November/December 2026

TOPSHAM SURGERY & GLASSHOUSE MEDICAL CENTRE NEWSLETTER

Keeping You Informed, Connected & Cared For.





Welcome to Your November/December Update

Welcome to the November/December edition from all of us at Topsham Surgery and Glasshouse Medical Centre.

This issue introduces two new services starting this winter. BetterLetter will help us process the thousands of letters we receive about our patients, and LineIn will help our admin team answer the phones at busy times. You will also find a guide to getting set up on the patient apps and a reminder about when to call 999 instead of the practice.

There is an invitation to a men's health talk in December, a request to check your next of kin details, our Christmas opening hours and a round-up of what is happening around Topsham over the festive season.

What We Delivered in October

Our team worked hard behind the scenes to keep everything running smoothly - **here's a snapshot of what we handled**:

10,602 appointments. That's more than 480 appointments every working day.

Issued 26,130 medications. That's almost two items every minute during opening hours.

Sent 440 referrals. That's 20 referrals every working day.



Patient Voices

A big thank you to everyone who completed the Friends & Family Test in October. **1,176** responses were submitted, and we're really pleased to share that **96.6%** of you rated your experience as '**Good**' or '**Very Good**'.

We've seen some fantastic feedback, including comments like:

"600 patients for flu jab! We found it all very efficient."

"Topsham Surgery is always welcoming and all the staff are kind/friendly and helpful. Dr Boyce as always is lovely, extremely helpful and never makes you feel rushed throughout your appointment. I would give Topsham Surgery 10/10."

"Appointment made (and changed) with ease, face to face at reception in Topsham. Excellent very professional clinical staff pharmacist. "

A Message From Your Practice Manager



Will Moyle, Management Partner

Winter is always our busiest time of year, so I am pleased to share some new support we have put in place for the team and patients..

From 2nd November, BetterLetter will help us process the letters we receive from hospitals and other services. Last year we handled more than 53,000 of them. Later this winter, LineIn will also start helping us answer the phones at busy times. You can read more about both inside.

Please also take a moment to read the section on calling 999. We have recently seen patients come to the practice during a medical emergency, when an ambulance would have got them the right care faster - we're really keen to ensure our patients are able to get the right care, quickly.

Thank you to the PPG for organising their AGM in October, and to everyone who came along.

From all of us at Topsham and Glasshouse, I wish you a happy and healthy Christmas. If your local group has an event coming up, we would be glad to list it. Please email topshamadmin@nhs.net for my attention.

In an Emergency, Call 999

In recent weeks, patients having emergencies came to the practice instead of calling 999. If you think you or someone else is having a medical emergency, call 999 straight away. Please do not phone the practice or come in first.

Call 999 for chest pain that feels tight, heavy or squeezing, or spreads to the arms, neck or jaw, and for signs of a stroke such as a face drooping on one side, weakness in one arm or slurred speech. Call 999 for heavy bleeding that will not stop, severe difficulty breathing, or if someone has collapsed and is not responding normally. If you are unsure, call NHS 111.

Useful Apps For Managing Your Care

The NHS App lets you order repeat prescriptions, view your GP record, find your NHS number and see your referrals. Download it free from the App Store or Google Play, or log in through the NHS website. You will need to set up an NHS login, usually with photo ID such as a passport or driving licence. You must be 13 or over.

MY CARE / MY CHART is the Royal Devon's patient portal. It shows your upcoming hospital appointments, test results and letters from your hospital team. Sign up at mycare.exe.nhs.uk with your NHS number and an email address or mobile number, or log in with your NHS login. On your phone, download the MyChart app and choose MY CARE. You must be over 16.

SystmOnline lets you request repeat prescriptions, update your address or phone number and view a summary of your medical record. Use it on the website at systmonline.tpp-uk.com or through the free app. To get a username and password, ask our reception team and bring photo ID with you.

Airmid is a newer app from the makers of SystmOnline, with more features. Alongside repeat prescriptions, you can view your medical record, message the practice and set medication reminders. Download it from the App Store or Google Play and sign in with your SystmOnline details or your NHS login. There is no website version.

Missed Appointments

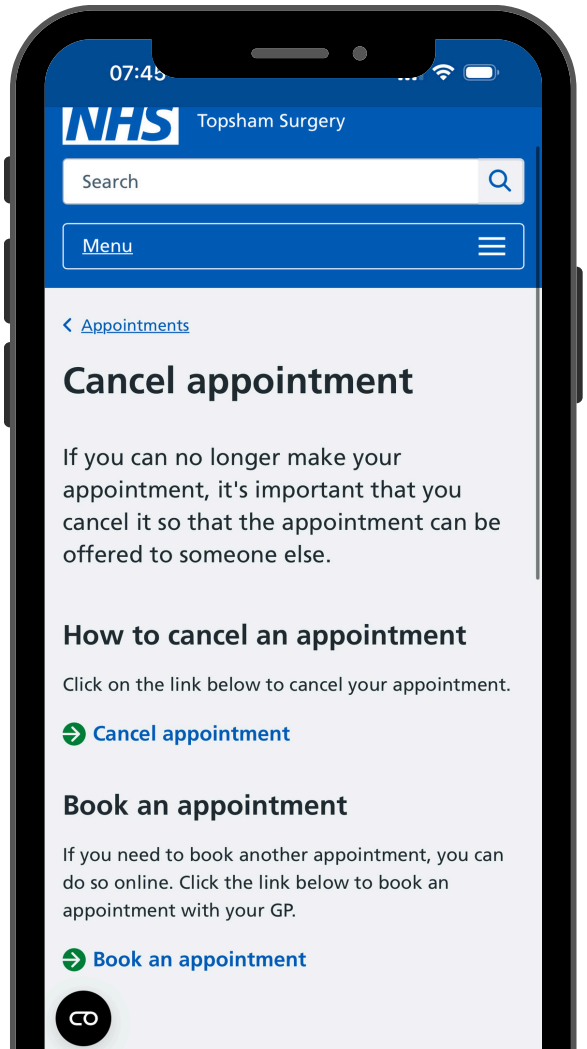
In October, we saw 227 missed appointments, and 148 of these were flu and COVID vaccinations. That's around 21 hours of clinical time wasted, roughly £800.

227
Appointments missed

21
Hours of clinical time

If you can't make your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible so we can offer it to someone else.

You can either cancel by calling the surgery on 01392 874646, through the cancellation page on our website or using the link within the text message reminder.



A New Way to Process Your Letters

Hospitals, clinics and other services send us letters about our patients every day. Last year we processed more than 53,000 of them. From 2nd November, we are using a tool called BetterLetter to help.

BetterLetter uses AI to read each letter and highlight the key information, such as a new diagnosis, a change to your medication or a follow-up that is needed. **A trained member of the practice team still checks the details before the letter is filed in your record.** This improves the accuracy of your record and frees up admin time to support other areas of patient care.

BetterLetter meets NHS security requirements. Your data is encrypted and can only be accessed by trained staff to manage your letters. You do not need to do anything. If you would prefer to opt out, email dpo@betterletter.ai and our team will process your letters by hand. More information is available at betterletter.ai/patients.

Extra Help Answering Your Calls

This winter, LineIn will start working alongside our admin team to answer incoming calls and make outgoing ones. This gives us extra capacity during our busiest times.

LineIn's call handlers follow the same protocols and procedures as our own staff and work as an extension of our team, so you should not notice any difference when you call us. More information is available on our website.

Three Quick Reminders

A few things worth checking before the end of the year.

Planning a trip abroad? Please book any travel vaccinations at least six weeks before you go. Some vaccines need more than one dose and they all take time to work, so contact us as soon as your trip is booked.

Are your next of kin details up to date? In an emergency, we need to know who to contact on your behalf. This is especially important if your circumstances have changed since you registered, for example following the death of a husband, wife or partner. Please call us or email topshamadmin@nhs.net with your next of kin's details if you need to update them.

Need repeat medication over Christmas? The bank holidays mean fewer working days to process prescription requests, so please order early and well before you run out.

Men’s Health Talk - Tuesday 1st December

We are pleased to welcome Mr Ian Donaldson, Consultant Urologist at Nuffield Health, to Topsham Surgery for an evening talk on men’s health. The talk starts at 6:30pm on Tuesday 1st December.

Tickets are available from Topsham Surgery reception and need to be collected in person.

Places are limited, so we recommend collecting yours early.



November is also Movember, when people around the world raise awareness of men’s health, including prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health. If you have noticed a change, such as needing to pee more often, a lump in a testicle or a low mood that will not lift, please contact us. Getting checked early makes a difference.

Thank You to Our PPG

Our Patient Participation Group held its Annual General Meeting on Monday 19th October.

Thank you to the PPG members who organised it and to every patient who came along. The minutes will be available on our website and in the waiting rooms in due course.

The PPG plays an important role in helping us improve the care and experience we provide.

We take patient feedback on things like communication and access back to the group, and look together at what we can change.

The group is open to all registered patients.

If you would like to help shape how the practice runs, please email: d-icb.topsham.patientgroup@nhs.net

Christmas and New Year Opening Hours



Both of our surgeries will be closed on Friday 25th December, reopening on Tuesday 29th December. We will close again on Friday 1st January, reopening on Monday 4th January. Please check our website nearer the time for any changes to opening hours.

If you need medical help while we are closed, call NHS 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk. In a medical emergency, always call 999.

From all of us at Topsham Surgery and Glasshouse Medical Centre, we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

Our Community

Each month, we'll shine a light on local events, initiatives and activities in our community. **In November and December, you can look out for:**



First Saturday of the month - Topsham Repair Café
The Repair Café at the Dorothy Holman Centre on Ferry Road has volunteers with repair skills who will help you fix broken clothes, furniture, electricals, crockery and toys. If you can carry it, bring it along. Free to attend, from 10am to 1pm. The next dates are Saturday 7th November and Saturday 5th December.

Thursday 19th November - 700 Years Beside the Exe
Organised by Topsham Museum, this talk sees the Earl of Devon, Charles Courtenay, tell the story of his family's long connection with the River Exe, Topsham and Powderham. Held at Matthews Hall, with doors open at 10.30am for an 11am start. Entry is £8 on the door.

Friday 27th November - Topsham Lights and Christmas Market
A festive evening on Fore Street, which closes to traffic from 4pm to 7pm. The Exeter Brass Band plays on Matthews Hall Green from 4pm, the lights are switched on at 4.50pm and Street Heat perform afterwards. The Christmas Market runs in St Margaret's Church from 5pm to 8pm, and more than 20 independent shops, cafés and eateries stay open late.



Sunday 6th December - Topsham Museum Christmas Market
A Christmas market at Matthews Hall on Fore Street, open from 11am to 3pm. There will be stalls full of gifts including cakes, produce, books, crafts, and mulled wine, as well as the Museum shop.

Tuesday 3rd to Thursday 5th December - Christmas Tree Festival
A display of Christmas trees at St Nicholas Methodist Church on Fore Street. Admission is free but donations are accepted.

We share local events and groups to help you find out what's happening in the community. Their inclusion does not mean the practice endorses or recommends them. Please contact the organisers directly with any questions





Thank You for Being A Part of Our Community

Thank you for taking the time to read our November/December newsletter. We hope you found it helpful and informative.

Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook too - it’s a great way to stay up to date with practice news and health advice: https://www.facebook.com/topshamandglasshousesurgery

We’ll be back in the new year. Until then, from everyone at Topsham and Glasshouse, have a very happy Christmas.

Topsham Surgery, Holman Way,
Topsham, Exeter EX3 0EN

Glasshouse Medical Centre,
Glasshouse Lane, Exeter, EX2 7BT

01392 874 646

www.topshamsurgery.nhs.uk