



PATIENT NEWSLETTER



Your quarterly update from Lancaster Medical Practice



Dalton Square | Galgate | King Street | Meadowside | Owen Road | Rosebank | University

AN UPDATE ON OUR SERVICES

You will know from reading our December newsletter that we supported the national British Medical Association (BMA) collective action. As a reminder, this action was taken in response to significant demand and increasing pressures on GP practices, aiming to ensure that practices like ours remain sustainable while continuing to deliver essential care.

As a result, during 2025, we have focused on delivering services that the practice is contracted and adequately supported to provide. This has meant that some services were transitioned to alternative providers, and some patients may have experienced changes to their care.

A welcome outcome of this collective action is that NHS commissioners have begun developing new contracts designed to better support services provided by GPs. We are pleased to inform patients that we now hold new contracts to deliver certain services, known as Local Enhanced Services (LES). While the provision of these funded services is a positive step forward, general practice continues to face extraordinary levels of demand. ►



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We remain committed to working with our commissioners to ensure fair and sustainable commissioning for all patients.

Over the coming months, we will be rolling out these enhanced services through a safe and carefully managed transition of care back into general practice. We will communicate directly with affected patients, and our Patient Participation Group is also being kept informed of these changes.

We recognise that a lot has changed to reach this point. Patient care remains at the heart of everything we do at Lancaster Medical Practice, and the introduction of these enhanced services supports our mission to continue providing safe, effective, and high-quality care.

Our whole practice team is excited to begin delivering these services—staff training is underway, stock has been ordered, and clinical rooms are ready. We thank all our patients for their continued support.

Stay Connected. Use **patches**.

Book appointments,
request medical or admin help,
hear from your GP.

YOUR DIABETES CHECK-UPS MATTER



HAVE YOU HAD YOUR ANNUAL DIABETES CHECK?

It's Diabetes Awareness Week between 9 and 15 June, and we're encouraging our diabetes patients to attend their annual review.

We encourage our patients to take an active role in managing their own conditions, but if you have diabetes, it is essential that you attend the practice once a year for a review.

Your diabetes review is to check that your condition is being

managed as best as possible, and is normally carried out by a member of the nursing team.

Can't remember when your last review was? Is it due soon? Contact us and we can help.

BEAT THE HEAT!

and stay well this summer

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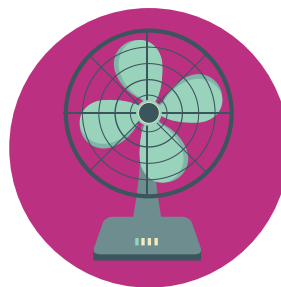
Drink plenty of water to reduce risk of dehydration



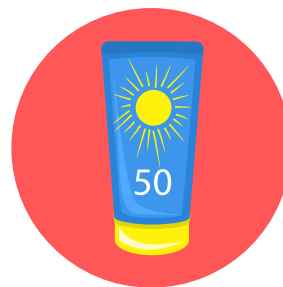
Protect yourself from the sun, especially between 11am and 3pm



Check on others, especially those at higher risk of heat-related illness



Keep your home as cool as possible



Wear a high factor sunscreen

HEAT EXHAUSTION: KNOW THE SIGNS

Tiredness – Dizziness – Headache – Feeling sick – Being sick – Excessive sweating – Pale & clammy skin or heat rash – Cramps in the arms, legs and stomach – Fast breathing or heartbeat – High temperature – Feeling very thirsty – Weakness

Suspect heat exhaustion? Cool the person down and give them fluids.

No improvement? Call **NHS 111** or **999** in an emergency

THINK PHARMACY FIRST!



Have an insect bite or sting that needs treating? Hay fever* symptoms getting in the way of your plans?

Your pharmacist can offer advice and the right treatment for a whole range of conditions to save you contacting the practice and ensure quick treatment. They can even prescribe common medications. So, think pharmacy first!

*A note about hay fever: in line with current guidelines, the practice is unable to routinely prescribe medication to treat hay fever. This means we will signpost you to a pharmacy for assessment and treatment from your pharmacist, who is a highly skilled expert in medicines.

DO YOU NEED ANY VACCINES BEFORE YOU JET AWAY?



Planning your next adventure abroad? Some destinations require you to have additional vaccinations to protect you from infections that may be prevalent in that country.

Not sure what vaccines you need? Book an appointment with a practice nurse 6 to 8 weeks before you travel and we will be able to advise, and order your vaccines which will be administered in a second appointment.

BEHIND THE SCENES: MEDS MANAGEMENT

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➤ **Have some queries about your medication? Lead Pharmacist, Sarah says our Medicines Management team are here to help you!**

Our Medicines Management team consists of pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and administrative staff. They are here to make sure your medications are used safely and effectively to benefit your overall health.

The practice issues around 18,000 medications per month – some of these will be one off prescriptions and others will be longer term prescribing on a repeat basis.

As experts in medicines, our pharmacists and pharmacy technicians work closely with clinicians across the practice to ensure medication is appropriate and side effects are minimised.

Did you know that if you have medication on a repeat prescription, you need a structured medication review once a year at the practice? The meds management team will keep track of when your review is due – please help us and attend your appointment.

If you feel the meds management team could help you, they can be reached by telephoning 01524 238150 (option 4) or filling in a Patchs form online.



WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN

Sometimes it can be hard to find someone to talk to, but please remember that support is available if you're facing difficult times.



At the practice, we have a small, experienced team who provide listening support for patients.

Our trained listeners are here to give you the time and space to talk for up to one hour about any difficulties or struggles you may be having in your life.

You can book a telephone appointment now – telephone 01524 238150, ask at reception or use Patchs. Appointments are available on Thursdays (am) and Fridays (am & pm).

We would like to inform patients that we no longer provide certificates confirming fitness to fly, fitness to participate in extreme sports or fitness to attend the gym. These certificates fall outside the scope of General Practitioners' NHS terms and conditions. More information and advice about where you can go instead, is available on our website.

FLU VACCINE

**COMING
SOON**

It's hard to believe, but preparations are already underway for the 2025/26 flu vaccine season. Keep your eyes peeled for updates – including who is eligible and when vaccine clinics will start.

WHAT TO EXPECT: REFERRALS PROCESS

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➤ What you need to know if you have been referred for specialist care

There are times when patients require more specialised care than what is available at the practice. In these circumstances, we will make a referral to the right place to continue their treatment, which is usually secondary care (hospital) or an external provider. Our Secretarial Coordinator, Julie, talks us through some important information about patient referrals.

How are we making sure patients get their referral processed promptly?

Our referrals team is a busy one. We recognise that waiting times for specialist treatment can be lengthy in some cases, and we have been working to reduce the amount of time it takes us to process patient referrals.

Following a review of the patient referral process, which looked at every step in detail, we have implemented a streamlined referrals process, which aims to be more efficient and minimise referral turnaround times for patients where possible.

What timescales can patients expect for a referral?

The time that it takes to process a referral depends on the issue that the patient has.

If your clinician decides that your issue needs an urgent referral, it will be processed by our referrals team within 24 hours.

If your clinician decides that your issue needs a routine referral, it is not time bound. However, all routine referrals are worked on in a chronological order and are processed as promptly as possible. It is difficult to put a timescale on how long a routine referral can take because timescales change based on a number of factors, including demand.

Please be assured that we work as hard as we can to get you referred to secondary care as swiftly as we can, and we can confidently say that thanks to our updated processes, these referrals are happening quicker than they did in the past.

What about NHS Right to Choose?

NHS Right to Choose means that in most cases, if your GP refers you for a physical or mental health condition, you have the legal right to choose where you receive your care. It is worth noting that we will always refer you to the most appropriate local service so that your referral is not delayed, but we will write to you offering Right to Choose. Following this, you must notify us within five working days if you have a preferred provider for your care.

How will I know if my referral has been processed?

When your referral has been completed by our team and sent to secondary care, it has been processed. If you wish to check if your referral has been processed, the quickest way to check is on the NHS App. Login and click on your GP health record, and you should see documentation of the referral here, once it is processed. This saves you waiting in the call queue for an update.



Have you heard about My Planned Care?

The NHS website that allows you to check average hospital waiting times by speciality.

My Planned Care

Supporting you while you wait for a hospital appointment, operation or treatment.

www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk



PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

➤ A message from our new chair of the PPG

“ After 30 years in Education, I vowed that once I retired, I would never join another ‘Committee’ or attend another meeting!! So why do it?

I became a patient with LMP around 7 years ago, when it was much smaller. The practice was exemplary and in many ways, it still is! As LMP grew, I began to ask questions and try to find out how the organisation worked.

I firmly believe that the bedrock to organisational change is communication. In order to communicate and effect change within LMP, there must be an open and transparent relationship between the practice and patients. This, in turn is rooted in mutual trust and respect.

Having met with small groups of LMP staff and individuals within PPG meetings, I've been impressed. There is a genuine desire on the part of the practice to improve the experience for all patients. They have been transparent and approachable in terms of the systems they employ and the areas in which these need to improve.

As ‘critical friends’, the PPG is currently looking at systems for patient feedback and evaluation. There's a huge amount of work already going on in these areas. The PPG role is to listen and critically evaluate existing systems and suggest ways in which these may be ‘improved’.

I've learned so much about the work going on behind the scenes, I like to think I'm curious, some might say nosey!!!!

Please consider joining us, we have a lovely group which meets approximately every six weeks, either at St Thomas' Church in Lancaster or via Teams online. You will be warmly welcomed.

Any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,

”

Steph Smith

chair@lmp-ppg.co.uk



Steph Smith,
PPG Chair

PPG DELIVER LIFE-SAVING CPR TRAINING

For their latest event, the PPG invited trainers from St John Ambulance to deliver a session on CPR and use of a defibrillator.

The session was well-attended and featured some theory with a focus on hands-on techniques.

Thank you to our PPG for arranging this informative session – look out for future PPG events!

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? JOIN OUR PPG!

Membership of the PPG is open to all of our registered patients.

The carer of a patient registered at the practice can be a member of the PPG even if they are not a registered patient themselves.

Sign up on our website, or via reception by filling in a paper form. See you at the next meeting!

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT

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- How have you found your care at the practice recently? Here's a look at your patient feedback for the last quarter, between March and May 2025.

NHS FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

Would you recommend us to your friends and family? The NHS Friends and Family Test is a very short and simple survey that you can complete to provide anonymous and honest feedback about the care you have received at the practice.

Between 1 March and 31 May, we received NHS Friends and Family feedback from

4,838 patients

Of these responses,

95.6% of patients

rated our service as good or very good



Words that patients frequently used to describe the practice in their feedback



A more detailed analysis of the Friends & Family results are available on our website.

LET US KNOW

There are different ways that you can let us know your feedback.

Rate your satisfaction through the NHS Friends and Family Test. Do this via text message after an appointment, through our website or by paper form

Don't have a complaint but you have some thoughts or suggestions about how we could improve? Fill in a paper feedback form and post it in the postbox at one of our sites

Not happy with the care you have received or our actions to resolve your concern? Full details on making a formal complaint can be found on our website

JUST ASK “COULD IT BE SEPSIS?”

SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN

A child may have sepsis if he or she:

- **Is breathing very fast**
- **Has a ‘fit’ or convulsion**
- **Looks mottled, bluish, or pale**
- **Has a rash that does not fade when you press it**
- **Is very lethargic or difficult to wake**
- **Feels abnormally cold to touch**

SYMPTOMS IN ADULTS

An adult may have sepsis if they show any of these signs:

- S**lurred speech or confusion
- E**xtrême shivering or muscle pain
- P**assing no urine (in a day)
- S**evere breathlessness
- I**t feels like you’re going to die
- S**kin mottled or discoloured

Call 111 or **contact your GP** if you’re worried about an infection.
Call 999 or **visit A&E** if someone has one of the sepsis symptoms.



**We’re open Monday - Friday,
8:00am - 6:30pm***

If you need medical attention when we’re closed and it cannot wait until we reopen, **call 111**

*Some pre-booked appointments are available on evenings and Saturdays at selected sites



**There are different ways to
contact us for medical help**

Online via a Patches form (find it on our website or via the NHS App)

Call 01524 238150

Walk in to one of our sites and speak to a member of our reception team



**We’re occasionally closed for
staff training**

Our scheduled closures for staff training over the coming months are **Wednesday 11 June** and **Thursday 10 July**

The practice will also be closed on **Monday 25 August** due to the bank holiday



www.lancastermedicalpractice.com

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 [@lancaster.medical.practice](https://www.instagram.com/lancaster.medical.practice)



Download the NHS App