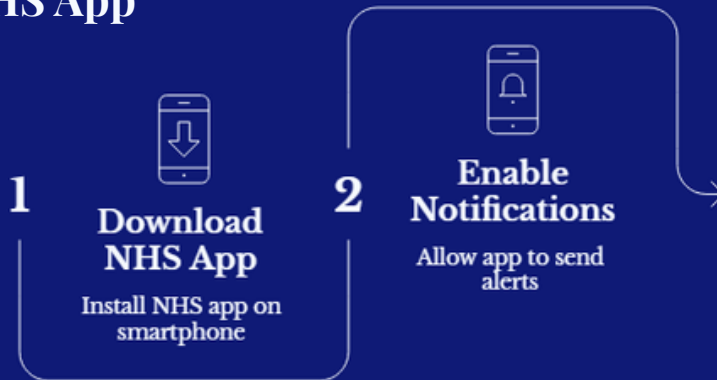


TOWER HOUSE SURGERY

Welcome!

to our monthly patient newsletter, where we discuss any updates at the surgery and any relevant goings-on in the Wycombe area.

Get Messages Directly Through NHS App



To opt out, simply don't enable notifications through the NHS app.

If a message is not responded to within an hour, the message will be re-sent as a text.

Patients will still receive communication via text, email, and calls.

Black History Month

was first celebrated in the United Kingdom in **1987**, and since then each October has been dedicated to uplifting black voices and ensuring their achievements are not pushed to the wayside simply because they are black.

As many black Britons will be able to tell you, the **NHS** has been no stranger to race-based discrimination in the past, and here at **Tower House Surgery** it is very important to us that we do our part to make all of our patients feel safe and welcome. This year, **BHM** is themed around Honouring Our Communities, and there is no better way to do so than for us to highlight some key black figures in British medical history.

In the **1850s** Britain sent troupes to Crimea to fight against the Ottoman Empire. Florence Nightingale and a select group of nurses were sent over to aid the wounded soldiers. Who better to join them than **Mary Seacole**, having years of experience with both traditional Jamaican and Western medicine. The War Office disagreed, stating they already had enough nurses. Her race undoubtedly played a part in this decision. They might have been an immovable object, but Mary Seacole was an unstoppable force. She quickly raised the funds to go herself and established her boarding house for soldiers there.

Whenever she was needed at the war camp, Mary donned her satchel filled with dressings, medicines, and provisions and leapt into action. The soldiers started calling her **Mother Seacole** and were so grateful for her care that they wrote in droves to British newspapers to spread word of her efforts. She was encouraged to release an autobiography once the war had ended, becoming a bestseller once she had. During her lifetime, she saw immense fame and virtue to the point that **>80,000** people attended a fundraising gala in her honour once she returned to England and fell into poverty.

The flame of her celebrity burned brightly, but it burned up quick. Soon after her death in 1881, she faded into obscurity. When Jamaican nurses visited England in the **1990s**, they expected to see the woman they spent their lives idolising as a driving force of modern medicine commemorated as such but quickly realised that England had left her memory in the past. They wasted no time before spreading the word about Mary's life, and thanks to them, her autobiography was soon reprinted for the world to read. Today she has taken her rightful place back in history, and in 2004 she became the first named black woman to be honoured in the UK when a statue of her image was erected in London. Her name and her legacy will never be forgotten again.

Black History Month

Over **100** years later, the **NHS** would welcome its first ever black matron, **Daphne Steele**.

This was in **1964**, where segregation and racism were rampant across the western world, and as such, this appointment would make national news. Steele was sent around 350 letters from people wishing her success, and she responded to every single letter with a return address. She was open about experiencing racial discrimination from both patients and colleagues but said that it was a necessary part of developing a mutual understanding in the workplace.

Steele was part of the **Windrush Generation**, a group of people who were encouraged to migrate to England after the Second World War. They were promised British citizenship and well-paid jobs, and they travelled from all across the former British Colonies to make a better life for themselves. The **NHS** launched in **1948** to a massively unhealthy population in part thanks to the war. The **Windrush Generation** was able to fill roughly **50,000** positions and can be credited with the reason the NHS was able to succeed. Their descendants make up a huge number of modern healthcare workers across all levels, and are a major contributing factor in the **NHS** being as diverse as it is today.

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Most women in the United Kingdom probably aren't a stranger to the concept of checking their bodies for signs of change. We are told that even the slightest difference can indicate something sinister below the surface. Since women's reproductive health is treated as a taboo subject when spoken about in detail or in public spaces; warning signs that should be flashing red are instead blinking a calm orange. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in women and the second most common overall. In the United Kingdom, around **59,000** people are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, and for around 10% of those people, it is fatal. The most important thing in keeping ahead of symptoms, is to **check regularly**. If you feel like something has changed or is unusual - make an appointment with your GP. If something in your body feels wrong, you owe it to yourself to get checked out. Getting the all clear is never a waste of time.

Common Cancer Symptoms



Lump or Swelling



Puckering or Dimpling



Darker or Red Color



Inverted Nipple



Unusual Liquid Discharge



Changes in Size/Shape

Healthy Breasts



Smooth Breast Surface



Even Skin Tone



Natural Breast Color



Normal Nipple Shape



No Nipple Discharge



Consistent Size/Shape

Stoptober

Most people nowadays have probably spent the majority of their adult life being told **“smoking kills!”** by public service announcements, pushy informative posters, disgusting warning labels, it doesn't matter. The point is it's been said and it's been heard.

In the year of **2026**, the general public is the healthiest it's ever been. With the amount of access we have to public healthcare, medical research consistently breaking the glass ceiling, and the average life expectancy in the **2020s** being the highest it's ever been; it should be surprising that the leading preventable cause of death has stayed the same since the **1950s**. **Smoking kills.**

Considering the speed at which smoking causes negative effects on your health, stopping smoking causes positive effects just as quickly. If our 20 pack a day chain smoker from above quit smoking on the 1st of October, they'd have saved an entire day of their life by the 4th of October. According to Gov.uk *“just 72 hours after quitting, your breathing will feel easier and your energy will increase. After 12 weeks, your blood circulation will improve and by the time one-year rolls around, your risk of heart attack will have halved compared to a smoker.”*

Smoking is an addiction that affects millions of people worldwide. If it was a simple feat to quit, we'd all know that by now. But it's not. People try patches, gum, Snus. Going on walks. Trying new hobbies. Quitting smoking by yourself is three times harder than quitting with the assistance of local services. Nicotine can cause a change in the way a person's reward system works, meaning that getting a dopamine hit is achieved easier by smoking than by doing anything else. Nicotine withdrawal symptoms cause stress, anxiety, headaches, irritability. When the easiest way to get rid of these all consuming symptoms is to relapse, it's natural that anyone would find it difficult on their own.

For resources on how to quit smoking, please visit [Quit smoking - Better Health - NHS](#)

For more information about the health benefits of quitting smoking, please visit the [Gov.uk website.](#)

Core Opening Hours

Monday	8am - 6:30pm
Tuesday	8am - 6:30pm
Wednesday	8am - 6:30pm
Thursday	8am - 6:30pm
Friday	8am - 6:30pm
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	CLOSED

Enhanced Access Hours

Tuesday	7am - 8am
Wednesday	7am - 8am & 6:30pm - 8pm
Friday	4.30pm - 7pm