

### Dear Patient

The colder winter months can have a significant impact on your health and wellbeing. Find advice online at [NHS Inform](#) on how to stay healthy and well this winter, including vaccinations, how to manage common winter illnesses and ways to keep warm.

#### Keeping well this winter



In this issue, we are encouraging all our patients to ensure we have their most up to date mobile number on record to ensure we can reach you with important updates about your health and practice developments.

We are sharing information on a local initiative aimed at reducing loneliness and isolation and supporting mental health and wellbeing through creativity!

There is also detail on a new app that is available to help patients manage any muscular & joint pain from home.

We wish all our Cairn patients, colleagues and the wider Inverness community a healthy & peaceful festive season.

Team Cairn

### Newsletter available online & for collection

We will no longer be posting out copies of our newsletter to patients. This decision supports our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint (use less paper and reduce our emissions contribution by using distribution channels less often).

However, the newsletter will still be accessible via our social media channels, and on our [practice website](#).

We recognise that not everyone can access an electronic version, and if a hard paper copy is preferred, simply collect a copy from the practice reception desk.

For information & ideas on how you might look to reduce your carbon footprint click [here](#).

### SMS: appointment reminders & important updates

If you have not already done so, please provide us with your mobile number if you use one.

SMS (text messaging) is our default communication choice enabling us to promptly share useful information such as appointment reminders, normal results following investigation, practice closure days etc. direct to your mobile phone.

Patients can also respond to an SMS appointment reminder when wishing to cancel an appointment.

Sharing this type of information via text helps avoid you needing to call the surgery to get updates and cancel appointments. Call wait times can be lengthy during our busier periods and reducing the number of unnecessary calls to the practice keeps our phone line free for patients with a pressing medical concern.

Let us know your mobile number when you are next in with us, or alternatively email [nhsh.gp56006-admin@nhs.scot](mailto:nhsh.gp56006-admin@nhs.scot) and we can update your records.

### Festive Closure Days

During the festive period, the practice will close as follows.

- Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023
- Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> December 2023
- Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024
- Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

When the practice is closed and you have a medical concern please contact **NHS24** by dialling 111.

**In a medical emergency, please dial 999.**

## Managing Muscle/Joint pain at home with PHIO



**You don't have to live with muscle or joint pain** 

Many muscle and joint problems can be managed at home with support from a team of Physiotherapists

- 73%** of GPs recommend self directed exercises for muscle & joint problems
- >66%** of people using self-management report less pain within 2-4 weeks
- 68%** of people get started with their exercises within one day

Phio.

Where you have an MSK condition such as muscle or joint pain you will now be offered to try the new 'Phio' app before or when booking an appointment to see one of our onsite physiotherapists.

Engaging with Phio is entirely the patient's choice and it is not a prerequisite for a physio or GP appointment. Patients are able to use Phio as an alternate option to an appointment or whilst they wait for an appointment with a physio or GP.

Phio is free to use, available 24/7, and is accessed from any device with internet access.

For more information about Phio and to download the app please follow this link:

<https://phio.eql.ai/provider/nhsnhighland-gp>

## Art is for Everyone - Inverness Openarts

Not artistically gifted? Can only draw a stick person? Not a problem.

Inverness Openarts delivers free creative sessions to those aged 16+, focusing on reducing loneliness and isolation and supporting mental health and wellbeing through creativity in a non-judgmental environment.

A recent survey of participants showed that, as a result of attending Openarts, 21% of participants express they are less likely to need to access mental health services and 43% are less likely to need to start/increase a dosage of antidepressants.

A wide range of art materials are available to use for free choice activities, with access to guidance and demos from professional artists at each session. Support workers/carers are welcome to accompany participants. No booking is required and participants are free to drop-in/out whenever suits within session times.

Search Inverness Openarts on Facebook/Instagram or contact project coordinator, Bonnie, to get a schedule with the dates, times and venues of upcoming sessions. Email [invernessopenarts@waspsstudios.org.uk](mailto:invernessopenarts@waspsstudios.org.uk) or mobile 07539020698.

## The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is now a duty for organisations like the NHS.

As a practice, we need to find our veterans, veteran's families, service families and reservists, so that we can meet our commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our Armed Forces and Veterans community.

### Myth busters:

- You are a veteran if you have served for at least one day in HM Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or you are a Merchant Naval Seafarer, who has deployed as part of a military operation.
- You are a veteran regardless of where you served, when you served or how you might have left the military.
- You remain part of the Armed Forces and Veterans community, even if you have divorced or separated.

### How are we going to do it?

If you or a member of your immediate family served, please get in touch with the practice and let us know the details.

If you are not already registered for the text/SMS message service, let us know your mobile number and we will register you automatically.

We will use the information to:

- Make sure that we can prioritise your treatment for conditions relating to military service.
- Support you to find help from organisations such as Poppyscotland or Combat Stress if necessary.

If you'd like more information about the Armed Forces Covenant, please visit [www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/](http://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/) or email contact [nhsh.armedforceschampion@nhs.scot](mailto:nhsh.armedforceschampion@nhs.scot)