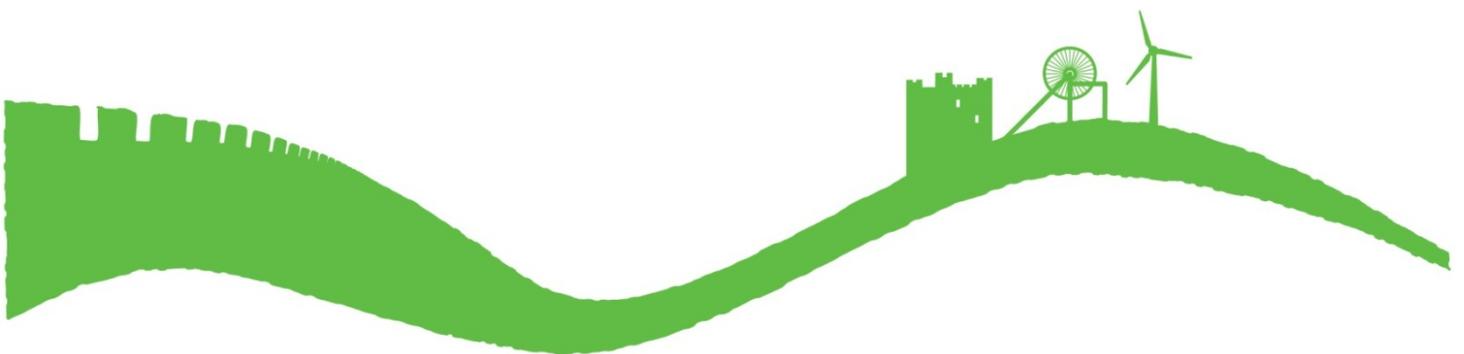




Northumberland
Clinical Commissioning Group

Laburnum Medical Group
Closure & Patient Dispersal
Engagement Feedback Report

December 2020



1 Purpose of report

To outline feedback received during a period of public engagement that sought views on the impact of the closure of Laburnum Medical Group and patient dispersal, and also identify any emerging issues for consideration by the NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group's Primary Care Commissioning Committee.

2 Background

Following a number of inspections and patient safety and quality issues identified by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Laburnum Medical Group in Ashington was notified to terminate its contract to provide GP services.

The CCG's Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC) met on 10 June 2020 to consider the grounds for termination. The CCG drew the following conclusions:

- There were significant quality and patient safety concerns that must be addressed
- Extensive opportunity had been provided to the practice to address these concerns by both the CQC and the CCG and remedial actions were not satisfactory
- The CCG had significant legal grounds to terminate the practice's contract.

The committee agreed to terminate the contract and to a re-provision of services for patients by implementing a managed dispersal of the practice list. As a result of this decision, the practice closed at the end of July 2020.

To ensure patients could continue to access primary care services they were allocated to an alternative neighbouring practice and automatically re-registered. This approach was deemed particularly suitable during the COVID-19 pandemic as it enabled social distancing to be maintained whilst also allowing the CCG to work with the receiving practices to focus on a safe transition of vulnerable patients between practices, some of whom may have been shielding at the time.

The 2,453 patients registered with Laburnum Medical Group (LMG) received a letter from the CCG on Monday 22 June 2020 to notify them of the decision and to advise them they were being automatically registered with one of six GP practices as close to their home as possible. These were:

- Seaton Park Medical Group
- Lintonville Medical Group
- Guide Post Medical Group
- Wellway Medical Group
- Bedlingtonshire Medical Group
- Gables Medical Group

There were an additional small number of patients who lived outside of LMG's local area, likely as they had moved house and not re-registered with a local practice. These patients were asked to register with a local practice of their choice.

The patient letter advised any patients with concerns or issues to contact the CCG, Healthwatch Northumberland or PALS. Patients were also invited to join a Zoom call hosted by Healthwatch on Friday July 3. The Zoom call was arranged as the CCG was unable to do a face-to-face engagement session in light of COVID-19. Feedback from this session indicated that patients were concerned about the new practice they were allocated, a full report can be found at appendix 1.

After three months had passed following the patient dispersal there was a need to engage with former Laburnum patients and key stakeholders to assess the impact of the practice closure and patient dispersal to identify any emerging issues. Engagement would provide former patients with an opportunity to share their experiences of the closure and of their new practice which would inform the commissioning process and future commissioning decisions.

Public engagement began on 26 October and extended over four weeks until 23 November 2020.

3 Understanding the patient list

As part of the impact analysis of the practice closure and managed dispersal, the CCG screened LMG's patient list to try to ascertain what information was available on the protected characteristics of the list. Unfortunately, one of the issues of concern with the practice relates to their governance including record keeping and coding. There was therefore no reliable information that could be drawn from the screening undertaken.

Information taken from Northumberland County Council's ward summaries based on the 2011 census indicated that the wards around LMG:

- Are some of the most deprived in the county, characterised with lower levels of educational attainment, higher levels of unemployment and greater incidence of poor health when compared to the rest of Northumberland
- Have low levels of car ownership, compared to the rest of the county
- Have age profiles comparable to the rest of the county. Northumberland has a more elderly population than the national average
- Have Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population numbers comparable to the county average.

The impact analysis determined that patients would not be negatively impacted. The alternative services will be of a better quality and suitably nearby to the patients. Furthermore, there was no reason to assume that any of groups with protected characteristics would be affected negatively by the proposed change.

The engagement process aimed to verify these findings. A copy of the full impact analysis can be found at appendix 2.

4 Methodology

To seek the views of former Laburnum patients and key stakeholders on the impact of the practice closure and patient dispersal, a variety of approaches were adopted:

- All former patients were sent a letter inviting them to take part in a survey either online or by completing the enclosed survey on an A4 folded card and to return it using the pre-paid business reply envelope. A copy of the letter and survey can be found at appendix 2 and 3.
- The survey comprised six questions, four of which used a five-point Likert scale to gain patients' attitudes and two were open-ended questions requiring respondents to leave comments.
- Patients received their letter on 26 October, the same date as the online survey opened. The survey was open for two weeks with the deadline for all responses set at 6 November.
- The letter was translated into different languages for patients who did not speak English as a first language and it was also adapted into Easy Read for patients who were identified to have learning disabilities. These letters were sent at a later date and respondents had until 23 November to complete the survey.
- The charity Being Woman, which supports the Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community in Northumberland were approached and asked if they would be able to assist former patients needing help completing their surveys.
- Healthwatch Northumberland also offered to support patients with the survey.
- Other voluntary and community sector groups including Northumberland County Blind Association, Citizens Advice, the VCS Assembly and PALS were contacted to ask for general feedback and to ask them to promote the survey with former patients they are aware of.
- Practice Managers at the receiving practices were asked to share details of the survey with their PPGs and to request the PPGs to promote the survey. PPGs were also offered an opportunity to hold a virtual meeting if they wished to share their views.
- Details of the engagement were uploaded to the CCG's website and shared on social media with a link to the online questionnaire.

5 Results

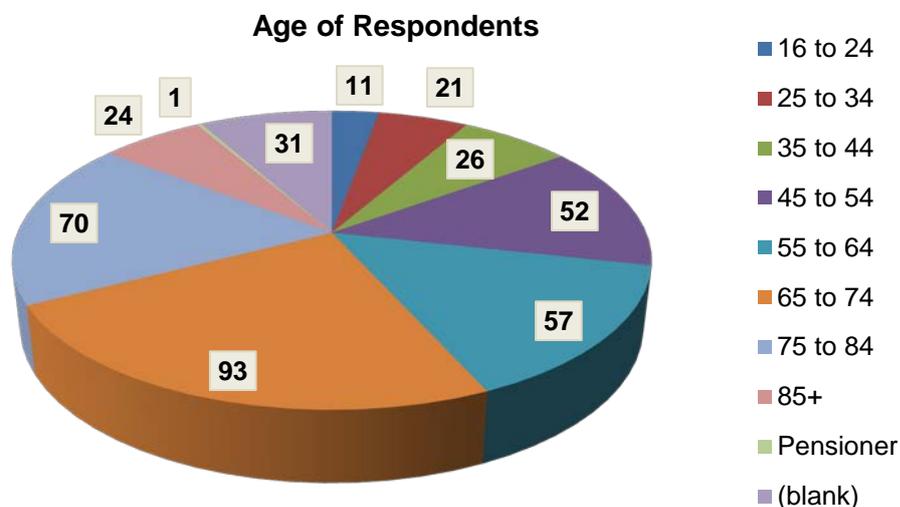
A total of 386 people completed the survey, 38 of these were completed online and the remaining 348 respondents returned the printed survey. This is a response rate of 16%. A further six responses were received but discounted as the responses were completed on behalf of children under 16. The charity Being Woman indicated that

they assisted approximately 40 participants with their surveys. Healthwatch Northumberland reported that they were not contacted for support during the engagement period.

Equality and Diversity

The survey asked respondents to leave demographic data about themselves, which was optional. Almost all respondents completed this section. A number of patients entered limited data in certain sections and only 20 surveys were returned with the 'About you' section blank.

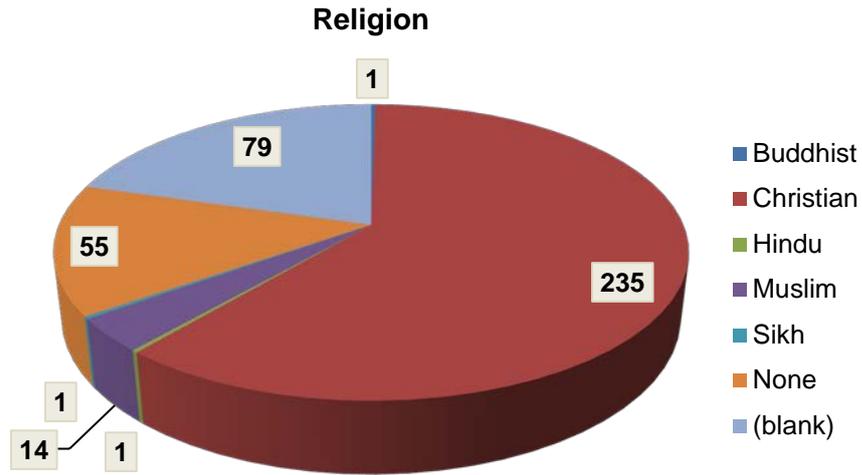
Almost half of the respondents (48%) were over 65 years of age (24% 65-74, 18% 75-84, 6% 85 and over) and the majority lived in the NE63 postcode area (77%).



The gender of respondents was evenly split with 46% male and 49% female. Two respondents stated their gender identity did not match their sex registered at birth. 46% of respondents were married or lived with their partner, 25% single, 13% widowed and 7% divorced. The majority of respondents (86%) described themselves as heterosexual, three respondents identified as gay or lesbian and one respondent identified as bisexual.

The majority of respondents identified as Christian (61%) but there was representation of most religions across respondents. The survey was also completed by people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds but unsurprisingly the majority of respondents described themselves as White (59%).

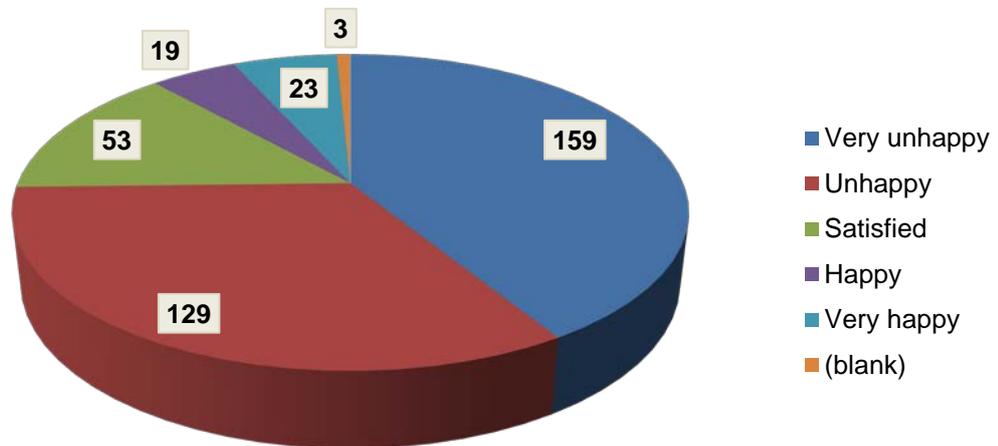
18% of respondents identified as a carer of someone with a long-standing illness or disability, with 20% saying they accompany a person, including a child to their GP appointment. Four respondents stated they were pregnant or had a child under the age of two.



Survey Questions

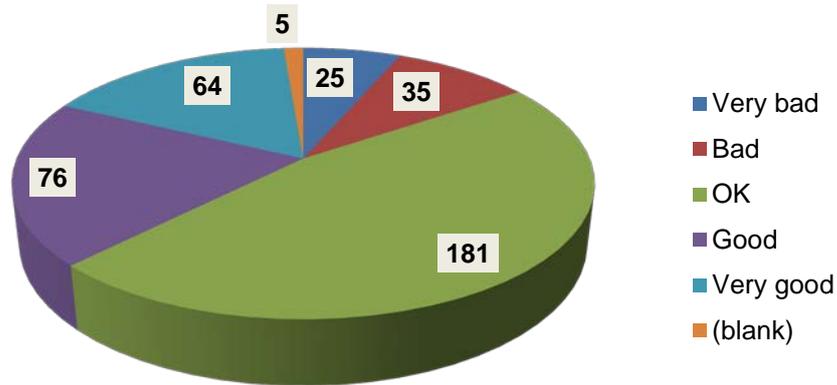
Question one of the survey asked respondents how they felt about the closure of Laburnum Medical Group and the majority of respondents, 74% stated they were very unhappy or unhappy about the closure (41% Very unhappy, 33% unhappy).

Q1: How did you feel about the closure of Laburnum Medical Group?



Question two asked respondents what was their experience of changing their GP practice, which 84% of respondents answered positively (47% OK, 20% Good, 17% Very good).

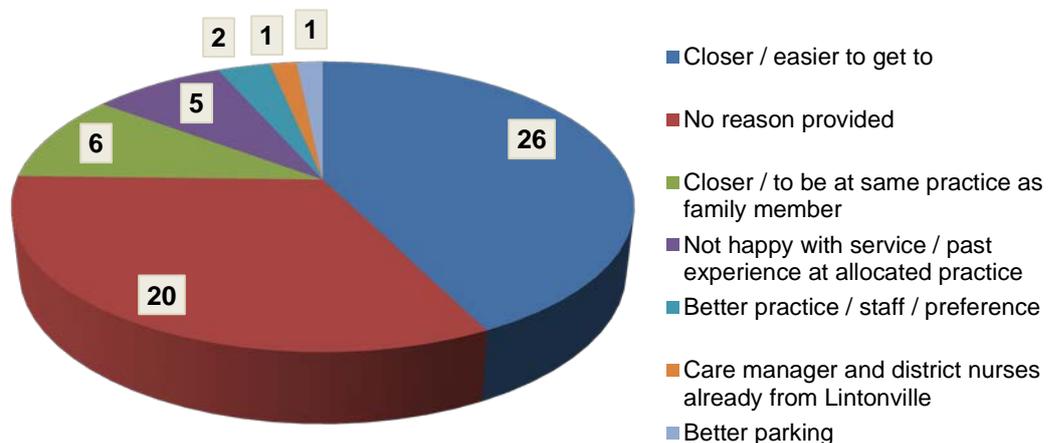
Q2: What was your experience of changing your GP Practice?



Question three asked respondents if they had changed the practice that was originally allocated to them in the patient dispersal and if they answered 'Yes' they were then asked to give their reasons why. Only 61 respondents said they had changed their practice and the main reasons given were either they wanted to change to a practice that was closer or easier to travel to or to be at the same practice as a family member. Some of the comments received included:

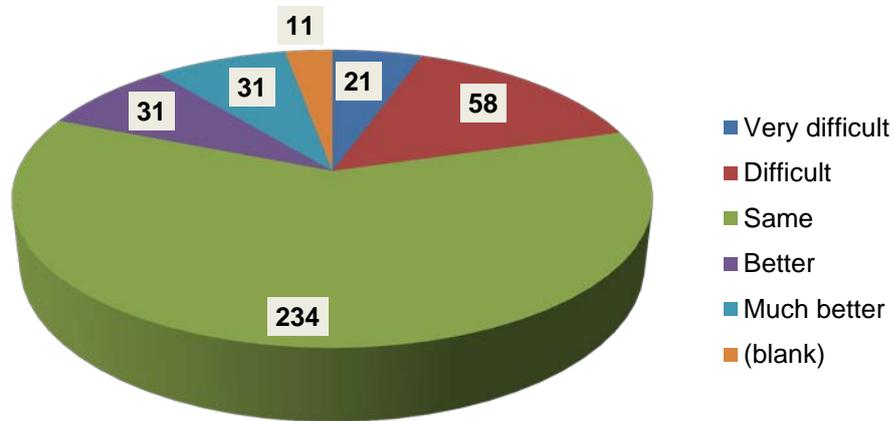
- Allocated surgery was too far to walk.
- Closer to home.
- I had no choice. The practice chosen for me is nowhere near where I live.
- Lintonville is more convenient for me, it is closer to my flat and a bus takes me two minutes to walk to the practice.
- Live in top end of Ashington, Norham surgery is too far away, Lintonville is perfect.
- Near to where I live.
- Seaton Park is closer and more convenient to me than Lintonville
- Too far from where we live.
- To be in the same practice as my wife and children.
- Wanted to be in the same one as my son.

Q3: Reasons for changing practice



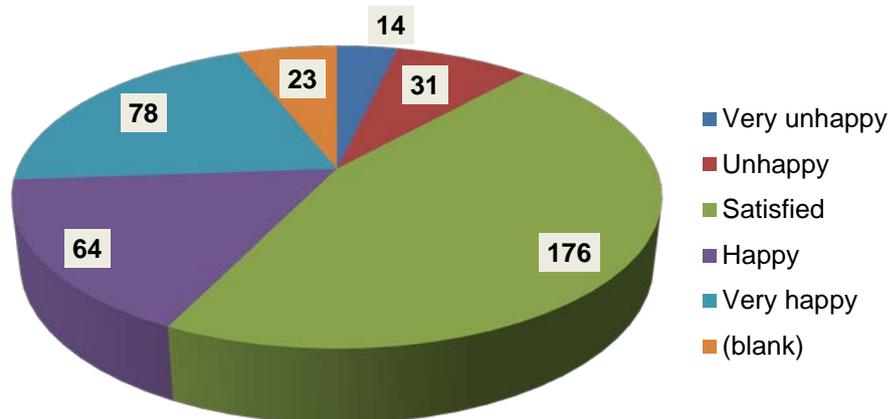
Question four asked patients how they find travelling to their new GP practice. 20% of respondents said that travelling was more difficult but over three quarters (77%) stated that travelling to their new practice was the same or better.

Q4: How do you find travelling to your new GP practice?



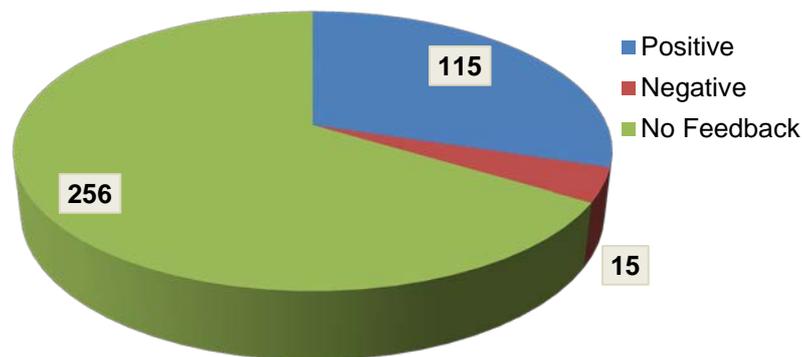
Question five asked respondents to give their view of the quality of care they receive at their new GP practice with the majority of patients (83%) answering positively (Satisfied 46%, Happy 17%, Very Happy 20%).

Q5: Overall, how do you feel about the quality of care you receive at your new GP practice?



Question six of the survey was an open-ended question and gave respondents the opportunity to have their say about their new GP practice or their experiences of the closure of Laburnum Surgery. Of the 386 total respondents, 234 completed this section leaving a variety of views which were either positive or negative about Laburnum Surgery, the new GP practice or a combination.

**Q6: Is there anything more you would like to say -
Comments about Laburnum Surgery**



130 patients provided feedback about their experiences of the closure of Laburnum. Out of the 130 patients who provided feedback, **88% (115 patients) were all positive about the surgery** and these patients were very disappointed about its closure. Comments indicated how highly regarded Dr Rasoul was and how patients were sad to be leaving the practice and losing their continuity of care after being registered at Laburnum Surgery for many years, some since birth. Some of the comments received included:

- Disappointed at the closure. Dr Rasoul was a very good/caring doctor who will be missed.
- Disappointed at closure of Laburnum Surgery as practice was very good.
- I always had a lot of respect and trust for Dr Rasoul, he always took time to make sure I was satisfied with my diagnosis, I am sad Laburnum has closed.
- I was quite happy with Dr Rasoul, I felt very comfortable with him, he knew all of our family and we respected him highly, did not want to change our surgery.
- I was very unhappy about the closure because I was a patient for 80 years at Laburnum.
- I was with Laburnum Surgery when Dr Rasoul first arrived. I found him to be a very charming helpful person (one of the old kind) unfortunately we all age.
- I will miss Dr Rasoul, who has been my GP since birth. What a wonderful gentleman.
- Knew my old GP for many years and found I could talk to him, I don't feel I would be able to do this with the new GP.
- The closure was extremely upsetting as Dr. Rasoul was a great support over many difficult years and knew my family history so well.
- Unhappy about the closure. Been there all my life. Knew all the doctors.

- Would have preferred to stay with Doctor Rasoul, he is a very caring doctor and always had time for his patients.

Only 12% of respondents (**15 patients**) left negative feedback about Laburnum Surgery. Some of the negative comments received included:

- I liked Laburnum as it was easy to see a GP though the practice needed new GPs there and the place needed updating. Dr Rasoul should have retired years ago and let a new doctor take his place.
- Had Laburnum been closed when investigations into the practice first started, my 36 year old daughter in law would not be dying of cancer. She only has weeks to live after being misdiagnosed for a year! She is leaving 3 children without a mother. This surgery should have been closed much sooner.
- I've only been at the new doctors for 3 months and I've had more information and communication than all of my time at Laburnum Surgery.
- I am happy with my new practice. I'm not very happy with Laburnum Surgery they hadn't updated my medical records.

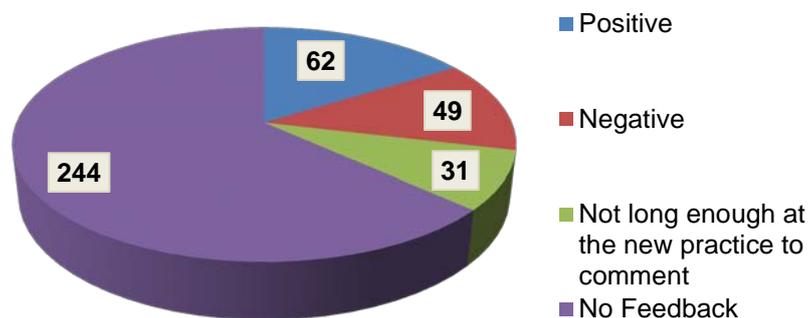
Of the 234 patients who completed question six, **142 comments were about respondents' new GP practice**. 44% (62 patients) of these comments were positive and 35% (49 patients) were negative. The remaining 22% said they needed a longer period of time or further experience of the practice before sharing their views.

Positive comments indicated that patients were happy to change practice and are pleased with the new service they are receiving and praised the quality of care, reduced waiting times, access to appointments and professional staff. Some of the feedback left is as follows:

- After been invited for my health check found everyone was very efficient and pleasant.
- Although the doctors at Laburnum were very caring, I had medical issues that weren't taken care of or followed up. I have incontinence issues and was told for years to just wear pads. I am only in my 40's. This has had a massive impact on my life. My new GP has immediately referred me to gynaecology and I feel that it should have been dealt with years ago.
- Everyone is so friendly and helpful at the new practice. Although I was sorry to see the old practice closed, having always received good care. It was also a lot closer. What I do not miss is having to wait more than one hour past my appointment time before I was seen. Totally different at new practice, usually seen on time.
- We all have been made very welcome at our new surgery (Seaton Park) and so far so good. The range of services is amazing and they're very on the ball.
- I believe it was inevitable Laburnum closed, with only one doctor on duty, who was either over worked or just lost interest in the job. My new surgery at Seaton Park is chalk and cheese!!
- I feel we have been better looked after these last three months than we did the last year at our past surgery
- My new GP is the best. I got a house visit within four hours after appointment so how good is that.

- I've only been at the new doctors from three months and I've had more information and communication than all of my time at Laburnum surgery.
- My new GP practice is a better environment and modern and up to date. It feels like a safer environment.
- My new surgery is very thorough and all the staff and doctors are excellent
- New practice is very clean and staff very helpful.
- New practice staff are very professional and friendly.
- The difference in care has been phenomenal, the care I receive now is excellent compared to going to Laburnum.

**Q6: Is there anything more you would like to say -
Comments about new GP practice**



Of the 142 comments left about the new GP practice, **only 35% were negative** (49 comments). Feedback indicated that patients had either experienced difficulty booking appointments, had issues with medication or ordering prescriptions, or were generally unhappy with their new GP and the service received.

- Cannot get through on the telephone to this new GP practice - absolute joke!
- Getting an appointment is now nearly impossible.
- Getting through to them is really bad and when you book for an appointment they tell you that they don't have the record or it is the wrong time.
- New practice, everyone phones at 8.30 then no appointments available. Trying to get to see a doctor for week and a half. Last practice had two different times to phone, morning and afternoon.
- Telephone system is rubbish, 'you're in a queue your call will be answered in 10 seconds' - try 30 minutes.
- Unable to get an appointment, always engaged.
- Very much automated practice, lacks interpersonal feeling of smaller practice.
- I am being withdrawn off my pain medication but have not been weaned onto a new. Consequently I am in significant pain, mobility severely affected, unable to sleep. Been given Naproxen which I can buy over the counter. Will be ringing them again.
- New practice only prescribe my tablets for one month at a time. Laburnum prescribed three lots at a time saving me £18.30 over three months - it helps because of my low wages.

Option to Discuss Experiences Further

Respondents who left feedback in question six were given the option to leave their contact details if they wanted to discuss their experiences further. Of the 234 patients who shared their views, 131 respondents left their contact details indicating they wanted to discuss their experiences in more detail. This number was higher than expected and it is possible respondents may have mistakenly left their contact details not realising it was optional, as it was a little unclear on the printed survey.

6 Themes

From analysing the responses to the survey, a number of themes have emerged.

Disappointment about closure

By far the strongest theme that emerged from the survey is the feeling of disappointment about the closure of the Laburnum Surgery. Three quarters of respondents said they were unhappy about the closure and the majority of open-ended comments demonstrated respondents' disappointment. It was apparent that former patients were happy with the care they received from Dr Rasoul and he was greatly missed.

Dispersal process

As the majority of respondents (84%) stated they had a positive experience of changing their GP practice and only 16% of patients changed the practice that was originally allocated to them, it can be assumed that the dispersal process and re-provision of services implemented by the CCG was successful overall.

Travel

Being able to travel easily to the GP was the main reason cited by those patients who changed their allocated practice. A small number of negative comments about travel and parking were also expressed about patients' new GP practices, with 20% of respondents saying that travelling to their new GP practice was more difficult. However on the whole, most respondents indicated that travelling to their new practice was the same or better.

Quality of care

As stated above, the majority of respondents expressed how happy they were with the care they received from Dr Rasoul. However, a small number of participants did raise quality of care concerns about Laburnum Surgery citing a cancer misdiagnosis, record keeping errors and concerns about the general condition of the practice. Many patients also commented that they were happy with the service they are receiving at their new practice which supported the results of question five, with 83% of patients responding positively about the quality of care they receive at their new GP practice.

Access to appointments

A small number of patients (49 comments) were negative about their new GP practice and raised issues about accessing appointments at their new GP practice. In particular, 18 patients experienced difficulty contacting the surgery by telephone and other patients indicated they had issues with their medication, ordering prescriptions, or were generally dissatisfied with their new practice. In comparison, all these participants commented positively about their ease of accessing services at Laburnum.

7 Conclusion

An effective process of engagement was carried out from 26 October to 23 November which provided all former Laburnum Medical Group patients an opportunity to share their experiences of the practice closure and provide feedback on their new GP practice. To seek their views, patients were invited to take part in a survey either online or by completing a printed survey. This approach was thought to be the most appropriate considering the restrictions placed on public engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CCG made concerted efforts to ensure that patients were aware of the engagement and were able to share their views by involving local voluntary and community sector organisations and through promoting the survey on social media. A total of 386 people completed the survey with good representation from seldom heard groups.

Overall respondents were clearly unhappy about the closure and had a strong feeling of disappointment. Dr Rasoul was highly regarded and liked by former patients, many of whom commented on how happy they were with his care. This indicates there was a definite lack of awareness of any quality and safety issues among the majority of patients.

However, on the whole respondents reported they had a positive experience of changing GP practice, were happy with the quality of care they receive at their new practice and are not inconvenienced travelling there. Although a small number of patients reported issues accessing appointments which may need to be addressed in future.

Taking on board the predominantly positive feedback it can be assumed that the dispersal process implemented by the CCG was successful overall and that patients have not been negatively impacted by the re-provision of services, and now receive better quality care that is as close to their home as possible.

8 Next Steps

A copy of this report will be uploaded to the CCG's website and a summary of the feedback will be shared with those individuals who left their contact details. Confirmation will be sought from these patients to verify that they wish to discuss their experiences further. When writing out to patients, they will be given details of CCG representatives who can be contacted as part of these discussions.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Feedback from Healthwatch Zoom Session, 3 July 2020

Appendix 2 – Impact Analysis

Appendix 3 – Patient Letter

Appendix 4 – Patient Survey

Appendix 1 – Feedback from Healthwatch Zoom Session, 3 July 2020

Notes from Laburnum online forum – Friday 3 July 2020

Present:

Caroline Janes – Engagement & Insight Officer - Healthwatch Northumberland

Lesley Tweddell – Engagement Officer – Healthwatch Northumberland

Laura Kane – Communication & Marketing Assistant – Healthwatch Northumberland

Cara Charlton – Head of Public Relations – Northumberland CCG

Emma Robertson – Communications and Engagement Manager - Northumberland CCG

Pamela Phelps – Senior Head of Commissioning - Northumberland CCG

Claire Lynch – Northumberland CCG

Catherine Lee – PALS and Healthwatch Northumberland Board Member

Margaret Young – Deputy Board Chair of Healthwatch Northumberland and Secretary of Seaton Park PPG

Fareeha Usman – Being Woman

Mahnoor Shakir – Being Woman

Ellen – Being Woman

3 Laburnum patients joined the forum

Discussion:

- Caroline introduced the forum and explained the code of conduct.
- Margaret Young – asked 1) Do Laburnum patients get a choice of new practice or are they just allocated one? 2) As Laburnum is part of a network of practices, do patients only get a choice of the other practices in that network? 3) Will there be an effect on Seaton Park Medical Group, for example if all 2,400 patients went to Seaton Park would it make it difficult to get an appointment?
- Pamela Phelps
 - 1) Patient choice will be respected. However, given the tight six-week timeline and the current situation with Covid-19 the safest option was to automatically register all patients with another practice close to their home. However, they can still choose to register with a different practice after Laburnum has closed.
 - 2) This is not relative to the networks of practices. Patients can register with any practice if they live within the boundary.

- 3) More resources are being provided e.g. more GP and nurse time, drug and alcohol support, mental health support. There will be open communication on a regular basis and if any practices feel they can't take any more patients then a temporary hold can be put on new registrations.
- Margaret Young – even now without the extra patients it is hard to get an appointment, sometimes you can wait up to three weeks.
 - Pamela encouraged Margaret to bring up this issue separately with the practice.
 - Catherine Lee – Catherine has not heard of many issues via PALS, she believes most will have contacted the CCG directly. The main anxiety is being allocated a new practice and being worried about what will happen next. There may be issues going forward and patients may find things a bit different, but PALS will be there to help.
 - Mahnoor Shakir – not aware of any issues yet but joined the forum to stay updated on the situation.
 - Fareeha Usman – most Being Woman service users are registered with Laburnum and comfortable with their GP. They are unsure what will happen when they change practice. Ellen is registered with Laburnum and close to service users so may know better how they are feeling.
 - Cara Charlton – asked if anyone had any feedback about the communications around the closure?
 - Fareeha Usman – some patients didn't understand the English letter. There's been a good job done sending out information but those who don't speak English are worried about what it says. Could've identified people who speak other languages and translated. Fareeha to send Cara and Emma a list of most popular languages of service users. Fareeha is happy to help with translations.
 - Ellen – has been a patient at Laburnum for a while. The main concern she is hearing is about being allocated a GP or being able to choose but this question has been answered. Many asylum seekers have language barriers so there is confusion. Many patients have a good relationship with a specific GP at Laburnum.
 - Pamela Phelps – suggested a separate phone call might be an easier way to answer more specific questions. This discussion has highlighted there is an issue with engaging with a specific community in Ashington.
 - Fareeha Usman – Being Woman would love to collaborate on this engagement. Simple information can be sent out in food parcels and engagement can be done in small, social distanced groups.
Some patients prefer to see a GP from a BAME background who understands their culture. Would it be possible to consider this when allocating patients to GPs?
 - Pamela Phelps – we could certainly pick this up and do some work around engaging with these pockets of the community. It's about removing barriers to healthcare.
 - Daughter of a Laburnum patient – her parents have been with Laburnum for 70+ years. They haven't got internet so can they call someone to discuss? How can her mother change practice without having to leave the house? She's gone from being able to get an appointment on the day to a three week wait.
 - Pamela Phelps – they can call the number on the letter and speak to the CCG or Healthwatch. If the patient wants to change practice she can ring the one she wants to register with and they will support her over the phone.
 - Margaret Young – asked if Laburnum had a PPG? It helps to have a friendly, non-clinical group.

- Pamela Phelps – they did try to set one up via email and notice board messages but it didn't get up and running. That human to human contact is important and we need to make the most of patient advocates.
- Fareeha Usman – human to human connection is especially important when people are already isolated. Looking forward to working with Pamela.
- Lesley and Caroline thanked everyone for attending and reminded the forum that they would be available to talk over the phone for the next hour if anyone would like to discuss further.

Call taken by Caroline Janes from attendee after the session:

Caller would have liked to have known about the closing of Laburnum earlier.

They want to change their new GP from Seaton Park to Lintonville and are aware they'll need to do this after Laburnum closes on 27th July. They are quite anxious about the transition period and the phones lines being jammed. I have let them know that they can get in touch with us at Healthwatch if they have difficulties getting through to Lintonville. They also wanted to check whether they would be able to switch **on** the 27th July or if it needed to be **after** the 27th July, I told them they would be able to switch **on** the 27th July.

They also stressed that they would miss Dr Rasaul as he was a family doctor, they felt he had empathy and were listened to by him. They wanted the CCG to know what a good doctor he had been.

Call taken by Lesley Tweddell from attendee after the session:

Caller didn't understand the letter.

Following telephone call with Healthwatch Northumberland after the online forum, caller was able to understand what the letter was about and was reassured. It was explained that if they needed GP before 27th July – call Laburnum, if need GP after 27th July, call new practice on letter.

Additional information

From calls/emails:

- 3 people want to switch to Lintonville (2 from Seaton Park, 1 from unknown)
- 5 people want to switch to Seaton Park (3 from Lintonville, 2 from unknown)
- 1 person wants to switch to Bedlingtonshire (from Seaton Park as currently shielding in the Bedlingtonshire area)
- 1 person wants to switch (unknown where from and to)

Appendix 2 – Impact Analysis

Impact Analysis

Purpose

The report considers the impact of a proposed managed dispersal of Laburnum Medical Group's (LMG) patient list to neighbouring practices

What is the proposed change?

Laburnum Medical Group (LMG) is a GP practice based in Ashington that delivers essential, additional and enhanced services to a registered list of c2,500 patients under a PMS Agreement.

Due to quality concerns the CCG is due to consider on the 10 June 2020 whether the practice's contract should be terminated. Should this decision be taken, the recommended action to ensure patients can continue to access primary care services is to undertake a managed dispersal of the practice patient list to neighbouring practices. As the dispersal will be managed this means that patients will be allocated an alternative practice and automatically re-registered. This approach is deemed particularly suitable during the COVID-19 emergency as it enables social distancing to be maintained whilst also allowing the CCG to work with the receiving practices to focus on a safe transition of vulnerable patients between practices, some of whom may be 'shielding' at this time.

There are four practices that would receive a share of the vast majority of the patient list where travel is the main determining factor for allocating patients. Those practices are:

- Seaton Park Medical Group
- Lintonville Medical Group
- Guide Post Medical Group
- Wellway Medical Group

There are a small number of patients that live outside of LMG's local area, likely as they've moved house and not re-registered with a local practice. If a dispersal is undertaken these patients will be asked to re-register with a local practice of their choice.

Understanding the characteristics of the patient list

The CCG has screened the patient list to try to ascertain what information is available on the protected characteristics of the list. Unfortunately, one of the issues of concern with the practice's governance relates to record keeping, including coding. There was therefore no reliable information that could be drawn from the screening undertaken

Appendix 1 provides information taken from Northumberland County Council's ward summaries based on the 2011 census. The important points to note are that the wards around LMG:

- Are some of the most deprived in the county, characterised with lower levels of educational attainment, higher levels of unemployment and greater incidence of poor health when compared to the rest of Northumberland
- Have low levels of car ownership, compared to the rest of the county
- Have age profiles comparable to the rest of the county. Northumberland has a more elderly population than the national average
- Have Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) population numbers comparable to the county average.

When assessing the impact of the proposed change the key components to be considered are therefore:

- The travel impact on patients
- The quality of services available

Travel analysis

Given that car ownership is low in the wards that are currently served by LMG and also as LMG is based in central Ashington and served by good bus routes, a negative impact on patients can only be avoided if alternative provision is also proximate to the population it serves and aided by good public transport.

The table below provides a comparison for each ward of the distance patients residing there will currently be travelling to LMG versus the distance they would travel to the nearest alternative practice. The table also indicates whether a direct bus route is available from the ward to the alternative practice (see appendix 2 for more detail on bus routes). The table demonstrates that many patients would be closer to the alternative practice than LMG and for the two wards where the distance to travel is further, the distance is not significantly further (0.2-0.3 of a mile). Appendix 3 provides a map of the local area, the ward boundaries and the location of local practices so the proximity of alternative provision can be observed.

Ward and indicative postcode (taken at mid-point of ward's populated area)	Proportion of list size residing in ward	Distance to Laburnum NE63 0XX	Nearest alternative practice Distance away		Net distance to the alternative practice compared to Laburnum (negative figures means practice is closer than Laburnum)	On direct bus route
Ashington Central NE63 0AQ	27%	0.1 miles	Lintonville	0.4 miles	0.3 miles further away	Yes
Hirst NE63 9LU	24%	1.0 miles	Seaton Park	1.0 miles	Same	Yes
Bothal NE63 8EA	10%	1.0 miles	Lintonville	1.2 miles	0.2 miles further away	Yes
College	13%	0.8 miles	Seaton Park	0.6 miles	0.2 miles	Yes

NE63 OQR					closer	
Haydon NE63 8NJ	7%	1.4 miles	Seaton Park	1.0 miles	0.4 miles closer	Yes
Seaton with Newbiggin West NE63 9SE	7%	2.5 miles	Seaton Park	1.0 miles	1.5 miles closer	Yes
Newbiggin Central and East NE64 6PY	3%	3.0 miles	Seaton Park/ Wellway Newbiggin	0.3 miles	2.7 miles closer	Yes
Choppington NE62 5PD	1%	3.1 miles	Guidepost	0.5 miles	2.6 miles closer	Yes
Stakeford NE62 5AD	2%	2.2 miles	Guidepost	0.8 miles	1.4 miles closer	Yes
Lynemouth NE61 5SY	2%	3.7 miles	Wellway Lynemouth	0.3 miles	3.4 miles closer	Yes
Pegswood NE61 6UN	1%	3.7 miles	Wellway Pegswood	0.4 miles	3.3 miles closer	Yes
Bedlington Central NE22 5EL	<0%	5.1 miles	Bedlingtonshire	0.7 miles	4.4 miles closer	Yes
Bedlington East NE22 5YH	<0%	4.0 miles	Gables	0.7 miles	3.3 miles closer	Yes
Sleekburn NE22 7EU	1%	3.6 miles	Gables	0.2 miles	3.4 miles closer	Yes
Other wards	3%	-	-	-	-	-

Quality of services

Quality of care is always vitally important to all patient groups but perhaps even more so when there is a greater incidence of poor health in an area, which is the case for the wards currently served by LMG, when compared to the rest of Northumberland. The table below shows the CQC ratings of the potential receiving practices compared to LMG. All receiving practices are rated Good or Outstanding.

PRACTICE	CQC RATING						
	Date of inspection	Overall	Safe	Effective	Caring	Responsive	Well-led
Laburnum	2020	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Good	Inadequate
Lintonville	2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Guidepost	2016	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Seaton Park	2018	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Wellway	2016	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

Findings

The main findings of this impact analysis are:

- The accessibility of services for patients will not be negatively impacted as alternative services are close to the wards served by LMG
- The quality of alternative services will be higher than patients currently receive at LMG and therefore this will be a positive impact for patients

Conclusion

The impact of the proposed managed dispersal will not be negative for patients. The alternative services will be of a better quality and suitably proximate to the patients. There is therefore no reason to assume that any of groups with protected characteristics will be affected negatively by the proposed change.

Appendix 1 – Northumberland County Council Ward Summaries (2011 Census)

The wards around Laburnum Primary Care Centre – namely Central, College and Hirst – are some of the most deprived in the county, characterised with lower levels of educational attainment, higher levels of unemployment and greater incidence of poor health when compared to the rest of Northumberland.

An overview of the 2011 Census produced by Northumberland County Council shows that for those wards, plus the less deprived wards of Bothal, Haydon, Seaton and Newbiggin West and Newbiggin Central and East affected by Laburnum’s potential closure:

Higher proportions of this local population have no qualifications (30%) when compared to the county average (24%). In particular the Bothal, College and Hirst wards had significantly higher rates of residents without qualifications. Furthermore, this local area has a smaller proportion of the population with level 4 and above qualifications (16%) when compared to the county average (26%). Again, Bothal, College and Hirst had much lower rates of residents with level 4 qualifications and above – all less than half the level of the county average.

Across the local population, 9% of residents reported to have ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ general health, compared with 6% across Northumberland. In addition, 13% of residents in the local areas reported that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot compared with 10% across the county.

Unemployment rates in this local area are much higher than the county average, with 7% of the local population unemployed compared with 4% across the county. Again, the unemployment rate in Central was more than double the county average, while the unemployment rate in the Hirst ward was almost three times the rate of the average for Northumberland.

Households without access to a car in the local area are 34%, compared to 22% across Northumberland. Again, the wards of Central, College and Hirst wards showed much lower levels of car ownership – at around twice the county average.

This local area, with low levels of car ownership, higher levels of unemployment, which is linked to lower levels of household income, and a higher use of secondary care services – at around 50% higher than the County average– means that dispersal of patients from these wards – a great many of whom will walk or will be able to walk to Laburnum Primary Care Centre – will require careful consideration.

INDICATOR	CENTRAL	BOTHAL	COLLEGE	HAYDON	HIRST	NEWBIGGIN CENTRAL AND EAST	SEATON WITH NEWBIGGIN WEST	TOTAL LOCAL AREA	COUNTY
All residents	4,968	4,448	5,128	4,639	5,572	4,710	4,632	34,097	
White	4,852	4,396	5,056	4,604	5,330	4,658	4,538	33,434	
Black & minority ethnic	116	52	72	35	242	52	94	663	

INDICATOR	CENTRAL	BOTHAL	COLLEGE	HAYDON	HIRST	NEWBIGGIN CENTRAL AND EAST	SEATON WITH NEWBIGGIN WEST	TOTAL LOCAL AREA	COUNTY
Age profile									
0 – 15 years	899	659	886	767	1,189	803	973	6,176	
16 – 64 years	3,339	2,790	3,332	3,053	3,591	2,847	3,009	21,961	
65 + years	730	999	910	819	792	1,060	650	5,960	
75 +	374	530	396	333	360	470	250	2,713	
Highest Level of Qualification (aged 16+)									
No qualifications	1,319	952	1,381	927	1,502	1,371	997	8,449	
Level 1	655	460	703	514	780	576	553	4,241	
Level 2	785	642	733	723	737	581	648	4,849	
Apprenticeship	149	167	182	194	138	158	162	1,150	
Level 3	514	512	559	567	517	425	486	3,580	
Level 4 or higher	504	900	549	823	528	627	633	4,564	
Economic Activity (aged 16-74)									
Economically Active	2,463	2,270	2,488	2,405	2,550	2,079	2,288	16,543	
Employees part-time	541	486	542	508	599	451	557	3,684	
Employees full-time	1,360	1,356	1,417	1,488	1,272	1,088	1,269	9,250	
Self-employed	152	217	162	168	158	219	185	1,261	
Unemployed	323	125	305	148	446	260	204	1,811	
Full-time student	87	86	62	93	75	61	73	537	
Provision of Unpaid Care (all usual residents)									
Providing unpaid care	541	565	604	634	546	547	593	4,030	
General Health									
Bad or very bad	485	401	490	354	583	502	360	3,175	
Bad	393	309	390	273	468	389	278	2,500	
Very bad	92	92	100	81	115	113	82	675	
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	660	604	692	495	778	711	509	4,449	
No car/van in household	968	493	960	402	1,083	775	461	5,142	
All residents									
White	98%	99%	99%	99%	96%	99%	98%	98%	98%

INDICATOR	CENTRAL	BOTHAL	COLLEGE	HAYDON	HIRST	NEWBIGGIN CENTRAL AND EAST	SEATON WITH NEWBIGGIN WEST	TOTAL LOCAL AREA	COUNTY
Black & minority ethnic	2%	1%	1%	1%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Age profile									
0 – 15 years	18%	15%	17%	17%	21%	17%	21%	18%	17%
16 – 64 years	67%	63%	65%	66%	64%	60%	65%	64%	63%
65 + years	15%	22%	18%	18%	14%	23%	14%	17%	20%
75 +	8%	12%	8%	7%	6%	10%	5%	8%	9%
Highest Level of Qualification (aged 16+)									
No qualifications	32%	25%	33%	24%	34%	35%	27%	30%	24%
Level 1	16%	12%	17%	13%	18%	15%	15%	15%	14%
Level 2	19%	17%	17%	19%	17%	15%	18%	17%	17%
Apprenticeship	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Level 3	13%	14%	13%	15%	12%	11%	13%	13%	12%
Level 4 or higher	12%	24%	13%	21%	12%	16%	17%	16%	26%
Economic Activity (aged 16-74)									
Economically Active	66%	68%	67%	71%	65%	63%	70%	67%	68%
Employees part-time	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	14%	17%	15%	15%
Employees full-time	37%	41%	38%	44%	32%	33%	39%	37%	37%
Self-employed	4%	7%	4%	5%	4%	7%	6%	5%	10%
Unemployed	9%	4%	8%	4%	11%	8%	6%	7%	4%
Full-time student	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Provision of Unpaid Care (all usual residents)									
Providing unpaid care	11%	13%	12%	14%	10%	12%	13%	12%	11%
Health									
Bad or very bad	10%	9%	10%	8%	10%	11%	8%	9%	6%
Bad	8%	7%	8%	6%	8%	8%	6%	7%	5%
Very bad	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	13%	14%	13%	11%	14%	15%	11%	13%	10%
No car/van in household	42%	24%	39%	20%	44%	35%	24%	34%	22%

Appendix 2 - Bus routes

The vast majority of patients currently registered with Laburnum Primary Care Centre live in the boundaries of the former Wansbeck District Council towns of Ashington, Bedlington, Choppington, Guidepost, Newbiggin, Stakeford and these localities are well served by regular public transport services throughout the core opening hours of general practice (Monday to Friday between 8am and 6.30pm) and typically live within half a mile of a bus stop

In total, the area is served by six bus routes – numbers 1, 35, 57, X20, X21 and X22 – and buses typically run every hour during core general practice opening hours. All practices and wards in the area affected by this decision are on at least one direct bus route from the ward in which Laburnum Primary Care Centre (Ashington Central), with many on three or more direct bus routes. As a result of the Ashington being a main bus terminal in southeast Northumberland, each practice and ward is accessible by a maximum of two interconnected buses.

The tables below show the wards and practices served by local bus routes.

Table 1: Buses serving practices

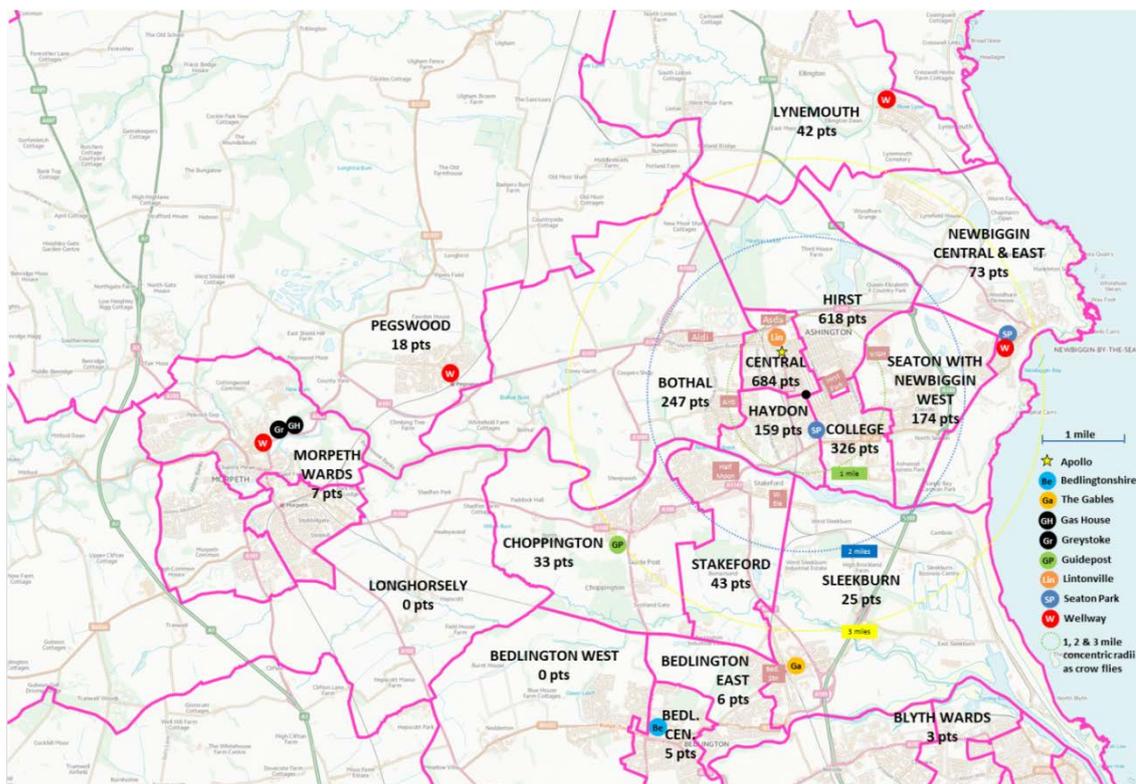
BUS ROUTE	1	35	57	X20	X21	X22
<i>FREQUENCY</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 120 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>
Laburnum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lintonville	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Seaton Park	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Seaton Park & Wellway Newbiggin	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-
Guidepost	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
Bedlingtonshire	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Gables	-	-	-	-	✓	-
Wellway Lynemouth	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Wellway Pegswood	-	✓	-	-	-	-

Table 2: Buses serving wards

BUS ROUTE	1	35	57	X20	X21	X22
<i>FREQUENCY</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 120 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>	<i>Every 60 mins</i>

Central	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hirst	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-
Haydon	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
College	-	✓	-	✓	-	-
Bothal	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
Seaton/Newbiggin West	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-
Newbiggin Cen. & East	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-
Stakeford	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Choppington	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
Bedlington Central	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓
Bedlington East	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-
Lynemouth	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
Pegswood	-	-	-	-	-	-

Appendix 3 – Map of the local area



Version 1.1: MT 14 May 2020

23 October 2020

The Rivergreen Centre

St Mary's Park
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 6BL

Dear patient

Tel: (01670) 335157
Email: norccg.enquiries@nhs.net

Laburnum Medical Group

Following the closure of Laburnum Medical Group in July, I am writing to you as a former patient of the GP practice as we would like to hear your thoughts about the surgery closure and give you an opportunity to share your views on your new GP practice. Your feedback is really valuable to us and will be used to make sure NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (the CCG) continues to deliver excellent primary care services in Northumberland.

Please could you take time to answer the short survey enclosed in this letter. Or if you prefer, you can complete this survey online at: www.northumberlandccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/

We are asking all former patients of Laburnum Surgery to complete the survey, so you may receive more than one copy in your household. Please could each former patient complete the survey individually.

Once you have completed the survey, please return it using the pre-paid envelope. Please note that the deadline for responses is: **6 November 2020**.

If you would like help completing this survey or have any questions please ring 01670 335157 or email norccg.comms@nhs.net.

You can also contact Healthwatch Northumberland, the statutory independent consumer champion for patients on 03332 408 468 (local call rate) or email info@healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk.

The CCG has always valued patient feedback and we are committed to ensuring you have access to the best possible healthcare. The results of the survey will be available on the CCG's website by the end of the year.

Please take this opportunity to have your say and help us to improve local health services.

Yours sincerely



Siobhan Brown
Chief Operating Officer
NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group

Laburnum Medical Group

Patient Survey

Now three months has passed since Laburnum Surgery has closed we would like to ask you to share your experiences of the practice closure and to gain your views of your new GP practice.

We would be grateful if you could take time to answer the following questions, raise any concerns you may have and return this card using the pre-paid envelope. Or if you prefer, you can complete this survey online at:

www.northumberlandccg.nhs.uk/get-involved

Please note that the deadline for responses is:
6 November 2020.

If you would like help completing this survey, please ring **01670 335157** or email **norccg.comms@nhs.net**



1. How did you feel about the closure of Laburnum Medical Group?

Very unhappy Unhappy Satisfied
Happy Very happy

2. What was your experience of changing your GP practice?

Very bad Bad OK
Good Very good

3. Have you changed the practice that was originally allocated to you?

Yes No

If yes, please tell us why:

.....

.....

.....

4. How do you find travelling to your new GP practice?

Very difficult Difficult Same
Better Much better

5. Overall, how do you feel about the quality of care you receive at your new GP practice?

Very unhappy Unhappy Satisfied
Happy Very happy

6. Is there anything more you would like to say about your new GP practice or your experiences of the closure of Laburnum Surgery? We will keep all responses that describe patient experiences confidential.*

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What do I do now?

Once you have completed this survey, simply put it in the envelope that came with your letter and put it in the post – you don't need a stamp.

Or if you prefer, you can complete this survey online at:
www.northumberlandccg.nhs.uk/get-involved

***If you would like to be contacted to discuss your experiences further, please leave your contact details below:**

Title (please circle): Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other:

First name:

Last name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone (home):

Mobile:

Email:

Please tell us how you would like to be contacted:

Email Post Telephone Text Message

About you

Please could we have some information about you to make sure that all the survey responses fairly represent the patients who were registered at Laburnum Surgery. You do not have to answer if you do not want to.

Please state your gender: Male Female

Prefer not to say Other (please specify):

Does your gender identity match your sex as registered at birth?

Yes No Prefer not to say

What is your age?

What is your marital status?

Which race or ethnicity best describes you?

What is your religion?

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual or straight Bisexual Gay or lesbian

Prefer not to say Other (please specify):

Do you care for someone with a long-standing illness or disability?

Yes No

Are you are pregnant or do you have a child under two years old?

Yes No Prefer not to say

Please tell us the first four or five characters of your post code (please note this does not identify a street or house) such as NE63 0 etc:

Do you generally accompany a person – including a child or children to their GP appointment – you may be their carer, parent or grandparent/other family member

Yes No