



Litchdon Medical Centre

Surgery Newsletter



Welcome to Litchdon's autumn/winter edition newsletter. It gives you all of the latest Practice news which we hope you will find useful.



Practice News



This year we have said farewell and happy retirement to 3 of our longstanding practice nurses Jayne Fewings, Gail Angove & Sophie McDonald. Between them they have been with Litchdon and looking after our patients for more than 140 years!!! We thank them and hope they enjoy their well deserved retirements.

We said goodbye to Drs Peter Abouelsaad, Ezzat Khairallah & Vaughan Olalekan and welcome our new registrars (trainee doctors) Dr Melanie Gregg, Dr Mahmoud Hamouda, Dr Jennifer Akhibi, Dr Chinwendu Iweha.

Congratulations went to Dr Whatling & his wife who had their first baby back in April.



Laura Williams successfully completed and passed non-medical prescribing course so is now a fully qualified nurse prescriber.

Nurses Chloe, Verity and Anna are training in cervical screening and contraceptive implant courses.

All staff continue to complete their annual mandatory online training, covering areas such as data security awareness, safeguarding adults & children, fire training, first aid & CPR, health & safety, manual handling, infection prevention & control and equality, diversity and human rights.

We converted our previous blood clinic waiting area into a new phlebotomy room which was completed and opened in May. The previous blood room is now a 2nd nurse specialist room, used mostly for respiratory and cardiovascular clinics.

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Friends & Family Results

In August we received 590 responses to the question...*Thinking about your GP Practice overall, how was your experience of our service?*

The results were:	Very good	475	Good	81
	Neither good nor poor	16	Poor	6
	Very poor	7	Don't know	5

Flu Clinics

This year's flu clinics will include Covid booster vaccinations and will be held over a number of Saturdays throughout October and November, with catch up appointments available once these have taken place.

If you are eligible for a vaccination you will receive an invitation by text allowing you to book an appointment of your choice. If you are unable to receive a text message you will be contacted by phone or post. Please DO NOT contact the surgery.



Nominated

We are delighted to say that our nomination for the New Rapid Therapist Intervention Pathway for Fibromyalgia within the Barnstaple Alliance PCN has been shortlisted for the Clinical Improvement Award: Long Term Conditions Award at this year's national General Practice Awards.

We will find out the winner in December but we are delighted to be shortlisted. We set this service up from scratch across our 4 practices to support patients newly diagnosed with Fibromyalgia and it is running very successfully.

GENERAL PRACTICE AWARDS 2024

We've been shortlisted for the General Practice Awards 2024

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UK Health Security Agency

Have your RSV vaccine to help protect you

RSV can cause pneumonia which can be serious

NHS

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine

From 1st September 2024, the NHS is introducing a new Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccination programme which will be offered at the practice to eligible patients.

You do not have to contact the practice as we will be sending out invitations to all eligible patients. We have around 900 potentially eligible patients so invitations will be over the next few months.

RSV is a common respiratory virus. Cases peak each winter, although can occur at any time of the year. It can be more serious for people aged 75 and over, and babies under 6 months old. Almost all children get it at least once before they're 2 years old.

Everyone turning 75 years old on or after 1st September 2024, up to and including 31st August 2025, will be offered the RSV vaccine this year. Pregnant patients at 28 weeks or more will also be offered the vaccine, to help protect their baby for the first few months after birth.

For the first year of the programme, the vaccine will also be offered to those who are already aged 75 to 79 years on 1st September 2024, and patients who will turn 80 years old before 31st August 2025.

Patients do not need to do anything. Those eligible will be contacted by the surgery to book an appointment.

More information at nhs.uk/conditions/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv

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GP Patient Survey Results July 2024

The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run on behalf of NHS England. Litchdon's results can be compared against National results and results of the local ICS (Integrated Care Systems) Practices. We discuss the results at team meetings to see what learning we can take from them.



Litchdon's highest patient experiences are:

98% of respondents knew what the next step would be after contacting their GP practice (ICS result: 88%, National result: 83%)

97% of respondents find the reception and administrative team at this GP practice helpful. (ICS result: 87%, National result: 83%)

94% of respondents knew what the next step would be within two days of contacting their GP practice. (ICS result: 92%, National result: 93%)

Litchdon's lowest patient experiences are:

42% of respondents find it easy to contact this GP practice using the NHS App. (ICS result: 47%, National result: 45%)

55% of respondents usually get to see or speak to their preferred healthcare professional when they would like to. (ICS result: 48%, National result: 40%)

56% of respondents find it easy to contact this GP practice using their website. (ICS result: 58%, National result: 48%)

Full survey results can be found at <https://www.gp-patient.co.uk>



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Registering as a new patient

We welcome new patients joining the Practice.

From 26th July you can register with us simply by scanning the QR code below or by clicking on the [automated registration form](https://www.litchdonmedicalcentre.co.uk/new-patients) via our website <https://www.litchdonmedicalcentre.co.uk/new-patients>

Although not required, it makes the registration process quicker and more accurate if you are able to provide us with your NHS number.

You can use the NHS website to find your NHS number <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/online-services/find-nhs-number/>

There are also instructions on how to find your NHS number in the registration form itself.

All new patients are assigned to a named GP, who is taking on new patients at the time you register, and we will notify you of the name.

Please fill in as much information on the registration form about your past medical history as you can as this helps the Practice understand your healthcare needs.

If you currently take repeat medication you will be required to upload a copy of your repeat medication slip (you will receive a welcome text from us which will allow you to upload the copy) or hand a paper copy in to the Dispensary in the Practice. Until this is done we are unable to issue any repeat medication.

Please note it may take up to 2 working days for your registration to come through to the Practice and be processed.





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SAFE SURGERIES

**We are proud to be a 'Safe Surgery' for everyone in our community.
All are welcome.**

Everyone in the UK has the right to free care from a GP. If you don't have proof of ID or address, you can still register. Immigration status or nationality don't matter - reception won't ask for immigration documents and won't share your information with the Home Office unless serious crime is involved. Don't have documents? Don't worry.

In partnership with Doctors of the World UK, we will ensure that our practice offers a welcoming space for everyone who seeks to use our services.

If you wish to register, please speak to a member of staff who can help and support you with the process of registration. Ask reception for an interpreter if you find it difficult to communicate in English



PROUD TO BE A SAFE SURGERY

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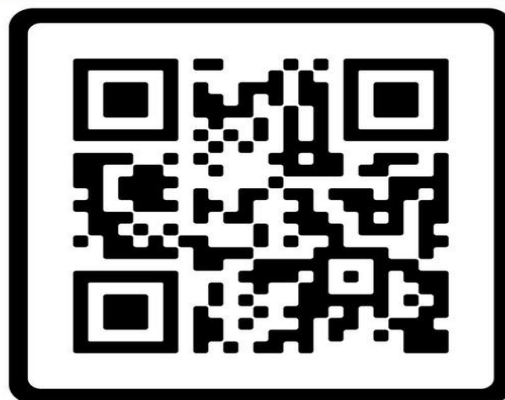
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Our PPG's are raising £15,000 to help fund a Dementia Support Worker

The Patient Participation Groups (PPG's) of the four GP practices of Barnstaple Alliance Primary Care Network (Brannam, Fremington, Litchdon & Queens Medical Centres) need support to help fund at least 50% of their dedicated Alzheimer's Society Dementia Support Worker, who provides care and advice to their patients with dementia and their carers.

From 1st April there will no longer be any national funding for this role so the Practices are doing all they can to retain the service for their patients. To help us raise over £15,000, scan the QR code to donate via our Just Giving page.



THANK YOU!



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GP Collective Action

Following the recent British Medical Association (BMA) ballot, which you may have heard about in the press, we are writing to explain what this means for our patients and the future of General Practice.

GPs have for years been doing work that is not funded, and not contracted due to gaps in commissioned services and pressures in secondary care services; we have been doing so out of concern for our patients and to ensure that you continue to receive the care you deserve. However, with chronic underfunding and increased demand it is no longer sustainable for GPs to continue working in this way.

Since 2015 we have seen 1600 Practices close or merge, there are 6 million more registered patients and 2000 fewer full time equivalent GPs across the country. Our funding levels are significantly lower than 2018 levels. This means we must now focus on the safety and stability of our service going forwards. Collective action is about working legitimately within our contracts. You may have heard this referred to in the press as industrial action; this is factually incorrect. We will not be doing anything that compromises your safety, and we will not currently be going on strike.

We hope you understand that we are taking this action to ensure that general practice locally, in Devon and across England is there for our patients in years to come.

For more information, please visit www.bma.org.uk/gpsonyourside.



GPS ARE ON YOUR SIDE



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Did you know...



The Government gives this practice just £107.57 a year for each patient, whatever their health needs. That's less than the cost of a TV licence.

This means we're only given 30p a day for every patient registered with us – less than the cost of an apple.



GPs want the same things that you do.

We believe nobody should struggle to see their family doctor.

We believe general practice deserves a **bigger slice** of NHS funding so we can train and hire more GPs, deliver the services you require and make it easier to get appointments to see your GP and practice team.

We know you deserve better than this. GPs Are On Your Side.

bma.org.uk/GPsOnYourSide

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Green News

Digital Carbon Footprint

The transformation of digital technology has brought many benefits that have a positive impact on the fight against climate change and reduction of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. However, unfortunately, the carbon released from making and using digital technology is high.

Activities such as streaming videos, sending emails, using cloud storage and running applications on devices, every document, photo and email, even every 'like' or comment on social media all consume electricity which indirectly leads to CO₂ emissions at data centres due to the need for continuous operation, cooling systems and the energy-intensive nature of large scale data processing and storage, and in electricity generation. The biggest datacentre on the planet has a surface area of 600,000 square metres, the equivalent of 110 football pitches.

These emissions are known as your **digital carbon footprint**.





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What can I do to help reduce my digital carbon footprint?



Simple means to reduce your CO2 emissions are....

- ◆ Reduce streaming and download instead —video streaming causes 75% of global data traffic. By comparison downloading is much less energy intensive.
- ◆ Keep devices for longer. Try to repair them rather than just changing them every 2-3 years and dispose of old devices correctly.
- ◆ Don't use wireless chargers, they consume 50% more energy.
- ◆ Close apps and tabs and disable location services when not using them.
- ◆ Reduce the brightness of your screens and use dark mode. This not only saves energy, but also reduces eye fatigue and dry eyes.
- ◆ Empty your email box regularly to reduce data storage.
- ◆ Unsubscribe from unwanted or unneeded emails.
- ◆ Reduce the file size of documents, images, videos and other multimedia assets.
- ◆ Store data locally, use the cloud as little as possible.
- ◆ Periodically clear your web browser's cache and cookies to free up storage space.
- ◆ Do a digital detox—take a break from your devices! Not only does this reduce your digital carbon footprint but it is also good for your mental health.
- ◆ Regularly schedule digital downtime in your day. Try not using devices during meals, before bedtime or during family and friend time.
- ◆ Set screen time limits on streaming and social media apps.





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Get Active

Being physically active can help you lead a healthier and happier life. Exercise can reduce your risk of major illnesses such as coronary heart disease, osteoarthritis, depression, dementia, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer, and can lower your risk of early death by up to 30%. Research also shows that physical activity can boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy as well as reducing your risk of stress.

Adults should try to be active every day and aim to do at least 150 minutes of physical activity over a week. For any type of activity to benefit your health you need to be moving quick enough to raise your heart rate, breathe faster and feel warmer.

There are lots of resources available to help increase your activity including...

www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active

www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/get-running-with-couch-to-5k
(also has a free app available to download)

www.thebodycoach.com (Joe Wicks)

(also has an app available to download which does have payment subscription, alternatively there are free workouts available on YouTube)

www.komoot.com

(also has an app available to download)



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Codden Hill Walk



Park your car in Clements Lane Car Park (East side of Codden Hill).

Go through the gate (yellow arrow) ascending the large rocky path for 450 meters. Ignore a path on your right and continue straight next to the open meadow which leads to a monument.

At the top, you have a 360 view of Bishops Tawton and Barnstaple on clear days. Go past the monument (a pillar in memory of Caroline Thorpe), descend the grassy path along the fence on your left for 1km and bear immediately right to the small path when you reach a large gate on your left. Go slightly down this path across the meadow until you reach a junction next to the woods.

Bear right and follow straight this gravel path along the woods for almost one mile. When you join the fork with a small path on the left, bear right ascending the quite steep ascent for 300 meters.

At the junction, bear left going down the path.

When you reach another junction, ignore the path to "lakes" on your left but follow straight the final ascent which leads to the car park.



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Are there parts of your life that are impacting on your health and wellbeing, but medicine can't help? You may need...

The Wellbeing Team



By giving you the time to focus on what matters to you we can support you with any of the following:

- Discovering local groups and services
- Loneliness and isolation
- Accessing work, training or volunteering
- Financial concerns
- Housing difficulties
- Healthy lifestyle choices
- Living with a long-term condition
- Carers Support
- Bereavement
- Support for new parents

To refer yourself, scan the QR Code

No smart phone? No problem!
Ask at reception or during your appointment for a referral to the wellbeing team.



Barnstaple Alliance
PRIMARY CARE

Patients must be 18 years of age and over and registered at this practice. Our input is designed to be short and targeted. The aim is to provide patients with the information and the support network they need to move forward.

*Note that this is not an emergency service.

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WELCOME TO A NEW FIBROMYALGIA PEER SUPPORT CAFE

Started Tuesday 2nd July 2024
and will run the first Tuesday of
each month!!
Please come and join us!!

10:00 -12:00
Queen Anne's Cafe,
Queen Anne's Walk,
The Strand,
Barnstaple.

For more information email:
fibropeers@mail.com





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Never Alone

Below are a number of support lines available, most being 24 hours, to contact if you or someone you know needs help.

NSPCC
0808 800 5000
(24hrs)

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247
(24hrs free)

Mind
0300 123 3393
(Mon-Fri 9-6)

Victim Support
0808 168 9111
(24hrs)

Cruse Bereavement
0800 808 1677
(Mon-Fri 9-5)

ChildLine
0800 1111
(24hrs)

Action on Elder Abuse
0808 808 8141
(Mon-Fri 9-5)

Respect - Men's Advice Line
0808 801 0327
(Mon-Fri 9-5 or 8pm)

Samaritans
116 123
(24hrs free)

National Centre for Domestic Violence
0207 186 8270

Supporting And Improving Your Mental And Physical Wellbeing

During these hard times looking after yourself both physically and mentally can become increasingly difficult.

Did you know that you can self-refer to TalkWorks? A free, confidential, NHS talking therapy service for people over 18 in Devon, helping you to feel better and give you tools and techniques to improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

Visit

TALKWORKS
IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING

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