



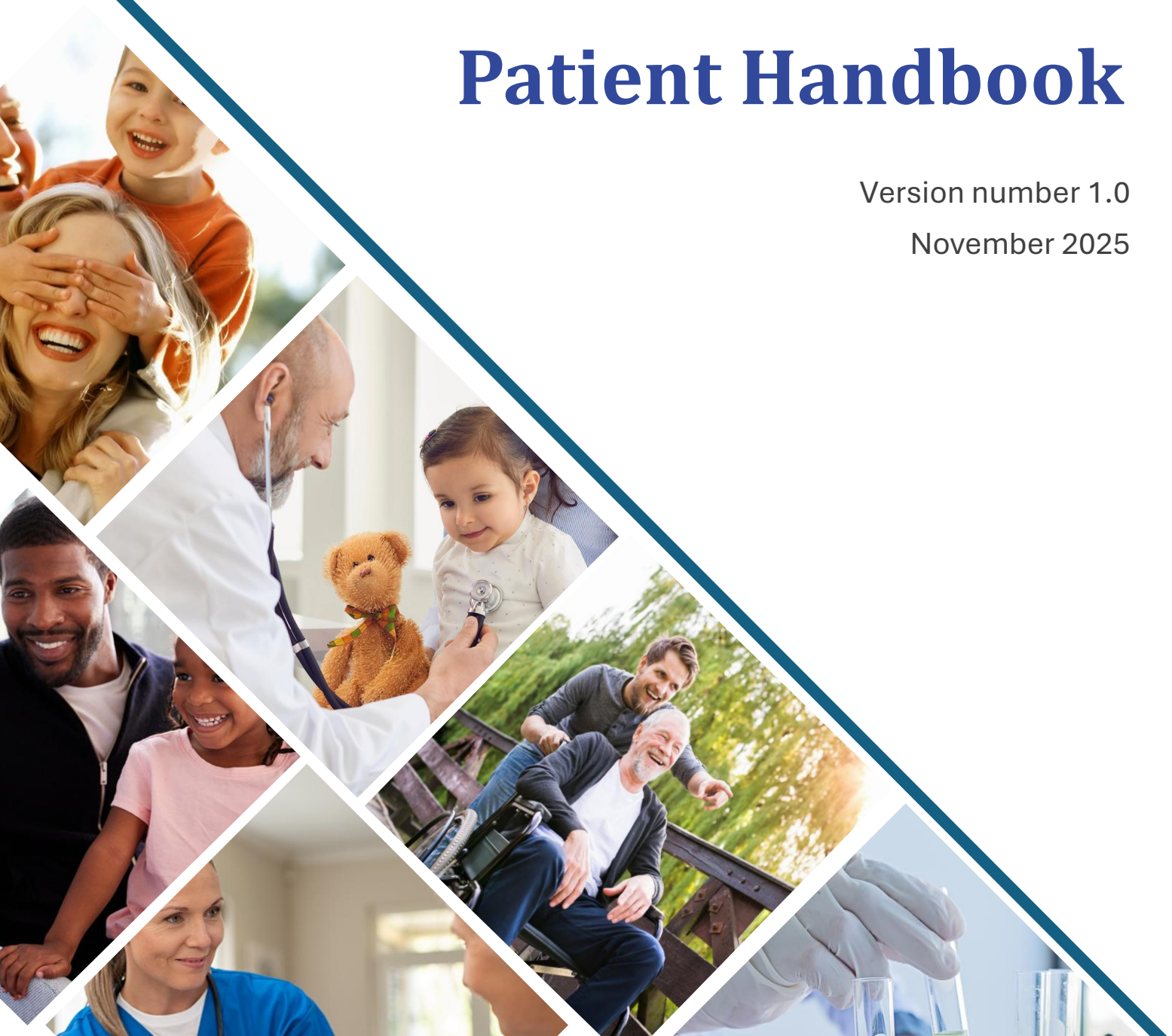
**Staveleigh Medical Centre**

# **Staveleigh Medical Centre Your Family GP Practice**

## **Patient Handbook**

Version number 1.0

November 2025



# WELCOME AND OUR COMMITMENT

## WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE PRACTICE MANAGER

Dear Patients,

A warm welcome to Staveleigh Medical Centre from me, Martin, the Practice Manager, and our entire dedicated team. Whilst I sincerely hope that you may not need to visit us often, when you do, we are here for you and want to make the experience as easy and as efficient as possible. What truly makes us different is that whilst the modern world drives pressures for convenience, digital solutions, and presents inequalities, we are determined to keep the concept of "your family practice" as our priority, ensuring this valuable relationship is not lost.

This pack provides essential information about everything you need to know as a patient at Staveleigh Medical Centre. I appreciate this is a lot of information, and only some sections will be immediately relevant to you.

To help you get started, I particularly draw your attention to two key sections:

1. **Top Tips for Patient Success (Section 22):** This section summarises the entire process of how to make an appointment to what to do before, during, and after your consultation.
2. **Requesting Your Medication (Section 9):** This outlines our prescription turnaround time and the process for ordering your repeat medicines.

Your safety is paramount, and we aim to offer you fair choices in how you receive your care. If you're ever unsure about anything, please do not hesitate to talk to me, our doctors and nurses, or any member of the team.

Yours Sincerely



*Martin Turner*

**Martin Turner**

**Practice Manager, Staveleigh Medical Centre**



# Contents

Welcome and Our Commitment .....	1
Welcome Message from the Practice Manager .....	1
Document Control .....	5
1. Our Team and Your Care.....	5
1.1 Doctors and Leadership team .....	5
1.2 Nursing Team .....	6
1.3 Non-Clinical Team.....	6
1.4 Training Practice.....	7
2. Contact, Location and Opening Times.....	7
2.1. Contact Details .....	7
2.2. Opening Hours .....	7
2.3 Enhanced Access Appointments.....	7
2.4. Social Media Updates .....	7
2.5. Parking and Transport .....	8
2.6. Accessibility and Facilities .....	8
3. Registration and Continuity of care .....	9
3.1. Access to Care .....	9
3.2. Our Core Values .....	9
3.3. The Patient Charter.....	9
3.4. You and Your General Practice (YYGP) and the NHS Consitution .....	9
3.5. Personal Details .....	10
3.6. Catchment Area .....	10
4. How You Can Contact Us and What Happens.....	10
4.1. Methods of Contact .....	10
4.2. Digital Access.....	10
4.3. Encouraging the NHS App and Website .....	11
5. Your Medical Records and Confidentiality .....	11
5.1. Access to Your Medical Records .....	11
5.2. Requesting Historical and Additional Access .....	11
5.3. Safety Restrictions on Access .....	11
5.4. Proxy Access and Consent.....	11
5.5. Speaking on Behalf of Someone Else .....	11
5.6. Data Protection and Staff Confidentiality.....	12
5.7. National Data Opt-Out.....	12
5.8. Protecting Your Privacy If You Know Staff Members.....	12
5.9. Privacy Notices.....	12

5.10. Shared Care Records (Summary Care Record and GM Care Record).....	12
6. Safeguarding.....	13
6.1. The Practice's Safeguarding Commitment.....	13
6.2. External Safeguarding Contacts .....	13
6.3. Domestic Abuse .....	13
7. Health and Safety Whilst Visiting The Practice .....	14
7.1. Fire Safety and Evacuation Protocol .....	14
7.2. Contagious Illness Protocol .....	14
7.3. Spillages and Bodily Fluids.....	14
8. Stalybridge, Dukinfield and Mossley Primary Care Network (PCN).....	14
8.1. What is the PCN?.....	14
8.2. PCN Hub Access and Services .....	14
9. Prescriptions and Long Term Conditions .....	15
9.1. Ordering Your Medication .....	15
9.2. Early Requests and Restrictions .....	15
9.3. Long Term Conditions and Annual Reviews.....	15
9.4. Shared Care Arrangements .....	15
9.5. Antibiotic Stewardship.....	15
10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion .....	16
10.1. Our Commitment to Equal Healthcare.....	16
10.2. LGBTQ+ Gold Standard Practice.....	16
10.3. Preferred Name and Pronouns .....	16
10.4. Providing Feedback on Inclusion .....	16
11. Reasonable Adjustments and Additional Support .....	16
11.1. Reasonable Adjustments for Accessibility .....	16
11.2. Neurodiversity Support .....	16
11.3. Specific Patient Support Champions .....	17
11.4. Veteran Support .....	17
11.5 Patients With No Fixed Abode or Homeless .....	17
11.6. Welfare and Community Initiatives.....	17
11.7. Your Right to Choose for Referrals .....	17
12. Carers Support.....	18
12.1. Identifying Carers .....	18
12.2. Carers Support .....	18
13. Patient Responsibility and Mutual Respect.....	18
13.1. Mutual Respect and Zero Tolerance .....	18
13.2. Appointment Management.....	19
13.3. Medication and Treatment Plans .....	19

14. Patient Feedback Channels and Action .....	19
14.1. Patient Participation Group (PPG).....	19
14.2. Friends and Family Test (FFT) and Online Reviews.....	19
14.3. Annual Patient Survey .....	19
14.4. Complaints Procedure .....	19
15. The Green NHS and Our Environmental Commitment .....	20
15.1. Supporting a Sustainable NHS .....	20
15.2. Sustainable Medication Management.....	20
15.3. Reducing Our Carbon Footprint.....	20
16. Vaccinations, Immunisations and Travel Health .....	21
16.1. Routine Immunisations .....	21
16.2. Travel Vaccinations.....	21
16.3. Occupational Health Vaccinations and Records .....	21
17. Sick Notes, Fit Notes, and MED3 .....	22
17.1. Self-Certification (First 7 Days).....	22
17.2. Obtaining a Fit Note (MED3) .....	22
18. Non-NHS Services (Private Work).....	22
19. Research and Innovation .....	23
19.1. Our Status as a Research Active Practice.....	23
19.2. Participation is Voluntary .....	23
20. Digital Health and Self-Management Tools .....	23
20.1. The NHS App and Online Consultation Platform.....	23
20.2. Recommended Digital Self-Management Tools.....	23
21. Care Home Services .....	23
21.1. Aligned Care Home Provision .....	23
21.2. Dedicated Care and Ward Rounds.....	24
21.3. Collaboration with Local Teams .....	24
22. Top Tips for Patient Success .....	24
22.1. How to Request an Appointment .....	24
22.2. Before Your Appointment .....	24
22.3. During Your Appointment .....	25
22.4. After Your Appointment.....	25
22.5. Health Checks.....	25
23. Useful Contacts and Services .....	25
23.1. General Wellness and Screening.....	25
23.2. Urgent Care Guidance .....	26
23.3. Local Health and Community Support.....	26
24. Glossary of Terms (Definitions) .....	27





## DOCUMENT CONTROL



Item	Detail
<b>Document Name</b>	Patient Handbook
<b>Item Type</b>	Handbook, Patient Information
<b>Author</b>	M. Turner
<b>Version</b>	1.0
<b>Approved By</b>	Practice Partners
<b>Date Issued</b>	08 November 2025
<b>Review Due Date</b>	08 November 2027

Version	Date	Created By	Approved By	Comments
1.0	Nov 25	M. Turner	Practice Partners	Document initiated.

## 1. OUR TEAM AND YOUR CARE

### 1.1 DOCTORS AND LEADERSHIP TEAM

 <p><b>Dr G. Choi</b> GP Partner PCN Clinical Director Urgent Care Lead for Tameside Mental Health Champion</p>	 <p><b>Dr V. Long</b> GP Partner Safeguarding Lead Caldicott Guardian Women's and Family Champion</p>
 <p><b>Dr R. Naweed</b> GP Partner GP Trainer CKD Lead for Tameside Tameside Together GP Federation Director Men's Health Champion</p>	 <p><b>Dr J. Shilhan</b> GP Partner Lead GP Trainer</p>

 <p><b>Dr D. Manatsa</b> GP Lifestyle Champion</p>	 <p><b>Martin Turner</b> Practice Manager PCN Manager Health Inequalities Champion</p>
<p><b>Kirstie Ellis</b> Assistant Practice Manager</p> <p><b>Roxanne Matthews</b> Reception Supervisor</p> <p><b>Lisa Moran</b> Quality Assurance Manager</p>	

## 1.2 NURSING TEAM

<p><b>Donna</b> Practice Nurse Starting Well Champion</p>	<p><b>Kirsty</b> Healthcare Assistant LGBTQ+ Champion</p>
<p><b>Eva</b> Practice Nurse Tameside Academy Development Nurse</p>	<p><b>Vickie</b> Healthcare Assistant</p>
<p><b>Johanna</b> Healthcare Assistant Learning Disability Champion Living Well Champion</p>	<p><b>Lee</b> Healthcare Assistant</p>
<p><b>Anne</b> Healthcare Assistant</p>	

## 1.3 NON-CLINICAL TEAM

To support our clinical team, we also have a full complement of Receptionists and Patient Advisors, Administrators and Medical Secretaries. Our team are trained care navigators and may ask for details about your request to ensure you are directed to the most appropriate person or service, which may not always be a GP.

## 1.4 TRAINING PRACTICE

We are proud to be a training practice, hosting clinicians in training. Eva is Tameside's Nurse Trainer, and Dr Naweed and Dr Shilhan are GP Trainers, demonstrating the high calibre of our teaching and clinical oversight. We will always ask for your consent for students and trainees to be present during any of your appointments. Any examinations or consultations undertaken by trainees are supervised by a senior clinician. You have the right to decline this.

## 2. CONTACT, LOCATION AND OPENING TIMES

### 2.1. CONTACT DETAILS



Staveleigh Medical Centre, King Street, Stalybridge, SK15 2AE



0161 3048009



[www.staveleighmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.staveleighmedicalcentre.co.uk)

### 2.2. OPENING HOURS

<b>Monday</b>	08:00-18:30	
<b>Tuesday</b>	08:00-18:30	
<b>Wednesday</b>	08:00-18:30	
<b>Thursday</b>	08:00-18:30	We are usually closed on the third Thursday afternoon of each month for training.
<b>Friday</b>	08:00-18:30	
<b>Saturday</b>	Closed	You may still be able to submit online and prescription requests
<b>Sunday</b>	Closed	You may still be able to submit online and prescription requests

### 2.3 ENHANCED ACCESS APPOINTMENTS

We participate in the local Enhanced Access scheme, which allows you to access routine GP, nurse and healthcare assistant appointments outside of our core hours. These are typically held at the PCN Hub (Primary Care Network Hub, Waterloo Road, SK15 2AU) and are available Monday to Friday, from 18:30 to 20:00, and on Saturday, from 09:00 to 17:00. Please ask our team for details when booking.

### 2.4. SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES



Follow us on Facebook: Look for Staveleigh Medical Centre





You can also join our WhatsApp channel for the latest updates: Look for Staveleigh Medical Centre in the WhatsApp channels section, or scan the QR code below:



## 2.5. PARKING AND TRANSPORT

There is unfortunately no access to patient parking at our practice, apart from those with accessibility needs. In addition to public street parking, Waterloo Road car park (operated by TMBC) is nearby and offers free parking for the first 2 hours. We kindly ask patients to park responsibly and be mindful that clinical appointments may occasionally run over their scheduled time. The practice does not accept liability for any parking charges or penalty notices incurred.

The practice is located adjacent to Stalybridge Bus Station, and only a few hundred metres away from Stalybridge Rail Station.

## 2.6. ACCESSIBILITY AND FACILITIES

**Wi-Fi** - For your convenience and to assist with accessing digital services while you wait, we offer free Wi-Fi access in our main waiting areas. Just search for NHS Wi-Fi.

**Physical Access** - All clinical rooms are located on the ground floor with an accessible ramp for easy access.

**Toilet Facilities** - We provide a number of patient toilet facilities, including an accessible toilet.

**Baby Changing Facilities** - We provide baby changing facilities in the toilet in the waiting room. Please dispose of used nappies and wipes in the correct bin, not down the toilet.

**Privacy and Support** - We can provide a private location for breastfeeding upon request.

**Sanitary Products** - We operate a scheme called Period Angels for donating and providing free sanitary products to those in need. We encourage you to participate by taking what you need and donating what you can.

**Contraception** - We provide a full range of free contraception services. Discreet contraception products can be collected from patient toilets. We are also a registered C-Card site.

**Assistance Dogs** - We welcome patients who require the use of assistance dogs. Assistance dogs are permitted on-site.

## 3. REGISTRATION AND CONTINUITY OF CARE

### 3.1. ACCESS TO CARE

New patients can register with us by either popping into the practice for a paper form, or by completing the official registration form on our website. As part of the Safe Surgeries Scheme, we do not ask for ID, proof of address, or proof of residency when registering patients. This is because everyone in the country is entitled to free access to necessary primary care, regardless of their status. However, for security and confidentiality purposes, we may ask for photo ID when granting access to sensitive services, such as online patient records or when collecting sensitive documents or letters on your behalf.

We can confirm that once you have submitted the registration form, you can access care straightaway. While it may take our administrative team a day or two to fully process the form and integrate your records, this does not stop you from accessing necessary care.

Once registered, you will have been informed of your registered General Practitioner (GP). Whilst your registered GP will have overall responsibility for your care, our entire team of clinicians and staff will be able to help with your needs.

#### **Visitors and Temporary Care**

If you are visiting our area and require urgent medical attention for a health issue that cannot wait until you return home, we can treat you as a Temporary Resident (if you are staying in our catchment area for less than three months). For any visitor who is unable to register, we will provide immediate necessary treatment to address any urgent health needs.

### 3.2. OUR CORE VALUES

Our commitment to you is based on several core values that shape how we deliver care. These values include: patient education, ensuring you understand your health options; equal healthcare, offering non-judgemental and accessible services to everyone; proactive wellness, focusing on prevention and a healthy lifestyle; and community engagement, connecting you with local resources and support networks.

### 3.3. THE PATIENT CHARTER

The Patient Charter outlines our formal commitment to you regarding the high standards of service and respect you can consistently expect from every member of our team at Staveleigh Medical Centre. You can pick up a copy of this from reception

### 3.4. YOU AND YOUR GENERAL PRACTICE (YYGP) AND THE NHS CONSTITUTION

**You And Your General Practice:** We encourage all new patients to review the expectations and responsibilities they can expect from their GP practice. You can find full details at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/you-and-your-general-practice/>.

**The NHS Constitution:** The NHS Constitution is the foundational document that sets out the core principles, values, and pledges of the National Health Service, along with the legal rights and responsibilities that patients, the public, and staff owe to one another. Full details are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>.

### 3.5. PERSONAL DETAILS

For your safety and to ensure we can always contact you quickly, please keep us updated on any changes to your personal details, including your address, phone number, and email address. To do this you can phone us on 0161 3048009, visit us in person, contact us through our online webform [www.staveleighmedical.co.uk](http://www.staveleighmedical.co.uk) or you may be able to update your details on the NHS App or other online access platforms. Please note that if you have the NHS App, you may receive notifications through the app instead of or as well as sms messages.

### 3.6. CATCHMENT AREA

If you decide to move out of our traditional catchment area, you may still be able to remain registered with us under certain circumstances. However, you must be able to attend the practice for any appointments or tests required. If you move out of our catchment area and your care becomes complex or if you require home visits, we may unfortunately have to ask that you register with a closer GP who will be better placed to meet your needs and provide timely care.

## 4. HOW YOU CAN CONTACT US AND WHAT HAPPENS

### 4.1. METHODS OF CONTACT

We offer three primary ways for you to contact the practice: online, in person, or by phone. Crucially, regardless of the method you choose, you will receive the same high standard of service and clinical attention. We encourage you to use the method that is most convenient for your needs at the time. We operate a triaging system which means that requests that come to us are reviewed by the duty doctor who advises the next best steps and determines if an urgent appointment is needed. Our team may also signpost you to local services who may be better placed or equipped to offer you timely care. If you call us or visit us in person, the reception team may ask questions about the reason for your request. This helps the duty doctor to triage your request.



### 4.2. DIGITAL ACCESS

For non-urgent requests and general queries, our online form (accessible via our website) is always available when we are open and generally also outside of our core opening hours. This offers flexibility and convenience, allowing you to submit your request at any time of day or night.

### 4.3. ENCOURAGING THE NHS APP AND WEBSITE

For the most efficient service, we strongly encourage the use of the NHS App or your personal Online Access account through our website. These digital portals are the most efficient way to manage key services, particularly for ordering repeat medication and securely viewing your medical records. For more information on the NHS App follow the link: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>.



## 5. YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

### 5.1. ACCESS TO YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS

When you register with us, for most patients access to view your full medical record online or through the NHS App is only automatically available for data recorded from either 1st November 2023 or the date you registered with us, whichever is later. This is due to necessary safety checks. This applies even if you had full record access at your previous GP surgery – You may notice that this disappears when you first register with us.

### 5.2. REQUESTING HISTORICAL AND ADDITIONAL ACCESS

To request additional access to your historical medical records, you must first complete a specific form available at reception. This ensures that your records can be thoroughly checked for safety and suitability before access is granted. This is because there might be some information in your record which could be harmful to you or somebody else.

### 5.3. SAFETY RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS

Please be aware that some individuals may not be granted full access to their records for safety reasons. If this decision affects you, you retain the right to request a review by completing a form, which is available in reception. Please note that access to records remains at the discretion of the Practice.

### 5.4. PROXY ACCESS AND CONSENT

You can apply for proxy access to access the records or online services for someone else, such as for children you may care for. However, please note that patient consent is still likely to be needed if the patient is competent to provide it. Access for children's records may automatically stop when they reach certain ages.

### 5.5. SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF SOMEONE ELSE

Even without full record access, you may be authorised to speak on behalf of someone else for tasks such as making appointments or ordering medication. This still requires a specific form from reception, and the patient must provide consent if they are able to do so.

## 5.6. DATA PROTECTION AND STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY

We are absolutely committed to protecting your personal medical information. We adhere strictly to data protection laws to ensure your records are always kept safe and confidential. To enforce this, all members of staff sign a formal confidentiality agreement and undertake mandatory annual training on data protection and governance.

## 5.7. NATIONAL DATA OPT-OUT

You have the right to opt out of your confidential patient information being used for research and planning purposes across the NHS. This process is known as the National Data Opt-Out (Type 1). Full information and links on how to set or change your preference are available on our practice website.

## 5.8. PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY IF YOU KNOW STAFF MEMBERS

We maintain strict internal guidelines on how we handle care for patients who might know staff members personally. We will often restrict staff members from viewing medical records of people who may know them, particularly if it is deemed that access to information on medical records could have a current or future potential to cause harm to the staff member, patient or someone else. You can request that a staff member is restricted from viewing your medical records by contacting the Practice Manager. The practice may also do this automatically if a staff member declares they know a patient personally.

## 5.9. PRIVACY NOTICES

Full details of how we manage, process, and protect your personal data, including your rights under GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), can be found in our comprehensive Privacy Notices. These documents are available for review on our website:

<https://www.staveleighmedicalcentre.co.uk/practice-information/>.

The practice upholds a membership with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and Martin Turner (Practice Manager) is the practice's Data Protection Officer (DPO) and can be contacted for any data related queries.

## 5.10. SHARED CARE RECORDS (SUMMARY CARE RECORD AND GM CARE RECORD)

Your medical information is shared locally and nationally to ensure continuity of care, especially in emergencies:

- **Summary Care Record (SCR):** This is a national electronic summary of key clinical information (including medications, allergies, and adverse reactions) taken from your GP record. It can be accessed by authorised staff across England in urgent care settings (like AandE or 111) to provide you with safer care when your GP practice is closed. You can find more information here: <https://digital.nhs.uk/services/summary-care-records-scr/summary-care-records-scr-information-for-patients>.
- **Greater Manchester (GM) Care Record:** This local resource brings together your information from NHS and care services across all 10 Greater Manchester boroughs (including Tameside) into one joined-up record. This allows hospitals, social care, and other local services to access a fuller picture of your health and care history quickly and securely. You can find more information here: <https://gmwearebettertogether.com/>.

You have the option to object to having an SCR or to having your data shared via the GM Care Record. Please speak to the practice about your options if you wish to opt out.

## 6. SAFEGUARDING

### 6.1. THE PRACTICE'S SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Staveleigh Medical Centre takes the safety and safeguarding of its patients, staff, and visitors very seriously. We recognise and embrace our professional duty to protect vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect, or abuse. We maintain this high standard through strong governance: our clinical lead for this area is Dr Long, our designated Safeguarding Lead, and all staff undertake mandatory annual safeguarding training to keep their knowledge current.

In line with our legal and ethical obligations, information may be shared, in strict accordance with national guidelines, only when it is deemed necessary to protect a vulnerable individual. Our procedures are strict, ensuring that we only share what is necessary to safeguard the person in question.

If you need to discuss a confidential matter, including any concerns you may have about your own safety or the safety of another person, you can request to speak to a member of staff in private at any time. Our team is trained to handle these sensitive discussions with discretion and professionalism.

### 6.2. EXTERNAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

If you have immediate concerns about a vulnerable child or adult, or if you believe someone is at immediate risk of harm, you should not wait to contact the practice. You should contact the relevant Tameside services directly:

- **Tameside Children's Social Care (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - MASH):**
  - Office Hours: 0161 342 4101
  - Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 0161 342 2222
- **Tameside Adult Social Care (Community Gateway Team):**
  - Office Hours: 0161 922 4888
  - Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 0161 342 2222

In a medical emergency or if a crime is being committed, you should always call 999.

### 6.3. DOMESTIC ABUSE

- **IRIS Service:** We are an IRIS (Identification and Referral to Improve Safety) service aware practice. Our clinicians and staff are trained to identify and support anyone experiencing domestic abuse, whether from a current or ex-partner. You can speak to any member of our team for advice and support. You can also self-refer to the IRIS office directly by calling 0161 820 8416 (Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 4:30 pm).
- **Speaking Privately:** If you are visiting the practice and feel unsafe or need to discuss a sensitive matter without your partner or family member present, please let a member of staff know, at reception or during your appointment, that you need to speak in private. We will ensure you are seen alone and confidentially. You can also subtly send us an online consultation form through our website that you need to speak privately and we will carefully arrange this for you.

- **Emergency Contact:** If you are in immediate danger, please call the Police on 999. If you cannot speak, dial 999 and then press 55 when prompted (Silent Solution).

## 7. HEALTH AND SAFETY WHILST VISITING THE PRACTICE

### 7.1. FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION PROTOCOL

The safety of our patients, visitors and staff is paramount. Should the fire alarm sound, you must immediately follow the directions of staff and exit via the nearest emergency exit by following the posted signs. For your information, every room also displays a fire evacuation route plan. Make your way to the assembly point which is located at the entrance of the staff car park.

### 7.2. CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS PROTOCOL

To protect vulnerable patients and staff from infectious diseases, we ask for your cooperation with our Contagious Illness Protocol. If you suspect you have a highly contagious illness or rash (e.g. chickenpox, measles, or severe flu symptoms), please contact the practice before you arrive. Depending on the illness, we may ask you to wait in your car or isolate you in a separate, designated area immediately upon arrival to minimise transmission risk.

### 7.3. SPILLAGES AND BODILY FLUIDS

To maintain a clean and safe environment, should you yourself be sick, bleed, or leak any other bodily fluid, or if you notice any spillage in the communal areas, please immediately alert a member of staff. Our team is trained to clean and sanitise these areas promptly and safely to prevent potential hazards or infection risks.

## 8. STALYBRIDGE, DUKINFIELD AND MOSSLEY PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (PCN)

### 8.1. WHAT IS THE PCN?

Staveleigh Medical Centre is an active member of our local Primary Care Network (PCN). The PCN is a national initiative that brings together groups of neighbouring GP practices to work collaboratively with a wider team of health and social care services, such as pharmacists, physiotherapists, and mental health professionals. This collaborative approach is often referred to as Neighbourhood Working and is designed to provide more comprehensive and integrated patient care close to home.

Our practice plays a significant leadership role within the local PCN, with Martin (Practice Manager) also being the PCN Manager and Dr Choi (GP Partner) also being the PCN Clinical Director, which directly benefits our patients by ensuring we have a strong voice in local service planning.

### 8.2. PCN HUB ACCESS AND SERVICES

To enable access to this wider range of clinical services, some appointments may be offered outside of our main building at the PCN Hub. This convenient location is situated just across the road: 2 Waterloo Road, SK15 2AU. Services offered at the Hub may include specialist roles such as the Musculoskeletal First Contact Practitioner (MSK FCP) service, Social Prescribing, as well as our Enhanced Access routine evening and weekend appointments.



## 9. PRESCRIPTIONS AND LONG TERM CONDITIONS

### 9.1. ORDERING YOUR MEDICATION

For the most efficient service, we strongly recommend requesting repeat prescriptions online via the NHS App or our practice website. Ordering digitally helps to reduce administrative mistakes and may result in your request being processed quicker than other methods. You should only order medication which you need and avoid stockpiling medication, as this can be unsafe.

To keep our phone waiting times down we do not routinely accept prescription requests over the phone for most patients.

We generally require a minimum of 48 working hours' notice to safely process and sign off your prescription request. Please be aware that some local pharmacies may require up to 72 working hours (three working days) to ensure they have the stock available and can dispense your items once the prescription reaches them electronically.

### 9.2. EARLY REQUESTS AND RESTRICTIONS

If you are planning to go on holiday or have a specific change in circumstances, you may be able to request your medication earlier than usual. However, we will need you to clearly document a reason for the early request. Please note that there are restrictions on the amount of certain medications we can issue at once, and some specialist medications may not be able to be placed onto your regular repeat list at all.

### 9.3. LONG TERM CONDITIONS AND ANNUAL REVIEWS

To ensure your safety and the effectiveness of your treatment, all patients with Long Term Conditions (LTCs) and those taking certain medications require regular reviews, often at least annually. Some conditions and medications require more frequent monitoring. It is essential that you engage fully and attend when you are invited for these annual reviews or other monitoring appointments with our clinical team.

### 9.4. SHARED CARE ARRANGEMENTS

Shared Care is an arrangement where a hospital consultant or other healthcare provider initiates specialist medication, and our practice then assists in the prescribing and monitoring of that medication. This arrangement is subject to strict clinical guidelines and will always require your regular engagement with the necessary monitoring appointments at the practice.

### 9.5. ANTIBIOTIC STEWARDSHIP

Antibiotic resistance is a serious global public health concern. As a responsible practice, we adhere to the principles of antibiotic stewardship, meaning antibiotics are only prescribed when medically necessary for confirmed or highly likely bacterial infections. Taking antibiotics when they are not needed, e.g. for common viral illnesses like colds, the flu, or most coughs, will not help you recover and significantly contributes to the development of antibiotic resistance. Storing antibiotics or taking a course when not prescribed directly by a clinician makes them less effective in the future when they might be urgently needed to treat a serious bacterial infection. We urge all patients to follow the clinician's guidance when an antibiotic is not prescribed and to always complete the full course if one is dispensed.



## 10. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

### 10.1. OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUAL HEALTHCARE

We firmly believe that every patient has the right to access high-quality, non-judgemental healthcare without exception. This commitment means we offer care regardless of any protected characteristic, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. Our dedication to fairness is strategically overseen by Martin (Practice Manager), who serves as our dedicated Health Inequalities Champion.

### 10.2. LGBTQ+ GOLD STANDARD PRACTICE

We are proud to hold the status of an LGBTQ+ Gold Standard Accredited Practice. This accreditation signifies that our entire team has undergone specialist training, and we have established supportive policies to ensure that all members of the LGBTQ+ community feel safe, respected, and fully included in their care. This important work is championed internally by Kirsty (HCA), our dedicated LGBTQ+ Champion.

### 10.3. PREFERRED NAME AND PRONOUNS

To ensure you feel fully respected and affirmed during all interactions, we encourage you to tell us your preferred name and pronouns. We will promptly update your medical record to reflect this information accurately.

### 10.4. PROVIDING FEEDBACK ON INCLUSION

We view inclusion as a continuous process and value your input. If you notice a sign, policy, or aspect of our service that you feel could be more inclusive or sensitive, please do not hesitate to let a member of staff know or bring it to the attention of our Patient Participation Group (PPG).

## 11. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

### 11.1. REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

We are fully committed to providing necessary reasonable adjustments to ensure all patients can access our services effectively and safely. Our provisions include:

- **Communication and Interpreters:** For patients with hearing impairments, we have a hearing loop available at reception. Additionally, interpreter services, including for British Sign Language (BSL), are readily available upon request. We can also provide leaflets and reading materials in different languages upon request.
- **Physical Access:** Our building is designed for easy access, with all clinical rooms located on the ground floor and an accessible ramp provided at the entrance.
- **Facilities and Privacy:** We offer accessible toilet and baby changing facilities. We are also happy to provide a private location for breastfeeding upon request.

### 11.2. NEURODIVERSITY SUPPORT

We actively seek feedback from our neurodiverse patient group to help make the practice environment more neurodivergent friendly. To assist with communication and sensory needs, we provide notepads in all clinical rooms for patients to use. Furthermore, ear defenders and sensory toy bags are available to borrow from reception.

### 11.3. SPECIFIC PATIENT SUPPORT CHAMPIONS

Our practice benefits from dedicated staff champions who focus on specific patient groups. This includes Johanna (HCA), who acts as our Learning Disabilities (LD) Champion, ensuring that patients with learning disabilities receive appropriate and tailored care.

### 11.4. VETERAN SUPPORT

We are proud to be a Veteran Friendly Accredited Practice. This means we have committed to identifying, supporting, and signposting veterans and their families to the specialist services and mental health support they may need. Information on support for veterans is available from our team.

### 11.5 PATIENTS WITH NO FIXED ABODE OR HOMELESS

We are a Homeless Friendly Practice, and our staff have received specific training to understand the challenges faced by those with no fixed abode. We are committed to ensuring that everyone in our community, regardless of their housing status, can access the care they need.

- **Registration and Care:** We will gladly assist you with the registration process and ensure you have access to the same high quality of care as any other patient. Having a fixed address is not a requirement to register with our practice. Likewise no ID is needed to register.
- **Adjustments for Correspondence:** We understand that receiving post is a challenge. We can make specific adjustments for you to attend the practice to collect any healthcare letters or sensitive correspondence if you do not have an address to send these to. Please discuss this with a member of the reception team when you register or attend.

### 11.6. WELFARE AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

We offer several initiatives to support the welfare and immediate needs of our community:

- **Essential Health Services:** We provide a full range of free contraception services and operate a scheme for donating and providing free sanitary products to those in need.
- **Community Engagement:** We foster a sense of community through several events throughout the year and have a free book swap and exchange located in the waiting room, encouraging patients to read a book, take a book, or donate a book.

### 11.7. YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE FOR REFERRALS

The NHS Constitution gives patients the legal right to choose where they receive their care for most first-time specialist referrals. This is often referred to as 'Patient Choice' or the 'Right to Choose'.

- **What it is:** If your GP determines that you require a referral for a consultant-led or specialist service (including for mental health, autism, or ADHD assessments), you have the right to choose any provider in England that holds an NHS contract for that specific service. This often includes some private or independent providers, as long as the service is delivered under NHS terms and does not cost more than a standard NHS referral.
- **How to exercise your right:** Please discuss your preferred provider with your GP during your consultation. We will support your choice and ensure your referral is directed to the provider you have selected, provided the referral is clinically appropriate.

For more detailed information on your choices in the NHS, please visit the official website: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/your-choices-in-the-nhs/>.

## 12. CARERS SUPPORT

### 12.1. IDENTIFYING CARERS

If you are a carer, someone who looks after a family member, partner, or friend who needs support because of their illness, disability, mental health problem, or an addiction, please let the practice know. Similarly, if you yourself have a carer, please inform us of their details. This allows us to ensure you both receive appropriate advice, flexibility with appointments, and access to support services. It is essential that you update us immediately if your caring role or circumstances change.

### 12.2. CARERS SUPPORT

As a registered carer, you are entitled to a free annual flu vaccination and, where appropriate, support with your own health needs, which can often be overlooked. Our team can also offer advice and signposting to relevant clinical services for both you and the person you care for.

We strongly encourage all carers to connect with local and national organisations that provide dedicated support, training, and advice:

- **Tameside Carers Centre**
  - Description: Offers free, confidential, and impartial information, advice, and emotional support to carers living in Tameside.
  - Phone: 0161 342 3344
- **Manchester Carers Centre**
  - Description: Provides tailored support, emotional support groups, and a welfare rights service for carers in the city of Manchester.
  - Phone: 0161 272 7270
- **Carers UK (National)**
  - Description: The UK's biggest charity run by carers, for carers. They offer a wealth of information on benefits, rights, and respite care.

## 13. PATIENT RESPONSIBILITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT

### 13.1. MUTUAL RESPECT AND ZERO TOLERANCE

Our dedicated staff members are here to help you and deserve to be always treated with courtesy and respect. Aggression, abusive language, or threatening behaviour towards any member of the team, or other patients, or continued inappropriate use of our services will not be tolerated. We operate a strict Zero Tolerance policy towards all forms of abuse, whether it is physical, verbal, or threatening behaviour. This policy extends to any form of abuse sent digitally, including threatening emails or social media directed at individual staff members.

We must maintain a good working relationship based on mutual trust and respect, and therefore, the practice reserves the right to remove a patient from our list on the grounds of an irreparable breakdown in that relationship. Aggressive or abusive behaviour or continued inappropriate use of our services may result in your removal from the practice list. Depending on the severity of the incident, patients may be removed with 30 days' notice, 8 days' notice, or in cases of severe violence or threats, with immediate effect. The police will be involved for any threats, abuse, or physical attacks on staff or patients. Thank you for your respect.

## 13.2. APPOINTMENT MANAGEMENT

If you are unable to attend a booked appointment, please notify us as soon as possible. Wasted appointments take up valuable clinical time and prevent others who urgently need care from being seen.

## 13.3. MEDICATION AND TREATMENT PLANS

We ask that you please follow the advice given regarding your medication and treatment plan. If you have any concerns about the plan or feel the treatment is not working, you must discuss this with a clinician rather than discontinuing treatment without professional medical advice.

# 14. PATIENT FEEDBACK CHANNELS AND ACTION

## 14.1. PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

Our Patient Participation Group (PPG) meets every two months to discuss the practice's services and performance. The PPG is an excellent channel for patients to influence and shape how we deliver care. Full information on how to join the group and contribute your views is available both at reception. Any patient, or someone who cares for a patient, can join the PPG. We are committed to being transparent about how we act on the feedback we receive.

## 14.2. FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST (FFT) AND ONLINE REVIEWS

We encourage all patients to complete the anonymous Friends and Family Test (FFT) via the link you may receive after your appointment. We actively use this feedback to measure and continually improve our service delivery. If you have a positive experience with the practice, you can also leave us a review on platforms such as Google.

## 14.3. ANNUAL PATIENT SURVEY

In addition to the instantaneous FFT, a more detailed and in-depth Annual Patient Survey is conducted nationally. This survey assesses broader areas of service quality and patient satisfaction. We encourage all registered patients to participate when invited, as this provides robust governance feedback. Our latest results, and how we compare to other practices can be found on the GP Patient Survey website: <https://gp-patient.co.uk/>

## 14.4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We acknowledge that sometimes things go wrong, and we view these instances as valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

**Informal Resolution:** If you have a complaint or query, we encourage you to first politely speak to a member of staff. We often find that immediate, informal discussion can resolve most queries quickly. You may also escalate informally by speaking with our Reception Supervisor or the Practice Manager.

**Formal Complaint:** If you wish to proceed with a formal complaint, you can complete a complaints form available in our waiting room, or email your complaint directly to the practice at: [gmicb-tameside.staveleighmedicalcentre@nhs.net](mailto:gmicb-tameside.staveleighmedicalcentre@nhs.net).

**Timelines:** We aim to acknowledge your complaint within three working days and endeavour to respond and resolve your complaint within 14 working days. If we are unable to meet these

deadlines, such as if your complaint is particularly complex, we will contact you to explain the reason and agree on an extended timeframe.

**Escalation:** In most cases, we expect that we can resolve your complaint internally. However, if you are not satisfied with how we conducted the internal investigation, or the final response itself, you have the right to escalate your complaint.

- **Independent Advocacy:** You are entitled to seek free assistance from the NHS Complaints Advocacy Service, who can be contacted on: 0300 330 4545.
- **Ombudsman:** You can also refer your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO).
  - Address: The Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP.
  - Telephone: 0345 015 4033
  - Email: [phso.enquires@ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:phso.enquires@ombudsman.org.uk)

## 15. THE GREEN NHS AND OUR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT



### 15.1. SUPPORTING A SUSTAINABLE NHS

Staveleigh Medical Centre is committed to supporting the NHS in becoming a more environmentally sustainable health service. Our goal is to reduce our carbon footprint and minimise the negative environmental impact of our operations and clinical care, protecting the planet for future generations. For more information on the NHS's national ambition to achieve net zero, please visit: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/greenernhs/>.

### 15.2. SUSTAINABLE MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

We ask for your cooperation in helping us manage medication responsibly:

- **Medication Packaging:** Please recycle medication packets, cardboard boxes, and leaflets through your usual kerbside recycling where possible.
- **Inhaler and Appliance Recycling:** Some local pharmacies now offer specialised recycling schemes for disposal of some medical appliances, such as inhalers. We encourage you to ask your pharmacy if they participate in these schemes to ensure safe and responsible disposal.
- **Lower Carbon Prescribing:** Where clinically appropriate and safe for your health, our clinicians may prescribe devices or medications, such as certain types of inhalers, which have been identified as having lower carbon emissions compared to traditional alternatives.

### 15.3. REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

We encourage patients to consider the environmental impact of accessing the practice:

- **Travel to the Practice:** Please consider how you travel to the practice. Where feasible, we encourage the use of sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling, or public transport over using a private car, especially for routine appointments.

- **Digital First:** By using our digital first options (NHS App, online forms) instead of printing and posting documents, you are actively helping us reduce our paper usage and the associated environmental waste.
- **Energy and Resource Use:** Within the building, we are continually working to reduce our energy consumption and ensure responsible use of resources. We ask that patients support us by avoiding unnecessary waste while on the premises.

## 16. VACCINATIONS, IMMUNISATIONS AND TRAVEL HEALTH

### 16.1. ROUTINE IMMUNISATIONS

Staveleigh Medical Centre supports the full list of routine immunisations available on the NHS. This includes the full childhood immunisation programme for babies and young children, as well as routine annual vaccinations (e.g. seasonal flu, Shingles, Pneumococcal, RSV and COVID-19) for eligible groups. Eligibility requirements for annual vaccinations may change each year, so please check the latest guidance on the official NHS website for all routine vaccinations: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/>.

### 16.2. TRAVEL VACCINATIONS

We support patients requiring travel vaccinations where available on the NHS. It is crucial that you contact the practice to book your travel vaccination appointments at least 8 weeks before you plan to travel. This necessary lead time ensures we have sufficient appointment availability, can order the correct stock in, and allows sufficient time for some vaccines to work effectively. You will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your travels before your appointment so we can accurately assess what vaccines you require.

Please note that not all travel vaccinations are available on the NHS, and you may need to visit a specialist travel vaccines centre or a participating pharmacy. There may be a charge for these non-NHS vaccines, and this will be clearly explained during your appointment. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have all the necessary vaccinations and relevant paperwork to meet the entry requirements of the countries you are visiting.

Please also be aware that if you are travelling to several different countries, or if your travel plans change, you should check the vaccination requirements for those specific countries. Some countries have different requirements based on which country you are travelling from or passing through, which may not always be the UK. For more specific advice on travel vaccines, visit <https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/travel-vaccinations/travel-vaccination-advice/>.

### 16.3. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH VACCINATIONS AND RECORDS

Vaccinations required for occupational purposes (e.g. certain healthcare or veterinary roles) fall outside of the NHS General Medical Services contract, and we may not be able to provide them. You should speak directly to your employer about their occupational health procedures.

Some employers may also ask for documentation of your vaccination status. You can access this information if you have access to your medical records through digital portals, such as the NHS App or Online Services, or you can ask us for a paper copy. Please be aware that patient records created before 2004 may not have been electronic and, where they exist, may be scanned paper which may or may not be attached to your current digital record.

## 17. SICK NOTES, FIT NOTES, AND MED3

### 17.1. SELF-CERTIFICATION (FIRST 7 DAYS)

For periods of illness lasting seven days or less, you do not need to obtain a medical certificate from a clinician. Instead, you can self-certify your illness using a form provided by your employer (called a SC2 form). This covers weekends and non-working days. For full information and guidance on self-certification, please refer to the official government guidelines:

<https://www.gov.uk/taking-sick-leave>.

### 17.2. OBTAINING A FIT NOTE (MED3)

A statement of fitness for work, commonly known as a Fit Note or MED3, is required when you have been ill for more than seven days. This note must be issued by an appropriate healthcare professional at the practice.

- **Retrospective Notes:** Please do not worry if you do not get an appointment before your sickness period starts, as Fit Notes can be issued retrospectively (covering a period in the past).
- **Assessment Required:** Depending on your illness and circumstances, you may need an appointment (either in person or by phone) with a clinician before a Fit Note is issued or extended. This allows the professional to accurately assess your condition.
- **Extensions:** The most efficient way to request an extension to an existing Fit Note is by completing the online form available on our practice website.

## 18. NON-NHS SERVICES (PRIVATE WORK)

The GPs and clinical staff at Staveleigh Medical Centre might be asked to perform tasks that fall outside of the NHS contract. These Non-NHS Services are considered private work and include items such as private letters, medical assessments (e.g. for driving licenses), and certificates requested by third parties (e.g. insurance companies or solicitors).

As this work is not funded by the NHS, there will usually be a charge for completing these services. This is because the work must be carried out by our clinicians outside of the hours for which the NHS provides funding. Therefore, if your request requires a physical assessment or examination, you may be asked to attend an appointment outside of our core NHS operating hours. A list of our current non-NHS fees is available upon request at reception.

Each request for Non-NHS work can be unique and individual, so the specific rate for the service will be agreed with you beforehand. Sometimes, companies such as insurance companies or solicitors may pay us directly for the Non-NHS service; however, you remain responsible for ensuring the fee is settled.

Please be aware that there may be some requests which, due to the complexity, associated liability, or lack of clinical information, we may not be able to complete. Examples of such requests might include certain extreme sports participation certificates or complex fitness-to-participate documents. If we are unable to complete the work, we will explain the reason why.



## 19. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

### 19.1. OUR STATUS AS A RESEARCH ACTIVE PRACTICE

Staveleigh Medical Centre is proud to be a Research Active Practice. We work in collaboration with leading healthcare organisations and academic institutions to actively participate in important health research. This work is essential to help develop new treatments, find improved methods of diagnosis, and ultimately enhance the quality of patient care for the future, both locally and nationally.

### 19.2. PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

As a registered patient, you may occasionally be invited to consider participating in a research study that is relevant to your health or demographic. We want to assure you that participation is entirely voluntary. Your decision to decline any invitation to take part in research will never affect the quality or continuity of your routine care at our practice.

## 20. DIGITAL HEALTH AND SELF-MANAGEMENT TOOLS

### 20.1. THE NHS APP AND ONLINE CONSULTATION PLATFORM

The NHS App is your primary gateway to managing your health digitally. It allows you to order repeat prescriptions, check symptoms via the NHS website, and securely view your medical records. You can download and register for the app here <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-app/>.

We utilise an Online Consultation Platform via our website. We encourage you to use this online form for all administrative requests (e.g. fit notes, insurance letters), medication queries, and non-urgent medical advice. We aim to respond to non-urgent administrative queries submitted via this platform within 72 working hours.

### 20.2. RECOMMENDED DIGITAL SELF-MANAGEMENT TOOLS

We actively recommend the following digital tools and platforms to empower you in managing your health and well-being:

- **Mental Health Support:** We provide information on local digital mental health platforms for managing common conditions like anxiety and depression. Two widely recognised examples include **Living Life to the Full** and **SilverCloud**, which offer online cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) programmes. You can often find links to local access via the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust website: <https://www.gmmh.nhs.uk/self-help/>.
- **Long Term Conditions (LTCs):** The NHS offers a library of approved digital apps designed to help patients monitor and manage various LTCs, such as asthma, diabetes, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). For a verified list of safe and effective apps, please check the NHS Apps Library: <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/>.
- **Self-Care Advice:** For reliable information on common conditions and how to treat yourself at home, the official NHS website is the best resource: <https://www.nhs.uk/>.

## 21. CARE HOME SERVICES

### 21.1. ALIGNED CARE HOME PROVISION

Staveleigh Medical Centre provides enhanced medical support to a number of aligned care homes in our local area. This means we take responsibility for the ongoing healthcare needs of



all residents within those designated homes. This model ensures consistency and continuity of care, as opposed to residents accessing services individually.

## 21.2. DEDICATED CARE AND WARD ROUNDS

To ensure residents receive proactive and timely clinical attention, the whole care home will be assigned a dedicated, named GP from our practice. This GP will visit the care home every week during a planned "care home ward round." These regular, scheduled visits allow us to review residents, manage complex conditions, and prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.

## 21.3. COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL TEAMS

To further enhance the quality and safety of care within these settings, our practice works closely with other local health teams. This collaboration includes working with Medicines Management pharmacists and technicians to ensure resident prescriptions are safe, appropriate, and optimally managed. This joint working helps us to improve the overall quality of care within the care homes we serve.

# 22. TOP TIPS FOR PATIENT SUCCESS

## 22.1. HOW TO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT

We ask for your active partnership to ensure you receive the most appropriate care quickly and efficiently:

- **Honesty and Triage:** Please be honest and clear about your symptoms when you contact us. Our reception team are trained Care Navigators who will ask for brief details. This is not to pry, but so the request can be swiftly passed to a duty doctor or the most relevant clinician who will triage the request. This ensures you get the right care at the right time.
- **Appointment Availability:** We offer both urgent (same-day) and routine appointments. Our target is to offer routine appointments within 14 days.
- **Urgent Availability:** If you request an urgent same-day appointment, you must ensure you are available to attend the practice immediately if you are asked to come in.
- **Requesting a Clinician:** You can request to see certain GPs or staff members, particularly for routine appointments, to maintain continuity of care. Whilst we will always try to honour this, it may not always be possible if you require an urgent appointment or if your preferred clinician is unavailable.
- **Appointment Types:** Appointments may be in-person, by phone, or video. Sometimes our team may start with a phone call to take your history and then ask you to come in face-to-face for the physical examination. This is an efficient approach that reduces your total waiting time and allows the clinician to prepare in advance.

## 22.2. BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

Careful preparation ensures you get the most out of your time with the clinician:

- **Self-Help and Escalation:** Follow any self-help advice or safety-netting instructions given to you whilst you wait. However, you must contact the practice immediately if your symptoms escalate or get worse.
- **Planning and Cancellation:** Ensure you have planned your journey, including parking, and have a contingency plan if your appointment takes longer than expected. Crucially, contact the practice immediately if you need to cancel or rearrange your appointment so that time slot can be offered to another patient.

- **Preparation and Adjustments:** Write down anything you need to ask us about, so you don't forget the key points. If you require any reasonable adjustments (as detailed in Section 11), such as an interpreter or a quiet waiting area, ensure you have let us know in advance.

## 22.3. DURING YOUR APPOINTMENT

Maximise the effectiveness of your consultation:

- **Honesty and Comfort:** Be completely honest and try not to be embarrassed, our clinical team has seen a wide range of issues and simply wants to help you.
- **Chaperone:** Always request a chaperone if you would like one to be present during an examination. On some occasions, a chaperone may be present for staff safety or for clinical best practice reasons.
- **Understanding the Plan:** Write down details or notes so you do not forget the agreed plan. If you are unsure, ensure you ask questions if you do not understand, and ask our team to repeat information if needed.

## 22.4. AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT

Following up is as important as the consultation itself:

- **Review Notes:** You can check your NHS App or Online Access for notes to remember what was discussed. Please note that medical records are intended primarily for use by healthcare professionals, so you may not fully understand some of the clinical language or numbers you see.
- **Treatment and Follow-up:** Ensure your treatment plan is followed exactly as agreed and allow the prescribed time for any medication to work. Contact us if symptoms subsequently get worse or do not improve within the expected timeframe.
- **Referrals:** If we refer you to a hospital or another specialist service, you must turn up to those appointments. If you fail to attend, that service may discharge you back to us, causing significant delays to your care.

## 22.5. HEALTH CHECKS

We actively encourage preventative care through two key national programmes. The NHS Health Check is a free check-up designed to help prevent common diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and kidney disease. It is offered to eligible adults in England aged 40 to 74 once every five years. Separately, we offer an annual proactive health check specifically for all patients aged 75 and over, who do not already have an annual review for a long-term condition. This check is designed to assess general health, social support, and identify any needs to help older patients remain independent and well. If you fall within either of these age groups and have not received a recent check, please contact our reception team to confirm your eligibility and book an appointment with a member of our nursing team.

# 23. USEFUL CONTACTS AND SERVICES

## 23.1. GENERAL WELLNESS AND SCREENING

We strongly encourage proactive health management. Please ensure your contact details are always up to date for national call and recall services. This ensures you receive timely invitations for important public health programmes such as:

- **Immunisation and Screening:** Attending for cervical screening when invited, and ensuring participation in the flu/COVID-19 vaccinations when you meet the current eligibility criteria. You can find details at: <https://www.nhs.uk/>.
- **Parkrun Practice:** We are a certified Parkrun Practice. We promote the benefits of physical activity and social connection through the local Stamford Park Parkrun, a free, weekly, 5k route that takes place every Saturday at 09:00. You can find details and register online at: <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/>.

## 23.2. URGENT CARE GUIDANCE

Knowing which service to use is critical for timely care. Please use the following guidance:

- **999 / Accident and Emergency (AandE):** For serious medical emergencies only.
- **NHS 111 (Phone or Online):** For urgent but non-life-threatening medical advice outside of practice hours, or if you are unsure where to go.
- **Pharmacy First:** For minor ailments (colds, coughs, rashes) and expert advice on over-the-counter medication. Pharmacists can offer immediate consultation without an appointment. More information can be found at: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first/>.

## 23.3. LOCAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- **Tameside, Oldham and Glossop MIND (TOG Mind) (Mental Health Support):** For non-urgent support, local Tameside wellbeing activities, and counselling services.
  - **Phone:** 0161 330 9223
  - **Website:** <http://www.togmind.org/>
- **Greater Manchester Bereavement Service (Bereavement Support):** This is a central hub to find the right support for anyone affected by a death, no matter how long ago.
  - **Phone:** 0161 983 0902
  - **Website:** <https://greater-manchester-bereavement-service.org.uk/>
- **Tameside Council (Emergency Food Bank Vouchers):** If you are a Tameside resident in financial crisis and require an emergency food bank voucher.
  - **Phone:** 0161 342 8355
  - **Email:** [welfare@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:welfare@tameside.gov.uk)
- **Tameside Citizen's Advice Bureau (General Support/Welfare Rights):** For free, confidential, and impartial advice on debt, benefits, housing, and legal issues.
  - **Phone (Advice Line):** 0808 278 7805
  - **Website:** <https://www.tamesidecab.org.uk/>.
- **Age UK Tameside (Elderly Support):** Provides local services, activities, and advice for older people.
  - **Phone:** 0161 308 5000
  - **Website:** <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/tameside/>.
- **Tameside Children's Social Care (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - MASH):**
  - Office Hours: 0161 342 4101
  - Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 0161 342 2222
- **Tameside Adult Social Care (Community Gateway Team):**
  - Office Hours: 0161 922 4888
  - Out of Hours (Emergency Duty Team): 0161 342 2222
- **Iris Domestic Abuse:**
  - Office Hours: 0161 820 8416
- **Mentell:** Confidential mental health support and advice for men.
  - **Website:** [www.mentell.org.uk](http://www.mentell.org.uk).

- **The Anthony Seddon Fund:** A charity offering mental health support in Tameside through peer support, activities, and a safe, welcoming drop-in centre.
  - **Phone:** 0161 376 4439
  - **Email:** [reception@tasfund.org.uk](mailto:reception@tasfund.org.uk).
- **Change Grow Live (CGL):** Confidential drug and alcohol service for adults, young people, families, carers and affected others in Tameside.
  - **Website:** <https://www.changegrowlive.org/service/tameside-my-recovery>.
- **Locala:** Sexual health services.
  - **Website:** <https://www.locala.org.uk/services/sexual-health/tameside>.

## 24. GLOSSARY OF TERMS (DEFINITIONS)

- **Annual Patient Survey:** A detailed patient feedback mechanism, conducted periodically (usually yearly), to gather in-depth information on service quality and patient satisfaction across the practice.
- **Caldicott Guardian:** A senior person within a health organisation (in our case, Dr Long) who oversees and is responsible for protecting patient and service user information and ensuring confidentiality.
- **Care Navigation:** A system where trained reception staff direct patients to the most appropriate help, whether it is a GP, nurse, pharmacist, or another service outside the practice, based on their needs.
- **Carer:** Someone who looks after a family member, partner, or friend who needs support because of their illness, disability, mental health problem, or an addiction.
- **Contagious Illness Protocol:** The practice's procedure requiring patients who suspect they have a highly infectious illness (e.g. measles, chickenpox) to contact the practice before arrival to arrange isolation or alternative access.
- **Digital First:** An approach to service delivery where online access and digital communication (e.g. NHS App, online forms) are encouraged as the initial, most convenient point of contact for non-urgent matters.
- **Enhanced Access:** Additional routine appointments offered by the Primary Care Network (PCN) outside of core practice hours, typically in the evenings and on weekends at the PCN Hub.
- **Fit Note (MED3):** A statement of fitness for work required by patients who have been ill for more than seven consecutive days, issued by an appropriate healthcare professional.
- **Health Inequalities:** Differences in health outcomes between different patient groups within the community. The practice focuses on identifying and reducing these unfair and avoidable differences.
- **Integrated Care Board (ICB):** A statutory NHS organisation responsible for planning and arranging healthcare services in a specific geographical area. In our case Greater Manchester ICB.
- **LGBTQ+ Gold Standard:** An accreditation awarded to practices that have demonstrated high standards of inclusive care, policies, and staff training for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer communities.
- **Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT):** A group of professionals from different healthcare disciplines (e.g. GPs, nurses, social workers) who work together to manage complex patient care.
- **Neighbourhood Working:** The collaborative approach of the PCN where local GP practices work with community, mental health, and social care services to provide wider, integrated patient care.
- **National Data Opt-Out:** The patient's right to opt out of their confidential patient information being used for research and planning across the wider NHS.

- **Primary Care Network (PCN):** A group of local GP practices working together with community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, and hospital services in their local area.
- **PCN Hub:** A central location used by the Primary Care Network to offer a wider range of services, often including Enhanced Access appointments. Address: 2 Waterloo Road, Stalybridge, SK15 2AU.
- **Proxy Access:** When one person is given authorised access to use online services (like booking appointments or viewing records) on behalf of another patient who lacks capacity or is a child.
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Legal requirements under the Equality Act to make changes or alterations to a service or environment to ensure disabled or vulnerable patients are not disadvantaged.
- **Research Active Practice:** A practice that actively works with NHS and academic organisations to participate in health research to develop new treatments and improve patient care.
- **Summary Care Record (SCR):** A simple, secure electronic record of a patient's key health information (e.g. allergies, current medication) which can be viewed by other NHS staff (e.g. AandE) in an emergency.
- **Self-Certify:** The process of officially declaring yourself unfit for work for the first seven days of an illness without needing a formal Fit Note from a doctor.
- **Shared Care:** An arrangement where the prescribing and monitoring of a patient's specialist medication is shared between the specialist (e.g. hospital consultant) and the GP, following agreed clinical guidelines.
- **Triage:** The process used by clinicians to assess the urgency and nature of a patient's request to ensure they are directed to the most appropriate clinician or service in a timely manner.
- **Zero Tolerance:** The practice's policy of immediately addressing and taking strict action against any aggression, abuse, or threatening behaviour towards staff or patients.