



Hello!

Welcome to the first issue of 'Better Connected'! our quarterly newsletter designed just for you.

This newsletter aims to communicate more openly with you as patients, and to share helpful insights, updates and resources on your practice and organisations in the wider community!

We truly believe that when we stay connected, everything gets better. That's why we've named the newsletter 'Better Connected'.

We hope that you enjoy the newsletter, and the information in it will make a positive difference to you. If you have any suggestions for future newsletters, get in touch with your practice.

**The Robert
Darbshire Practice,
The Whitswood
Practice, New Bank
Health Centre &
University GP Service**

Silver success: working together to drive change in health inequalities

At Better Health MCR, we're passionate about breaking barriers and improving lives. With practices in Rusholme, Moss Side and Longsight, we serve a beautifully diverse community from numerous backgrounds. With over 100 spoken languages within the PCN, it's important we know the barriers patients face, and try to develop ways to overcome them.

We're proud to announce that Better Health MCR is making history, with its GP practices being the first in the country to achieve the Black Health Improvement Programme (BHIP) Silver Accreditation, and as a group, it is also the first Primary Care Network (PCN) nationally to earn this recognition!

The programme, that has been created and delivered by Caribbean & African Health Network (CAHN), is set to help remedy long-standing health and wellbeing inequities which have existed for decades.

On 9th December, some of the Better Health MCR team were joined by representatives from CAHN for a celebration of our joint success.

The event was kickstarted with a speech by Rev Charles Kwaku-Odoi, Chief Officer of CAHN, that focussed on the partnership between the teams. Dr Faye Ruddock, Chair and Founder of CAHN, then talked further about health inequalities and why the Black Health Improvement Programme was an integral part of creating an inclusive way of working within healthcare. Before the teams received their certificates, Dr Sakinat Baiyewu shared her heartfelt joy in the PCN being awarded silver status, and wished us luck on our way to gold.

The PCN was awarded bronze status in August 2023, and quickly moved on to working towards silver. We're now in the process of making history again, and becoming the first PCN to be awarded gold status.

Protect yourself, wear a mask

It's not uncommon that when it's cold, more people get sick. During winter months, we often see a spike in illnesses that can be spread through the air, by coughing, breathing and talking. However, over the past few months, we've seen a bigger than normal increase in illnesses that affect breathing, like flu and respiratory infections.

Our main goal is to keep you as safe as possible in your practice. To protect you from catching a common breathing illness, we ask that if you visit the practice, you wear a mask or a face covering. Don't worry if you haven't got any at home, you can pick one up from your practice's reception desk.

You won't be alone. Our team are also wearing masks (and personal protection equipment when necessary) to keep you safe.



Patient participation group round-up

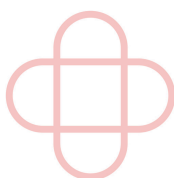
It's important that your practice works for you. That's why every three months we hold our regular patient participation group meeting (PPG), so we can get patients perspective on our service.

In December, we rounded out the year with our final PPG meeting of 2024. The theme of the meeting was to discuss signposting to local organisations, along with the way practices communicate with patients.

Once settled in with our festive treats, we started by discussing signposting to local services. Group members shared that local services had never been recommended to them, and they weren't sure of what organisations were available. They felt that having options for further support would be positive, and shared that using more services could benefit both patients and staff. It was decided amongst the group that more research would be completed with clinicians about local organisations, and that a new signposting blog would be created on practice websites highlighting different services in the area (coming soon!)

We then moved onto discuss how the practice communicates with patients. Group members felt that the amount of texts they usually receive was fine, and that they had never had a text message from their practice that they felt did not need to be sent. The majority of members felt the website was a great place to showcase more information so it is easily accessible for patients. For patients who are digitally excluded, we agreed to continue text messages and letters where appropriate, and to look at adding more messaging to practice screens and noticeboards.

If you would like to make a difference, and share your views on your practice, sign up to your practices patient participation group. You can find more information on your practice website on the 'get involved' page.





Welcome to Platt Hall

Platt Hall has been a long-standing part of the Rusholme community for 250 years. Located on the corner of Platt Lane and Wilmslow Road, it has had many purposes over time. From a home, a work camp, an art school and the Gallery of Costume for 70 years, it's now changing again.

Introducing Platt Hall Inbetween. Working with local residents, communities and partners, Platt Hall is transforming into a vital and creative space – and we're proud to be one of those partners.

Platt Hall have a number of programmes and events you can take part in:

For Better Health MCR patients only

- **Walk & Talks** Monday's, 12:45pm - 2.30pm. Walk through Platt Fields Park and take a look at some of the museums collection. No need to book a place, just turn up!
- **One-to-one health coaching** If you are struggling with motivation and want to make positive lifestyle changes, take part in one-to-one health coaching. You will need to be referred by a medical professional. Get in touch with your practice for more information.
- **Six-week courses** 10am-12pm every Thursday from 20th January 2025 (for six weeks). Learn new skills to help you create a healthier lifestyle. You will need a referral from a medical professional to join. Contact your practice for more information.

For the wider community

- **'Make space'** Drop in any time on a Tuesday from 12pm-3pm to get creative and connect with your community. Each session will have an arty activity you can try, you can bring your own craft project or just pop in for a cup of tea and a catch up. Resources are available so no need to bring your own if you don't want to.
- **Garden project** Starting in the first week of March, take part in helping to cultivate Platt Hall's beautiful gardens. Every Tuesday from 10am-4pm.
- **Tours** Interested in the history of Platt Hall? Take a free tour around the building and marvel at the artifacts on show. Available every first Tuesday of the month. Book a ticket using Eventbrite or phone 0161 245 7245 (Monday-Thursday)

Meet the team - Inayah - Physician Associate

Introduce yourself!

Hi everyone, my name is Inayah. I am one of the Physician Associates (also called a PA) at the Robert Darbishire Practice.

I am also the line manager for the other Physician Associates at the practice. That means I oversee their progress and handle any questions or concerns they may have.

What is a Physician Associate?

As a Physician Associate, I work alongside GPs to see, diagnose, and treat patients under supervision. This means there is always a point of contact if I need support.

Physician Associates handle a wide range of illnesses. There are a few things we don't manage at the moment, like mental health issues, postpartum women, children under the age of one, chronic conditions, and complex cases requiring ongoing follow-up by a GP, including medication reviews. Although we can recommend medication, we also can't prescribe, so your treatment plan would be discussed with a GP before the medication is sent to your pharmacy.

What made you decide to become a PA?

I chose to become a Physician Associate because I've always wanted a career in the medical field.

While considering whether to pursue medicine or continue with my undergraduate degree in Biomedical Science, I discovered the Physician Associate role. It offered the perfect balance as I could work directly with patients while having the reassurance of supervision to support my learning and development.

How would someone become a PA?

To become a Physician Associate, you need an undergraduate degree in a science-related subject (mine was Biomedical Science, though colleagues have degrees in Psychology or Biochemistry). Then, you complete a two-year master's program in Physician Associate Studies.

What does a typical day at work look like for you?

A typical day for me involves 12 consultations in the morning and 12 in the afternoon. These are initially telephone consultations, and if I feel a patient needs to be seen face-to-face, I'll bring them in, usually on the same day.

After my clinic, I meet with my supervisor to review each case. They ensure that all steps have been completed, double-check prescriptions, and address any outstanding queries. This process provides a safety net, ensuring nothing is missed and giving me valuable opportunities to deepen my knowledge.

Accessing timely ADHD care: how Frankie* received support and improved focus through the University GP Service

Student patient Frankie* was struggling with their concentration and anxiety. They were having a hard time with university work, meeting deadlines and eating regular meals. Recognising that the signs Frankie was showing were also symptoms of ADHD, their GP referred them to the in-house ADHD pathway clinic at the practice.

During their appointment in the ADHD pathway clinic, Frankie was able to run through their symptoms. With the clinician, Frankie had an informed conversation about the NHS referral pathway, the private referral process and the right to choose pathway. They were referred under right to choose to a national NHS ADHD assessment provider and were seen within eight weeks. Frankie still remains under the care of this service whilst they become stabilised on ADHD medication.

Having a dedicated ADHD clinic at the practice meant that Frankie was able to access the care they needed, and was able to cut down some of the waiting time they'd usually experience. Frankie is already reporting improvement in their concentration, along with a decrease in their anxiety levels. The longer-term aim is for Frankie's GP to take over the prescribing and monitoring of their ADHD medication once stable under a shared agreement.

*all patient names have been changed to protect confidentiality

The Robert Darbishire Practice half-day closure

We're passionate about providing the best service to patients. One of the ways we make improvements is by offering regular training to staff, to keep them up to date on new policies and procedures. For staff training, **The Robert Darbishire Practice will be closed from 12:30pm on Thursday 30th January.**

If you're feeling unwell and need help, you can call our out of hours service on 0161 336 5958. You can also contact NHS 111 by calling 111 on your telephone or visiting 111.nhs.uk. In a medical emergency, always call 999.

We'll be back open to help you with your health at 8:30am on Friday 31st January.

Don't forget we're now on social media. We'd love for you to be involved in building the awareness of our organisation online, so please make sure to like, follow and share our posts!