

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

A: This decision has not been taken lightly and has been taken following a number of inspections by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). These inspections identified a number of areas that show the Laburnum Medical Group has not been delivering all of the requirements of their contract, including the quality of care provided. Therefore, the CCG took the decision to terminate the practice's contract.

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

A: Yes, the other practices covering the areas where current patients live are aware and we are working closely with those practices most affected by any transfer of patients to explore any additional temporary support we can give them.

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

A: The CCG has been working closely with Laburnum Medical Group to identify those patients who, due to their clinical conditions, may be more vulnerable than others. Those patients will be supported to register with their new practice, by the new practice itself and the services they currently come into contact with, and who support them now. The CCG will also be writing again to patients to confirm when their registration has transferred to a new practice, before the end of July 2020. 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. All patients still however have the right to register elsewhere should they wish to do so. However, we do ask that during this time of transition, you do not try to register yourself with a GP practice in the local area as you will not be able to do so until Laburnum Medical Group closes.

Q: Where else can I register if I do not want to join the practice allocated to me?

A: If you do not want to be registered with your new GP practice you can choose to join an alternative. 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. More detailed information about practices is available on the NHS website (www.nhs.uk). If you have any difficulty or need assistance, please contact Healthwatch on 03332 408 468 (local call rate) or email info@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk.

However, we do ask that during this time of transition, you do not try to register yourself with a GP practice in the local area as you will not be able to do so until Laburnum Medical Group closes.

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. To ensure the safe transfer of patients as the result of Laburnum Medical Group closing and due to social distancing measures in place because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CCG is making arrangements to transfer your registration for you. You do not need to do anything until you get a letter from the CCG before the end of July 2020.

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

A: Yes. You will continue to be registered with Laburnum Medical Group until we confirm your medical records have transferred to your new practice. Until this time, you should continue to contact the practice if you need assistance with your health and care. We would like to reassure you that the CCG is working very closely with the practice at this time to ensure all patients can be seen.

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

A: You must continue to collect your prescriptions as you do now, until your registration has transferred to your new practice. There is a fact sheet enclosed from your new practice, which gives you information about prescriptions. 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 need to complete your 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 Laburnum Medical Group automatically to ensure continued care. If you think that you have not automatically been registered with a new practice, you can contact them on the date the CCG will give you, nearer the end of July 2020. If there are any problems with your registration you have a number of contacts in the attached letter to raise any questions that you may have.

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 the NHS.uk 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 do not need to do anything. Your new practice will have all of the information about your referral when your registration transfers. 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 Laburnum Medical Group because it has closed, this communication will go to your new GP practice you have been allocated to. The CCG will let all local hospitals know the date Laburnum Medical Group will close. Arrangements for the administration of letters and results after this date have been put in place to make sure your new GP surgery receives all information about you.

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 you contact Laburnum Medical Group up to the date your registration is transferred to your new practice and then your new practice after this date. We will write to you again to confirm the date your registration will be transferred.

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, Laburnum Medical Group will continue to provide sick notes to registered patients, where appropriate, until the date when your registration transfers. We will write to you again to confirm the date your registration will be transferred.

Q. My child is due their immunisations, how do I make arrangements for these?

A. If you have an appointment already arranged for your child's immunisations, you must keep this appointment. If your appointment is towards the end of July 2020 or you do not have an appointment and have some questions about this, you should contact your health visitor in the first instance.