, making it more comfortable for your baby.

Hib/MenC Vaccine:

This vaccine will be phased out for children born after 1st July 2024 due to the reduced need for it within the updated schedule.

Hepatitis B (selective group only):

For babies identified as being at risk of Hepatitis B, the final dose will now be included in the new 18-month appointment, rather than requiring a separate booster at 12 months.

Introducing a New 18-Month Appointment (from January 2026):

For babies born after 1st July 2024, a significant new appointment will be introduced at 18 months of age. This appointment will include:

A booster vaccine (hexavalent) to provide continued protection.

The second dose of the MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella) vaccine, if not already given at the 3 year 4-month appointment.



[Click the syringe for more information](#)

Flu clinics



Clinics will be:

Saturday **4th October** at Wem

Saturday **11th October** at Prees
from 8.30pm

Invites for patients that are eligible for the flu jab will
be sent in the coming weeks.

Bag Buddies Stoma Support Group, Whitchurch



A friendly support group for anyone living with an ostomy, where
like minded people including family, friends and carers can socialise
and be able to discuss issues and experiences.

These groups are to be held at:

Whitchurch Fire Station Community Room, Bridgewater Street,
Whitchurch SY13 1QL

On the **2nd Wednesday of every month** between
6.30pm and 8.30pm

These meetings commence on **10th September 2025**

Please come and join us for drinks, biscuits and a chat.

Lets share ideas to help take this group forward.

We hope to see you there

There are toilet facilities on site

Any questions or queries , please either contact our Facebook page:

"Bag Buddies - Stoma Support Group Whitchurch, Shropshire"

or Email: 134powerhouse@gmail.com

Volunteer Drivers Needed!

Residents of Wem and surrounding areas rely on volunteer drivers to transport them to various appointments, however more drivers are urgently needed.

There are currently 3 main car schemes that cover our area, all subsidised by the Council;



Wem Community Cars
(click on the car for more
information)

Wem Community Car Service is made up of dedicated volunteer drivers, who's role is to provide transport for people who, for various reasons, cannot use public transport.

The scheme pays expenses and allows you to give as much or as little time as you like. The scheme provides essential transport e.g doctor or optician appointments, shopping, visiting friends or relatives in hospital.

You use your own car and costs are reimbursed every month.

If you are interested in this very rewarding job, please complete the application form and return it to Wem Town Council, Wem Library, High Street, Wem, SY4 5AA

If you require any further information please call 01939 232733 or email info@wem.gov.uk



Bradbury Care Centre
(click on the car for more
information)



Royal Voluntary Service
(click on the car for more
information)

Did you know that you can get a 1/3rd off train travel for people with a disability and their adult companion?



If you are disabled or have a progressive medical condition you are eligible for the Disabled Persons Railcard if you:

- receive **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** or **Adult Disability Payment (ADP)**
- receive **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)** or **Child Disability Payment (CDP)** at either:
 - the higher or lower rate for the mobility component, or
 - the higher or middle rate for the care component
- have a **visual impairment**
- have a **hearing impairment**
- have **epilepsy**
- receive **Attendance Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance** or **Pension Age Disability Payment (PADP)**
- receive **War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement**
- receive **War** or **Service Disablement Pension** for 80% or more disability
- buy or lease a vehicle through the **Motability** scheme



(click on the train for more information)

Can you spare some time to help us to make our crochet poppy waterfall display bigger and better this year?



**If you would like to help,
please get in contact with the
practice via email (wemandprees@nhs.net),
or pop in and speak with the
team**





A reminder about our opening times (both practices are the same)

Surgery Open	Telephone lines open
8.15am – 1.00pm	8.15am – 1.00pm
<i>Both practices will close for lunch from 1.00pm – 2.00pm, however the emergency telephone line will still be available</i>	
2.00pm – 6.00pm	2.00pm – 6.00pm

The on-line form (accessed through www.WemAndPreesHealth.co.uk) to contact the practice will be accessible from 8.00am – 5.00pm

Supported by



And finally...

We hope you all have a happy, healthy summer would love to hear from you if you have any suggestions for articles in future editions please email wemandprees@nhs.net



Integrated Care System
Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin



Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin



Enjoy the sun safely

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- Cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses
- Take extra care with children
- Use at least factor 30 sunscreen.

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