

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why has the decision been taken to close the practice?

A: The provider of your GP services has informed us that they no longer wish to provide a service at Collingwood Medical Group. NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group, who is the organisation responsible for buying healthcare services in Northumberland has therefore looked at the options and believes the best solution for patients is to register at alternative practices.

Q: Do the other practices that are likely to receive patients know about the decision and will they be supported?

A: Yes, the other practices covering the areas where current patients live will be aware and we are offering to work with those practices most affected by any movement of patients to explore any additional temporary support we can give them. This is in addition to the new patient registration fee they will receive to manage the change per patient.

Q: What about vulnerable patients who may struggle to manage this change of practice?

A: The GPs at Collingwood Medical Group have been asked to identify those patients who, due to their clinical conditions, may be more vulnerable than others and have been asked to support those patients to register with another practice. We will also be writing again to patients to encourage them to register with a new practice before 30 November 2018. If however there are patients who have not registered elsewhere, we will take steps to register them with an alternative practice automatically to ensure they continue to receive primary medical care services. Those patients still however retain the right to register elsewhere should they not be happy with the practice they have been registered with.

Q: Where else can I register?

A: A list of GP practices in the area which are currently accepting patients is attached to this letter (below). If you have any difficulty or need assistance, please contact Healthwatch on 03332 408 468 (local call rate) or email info@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk.

You can register with any GP practice whose boundary includes your home address. Details of practice boundaries are on most practice websites and in each individual practice leaflet.

Q: What if I approach a practice and they won't register me?

A: As a patient, you have a right to register with any GP practice as long as you live within their practice boundary. The practice may, in some circumstances, decline to register you. The reason cannot be based on your medical condition, age, sex, gender or race. The practice will normally accept you as soon as you approach them and you will be required to complete some forms. You may also be asked to make an appointment to see the practice nurse for a health check. The practice will be able to deal with any health needs as soon as they receive your application.

Q: I am ill now and need to see a doctor, can I still go to my practice?

A: Yes. You continue to be registered with Collingwood Medical Group until 30 November 2018, however, we would encourage you to register with another GP practice as soon as possible; please don't leave registration until you need to see a doctor. If you do take longer to decide which practice to register with, all practices are obliged to provide necessary care

immediately to patients that live within their practice boundary, but they won't have access to your previous records.

Q: I have ordered my prescription, where do I get this from?

A: You will need to make sure that you collect your prescription by 12 noon on 30 November 2018 from Collingwood Medical Group. Please understand that for your new practice to issue your medication they need to add you to the system which requires time to process. Therefore we advise you to get through the registration process with your new practice before your next supply of medication is due.

Q: How will my records get transferred?

A: Your new practice will receive your records from Collingwood Medical Group via a central system if you register with a new practice by 30 November 2018. Your records will then be sent quickly and securely to your new practice to ensure continued care. If you have not registered with a new practice by 30 November 2018 we will take steps to register with you at another practice and your records will transfer automatically.

Q: Will my new practice provide the same services?

A: The main services you receive as a registered patient at a GP practice are also available from other GP practices in the area. However the opening times of the other practices may be different. Please consult NHS Choices website or contact the practice direct for details of their opening times.

Q: I have been referred to hospital. Will I need to be re-referred by my new practice?

A: If you have been referred to hospital recently you should ensure that you register with a new GP as soon as you are able to do so. The hospital will communicate with you directly regarding your appointment time. When you next attend the hospital you should inform them who your new GP practice is.

Q: I have been to see a specialist at the hospital who was writing to my GP, how will they know who to communicate with?

A: The hospital would write a letter to the GP who referred you. If this can't be delivered to Collingwood Medical Group because it has closed, this communication will go to your new GP or the practice that you have been allocated to.

Q: I am undergoing treatment, how will the new practice know about this?

A: Your medical record contains details of your previous and ongoing treatment and this will automatically transfer with your patient record. You will also have the opportunity to discuss any ongoing treatment or other health issues with health care staff at your new GP practice.

Q: I am waiting for results of my blood tests/x-rays, how will I get them?

A: Any test results will be added to your patient record. If you are undergoing treatment or investigations of any nature it is advisable for you to register with another practice as soon as possible to ensure continuity of care.

Q: My baby is due his/her injections and is registered at Collingwood Medical Group, what do I need to do?

A: You need to ensure your child is registered with a new practice as soon as possible and the practice will be responsible for issuing a letter informing you of your child's injection schedule. Although you can remain registered at Collingwood Medical Group until the end of November 2018, it is advisable for you to register your family with another practice as soon as possible. If you think your child has missed any injections, please speak to either your Health Visitor, or the staff at your new GP practice. Please note that you may have a new Health Visitor allocated to your family.

Q: I am pregnant; will I still have the same midwife?

A: You may not have the same midwife, however, you could speak to your existing midwife about this letter, and she will advise you.

Q: My sick note is due, where will I get this from?

A: As soon as you register with a new GP, any sick notes become the responsibility of your new GP; however, Collingwood Medical Group will continue to provide sick notes to registered patients, where appropriate, until 30 November 2018