



Litchdon Medical Centre

Surgery Newsletter



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



Practice News

One week in the life of Litchdon in January.

We provided:

- GP routine appointments 765
- Nurse appointments (Treatment suite) 225
- Long Term Condition Nurse Appointments 334
- Online Patient Triage 113
- Blood Appointments 201
- Urgent care telephone appointments 443
- Urgent care face to face appointments 158



We also had 74 appointments not attended by patients (with no notice) and these could have been used by other patients—to help us and other patients, if you cannot make your appointment any time please always let us know so we can use that appointment for someone else.

Total telephone calls received/made were well over 4000.

As well as all of the above we have a busy dispensary team managing all the prescriptions, an admin and finance team managing all the paperwork that comes in and goes out of the practice and our caretaking/cleaning team keeping the building safe and looking clean and tidy.

This is 1 week in the life of Litchdon and we do this 52 weeks of the year...always busy and always trying to do our best for patients and the care we provide.





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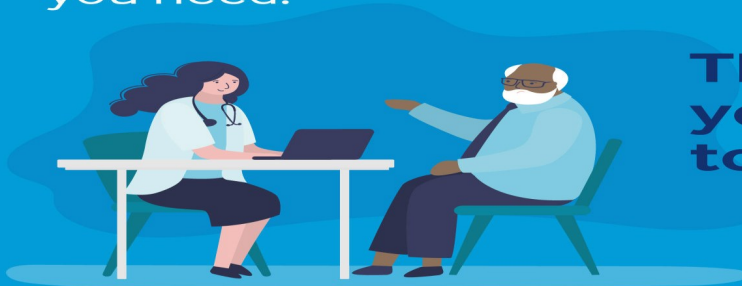


Did you know?



If general practice received a fairer share of NHS funding we could:

- Train and hire more GPs.
- Deliver the services you require.
- Make it easier to get the appointments you need.



This is why you struggle to see your GP

**General Practice is being broken.
We know you deserve better than this.
GPs Are On Your Side.**

The past decade has seen government policy break general practice.

- England's GP practices have £660 million less today than they did 5 years ago
- England has lost over 1,300 practices and we have 2000 fewer GPs to care for patients
- The practice receives just £112.50 per year for each patient, whatever their health needs. (That's less than the cost of an annual TV licence).

GPs want the same thing that you do.
We believe that nobody should struggle to see their family doctor.



www.bma.org.uk/GPsonyourside

We're on the Web! www.litchdonmedicalcentre.co.uk



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Friends & Family Results

In January we received 631 responses to the question...*Thinking about your GP Practice overall, how was your experience of our service?*



The results were:	Very good	513	Good	95
	Neither good nor poor	10	Poor	6
	Very poor	5	Don't know	2

Charity

Following our annual staff Christmas raffle and Christmas jumper day, we raised £562.30. This will be going towards the funding for the PCN Dementia Support Worker.

Every year our GPs choose to make an annual donation to a charity.

This year they have chosen to donate towards the PCN Dementia Support Worker.





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Spring Bank Holiday Opening Times

Please note that the surgery will be closed on the following Bank Holidays:

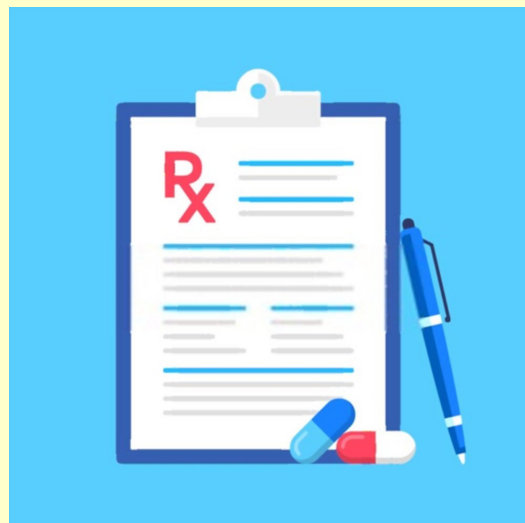
- Friday 18th April—**CLOSED**
- Monday 21st April—**CLOSED**
- Monday 5th May—**CLOSED**
- Monday 26th May—**CLOSED**



Should you need urgent medical advice on any of these days please contact 111.

Repeat Prescriptions

If you need a repeat prescription please ensure you order it in plenty of time to be ready before the Bank Holiday breaks.





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Braunton Burrows

5.8 miles (9.3 km)

Step 1

From the parking area at Velator Quay go up onto the bank alongside the river and turn right, walking away from Braunton, along the top of the bank. The path soon crosses an old slate stile and continues alongside the waterway known as "The Pill". As the road draws away to the right path carries on along the riverbank to a toll house.

Step 2

From the toll house, the bank crosses the mouth of a tidal inlet known as 'Inner Marsh Pill' and continues above the privately-owned toll roll. Carry on ahead to where the path forks.

Step 3

The right-hand fork travels along a boundary drain.

Step 4

At the White House stay with the South West Coast Path as it drops behind the beach and runs parallel to it until you reach the start of the old American road at Crow Point.

Step 5

Turn right onto the track at Crow Point and follow it through Braunton Burrows, to the car park at the far end.

Step 6

Reaching the car park at the end of the American Road, leave the Coast Path as it peels off to the right, and instead carry on ahead along the road to the first junction.

Step 7

Turn right here and follow this road as it winds through Braunton Marshes beside the stream.

Step 8

At the right-hand bend, a track leaves on the left, heading through the Great Field. Carry on along the road past it.

Step 9

When a road leaves on the right to the toll-house, carry on ahead and return to Velator Quay.



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Pathway Prescriptions – Find natural routes to feeling good

Would you like to get outside in nature more often, but are struggling to know where to start?

In March, we are launching a brand-new programme called Pathway Prescriptions, to help you find simple, everyday ways to spend more time outside in nature to enhance your health.

The programme offers:

Support — a 1-2-1 coaching programme.

Information — a directory of local outdoors and nature-based activities.

Education — how time outside in nature can boost your health.

Walking routes — 1, 2, 3 & 5 miles starting from Litchdon Medical Centre.

We will be sharing more details about the Pathway Prescriptions programme on our website and social media pages over the next few weeks.





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Spending time outside in nature is good for us; it's a simple, scientifically proven pathway to feeling better and boosting our health.

And living in north Devon we are lucky to have a huge range of beautiful, natural spaces to enjoy spending time in, to soak up all these amazing health benefits.

Including:

- Boosted mood.
- Less stress – reduction in stress hormone cortisol.
- Improved brain health.
- Lowered blood pressure.
- A refreshed mind – improved concentration and memory.
- Improved circulation.
- Elevated immune system.
- Better sleep.
- Increased resilience – feeling better able to deal with life stressors.
- Enhanced wellbeing – increased self-esteem & contentment.

But even though we know it is so good for us, it can still be hard to do!
So, what can block our paths?

- Time pressure – juggling busy jobs and family commitments.
- Uncertainty - about what activities to do or that you may enjoy.
- Lack of information - about activities available in the local community.
- Feelings – unconfident, fearful or unmotivated.





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Maintenance and Reliever Therapy (MART) for Asthma.

MART is an asthma treatment plan where you use one combination inhaler instead of two separate inhalers.

This change will be discussed at your annual review.

MART is a...

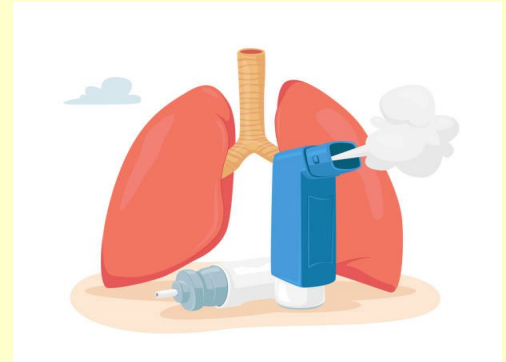
Simple

Safe

Effective

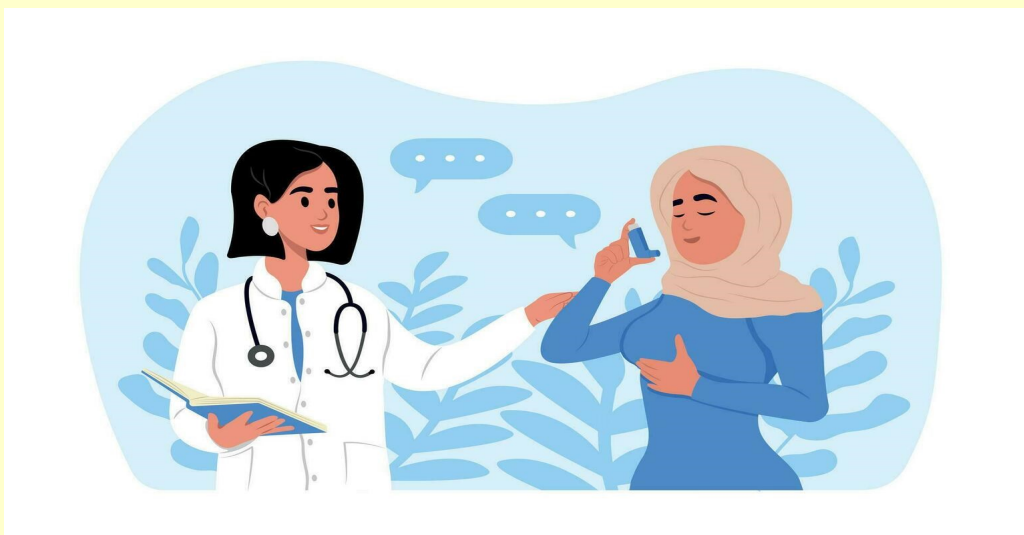
Greener

Patient-centred way of managing asthma.



If you would like to discuss sooner, please make an appointment to see one of our Respiratory Nurses.

For more information on MART visit <https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/symptoms.../treatments/mart>





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Our Practice Green Committee meet regularly to discuss and focus on things that can help both the practice and individuals become more climate friendly.

Recently we looked at air pollution, the impact it has on people and ways to try and improve it.



[Clean Air Hub](https://www.cleanairhub.org.uk)

[Visit https://www.cleanairhub.org.uk for more info](https://www.cleanairhub.org.uk)

How does air pollution affect the planet?

Climate change and air pollution are both issues associated with the burning of fossil fuels i.e many sources of air pollution are the same sources that contribute to climate change. This means that reducing sources such as carbon and greenhouse gas emissions, will not only help to improve air quality but may also help to tackle climate change.

Air pollution is also bad for nature as well as people, and is impacting on and contributing to the loss of wildlife.

Scientific evidence clearly shows the negative effects on wild plants, trees, fungi, mosses and lichens.

How does air pollution affect me?

Any amount of pollution can be damaging to our health, but the more that you are exposed to, the bigger the risk and the larger the effect it can have on you and your family.



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Air pollution affects human health at all stages of life, however, it can be particularly harmful to:

Children
Pregnant people
Older people
People with lung conditions
People with heart conditions

Even small reduction in air pollution could help us to avoid new cases of disease.

Top actions:-

- 1. Walk, wheel or cycle more, especially using the back streets away from polluting traffic. Quieter roads have been shown to reduce your exposure to pollution by 20%.*
- 2. Avoid unnecessary burning at home (e.g in a stove or open fire) unless it is your only source of heat*
- 3. If you rely on wood for your heating, use 'ready to burn' materials (e.g dry wood or approved manufactured solid fuels), and try to ensure that your appliance is eco-design accredited.*
- 4. If you do have to drive, switch your engine off when you're stationary, and try to choose electric vehicles where you can.*



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Did you know that Barnstaple Library has a seed bank?

It was lovingly made by The Gardeners Co. and can be found in the library foyer. Seeds are arranged in alphabetical order, and are free to take for those who would like them.

If you have any seeds you're no longer using then feel free to take them in and add them to the collection.





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PCN News and Projects

Although she has now moved on to pastures new, our previous PCN Digital & Transformation Lead, Sabrina, was a semi-finalist for the South West Women of the Year for her work in trying to improve health in-equalities. She attended an event at Powderham Castle and we are proud of her achievement and for flying the flag for the Barnstaple Alliance PCN.

Menopause Workshops

Our Mental Health Occupational Therapist, Jemma, facilitated 2 menopause workshops for staff working with the PCN. The workshop focused on the symptoms of perimenopause and menopause, how to manage symptoms (including non-pharmaceutical options) and gave a safe space for attendees to share their experiences.

Lung Health Events

Sabrina, Alan (Litchdon's respiratory nurse) and Desri (Brannam medical centre's nurse team lead) held some patient events in the community to help support high risk COPD patients. The aim was to provide them with support and guidance on living with COPD and to link patients up with local support services. The events were held at the Castle Centre, Roundswell Community Centre and Barnstaple Library. Patient feedback has been positive and they have enjoyed the events and have got a lot from it.

Fuel Poverty

Following on from a successful Fuel Poverty Project in 2022, we have started a new wave of the project, this time focusing on patients who are at high risk of living in fuel poverty but also have an increased risk of heart disease. Our PCN Wellbeing Team are calling eligible patients to offer them a referral to 361 Energy, who will visit patient's homes and provide them with advice, tangible energy saving measures (electric blankets, LED lightbulbs etc) and often fuel vouchers and grant applications. In 2022, each household saved an average of £600 per year on their energy bills and we hope to have the same success this time round. It might seem a strange area for us to be involved in, however – we know that patients who can't keep their homes warm and dry are more likely to have exacerbations of existing health conditions and may even develop new ones. If we can support patients to live in a comfortable environment, they are likely to live a healthier life.



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We are part of the Carer Friendly Practice scheme and link with Devon Carers as needed to offer support to unpaid carers in our practice.

If you are an unpaid carer of any age they are there for support.

It is also helpful for us to know if you are an unpaid carer so we can record that in your medical record as it can make you eligible for things like certain vaccinations and health checks. So let us know if you are an unpaid carer for any relatives or friends.

For more information about Devon Carers go to <https://devoncarers.org.uk>



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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 9-5or8pm)

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

We're on the Web! www.litchdonmedicalcentre.co.uk