

# BELFORD MEDICAL PRACTICE



MAY 2023

## NEWSLETTER

### PRACTICE NEWS

Some of you will already have met Dr Dick Fowles who is our locum GP. Dr Fowles will be with us until September.

We also have a new Registrar Dr Alice Hartley who will be with us until the end of November.

We are delighted to announce that our Assistant Practice Manager Nicola Blair has passed her exam for Operations or Departmental Manager Level 5. Congratulations Nicola.

Dr Rachel Wilkinson has given birth to a baby boy. Both Mother and Baby are well. Congratulations Rachel.

### DISPENSARY

#### MEDICATION

In May we destroyed £366.45 worth of medication. Please remember to only order what you need.

#### MENTAL HEALTH

If you are struggling with anxiety, low mood, bereavement or depression you can self refer to Talking Matters on 0300 3030 700 and they also have information and resources available.

If you are experiencing a severe mental health crisis you can contact the crisis team on 0300 3030 700

Further support can be found on Samaritans on 116 123 and MIND Northumberland on 0191477 4545 or 0330 1743 174





### **Look in on vulnerable neighbours and relatives**

Remember that other people, such as older neighbours, friends and family members, may need some extra help. There's a lot you can do to help people who need support.

Keep in touch with your friends, neighbours and family and ask if they need any practical help, or if they're feeling unwell. Make sure they're stocked up with enough food supplies. Make sure they keep well hydrated in the summer months especially if it is hot.

If they need help when the GP surgery or pharmacy is closed or they're not sure what to do, go to [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or call 111.

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council on 01670536400 or call the Age UK helpline on [0800 678 1602](tel:08006781602) (8am to 7pm every day). You can also report your concerns through the Northumberland County Councils online form on their website.

### **Defibrillators**

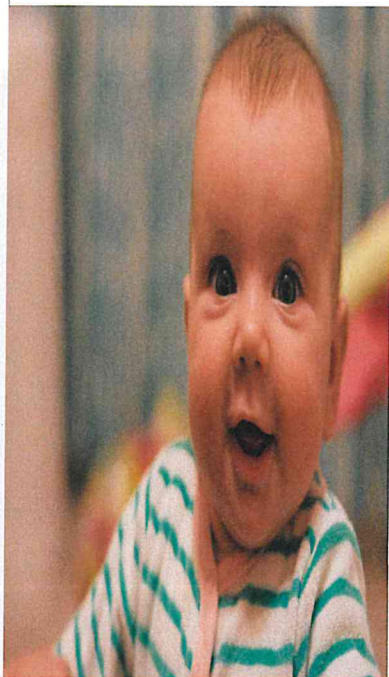
There are defibrillators for emergency use in various locations in the immediate area. Please click on the link to find out where the nearest one is to your location. <https://www.defibfinder.uk/>

### **Patient Contact Details**

Please could we ask patients to contact the surgery if any of your contact details have changed. This includes address, phone numbers or email. This is important to keep your records up to date.

### **Health Visitor Baby Clinics**

These are held at the Belford Surgery every 2nd Tuesday between 1-3pm. Parents can bring their babies to be weighed and to speak to the Health Visitor about any concerns they may have or to seek advice. At the moment the clinic is under review in terms of numbers of babies attending and we could be under threat of losing this local clinic.





## EAR CLINICS



**Northumbria Health**

### Have you heard?

**Microsuction** is now being offered at Northumbria Health.

We are delighted to be offering this safe and pain-free ear wax removal service for only £70.

Our microsuction expert, based between Morpeth View and Spring Terrace, will provide outstanding care to your patient.

No GP referral needed, please contact us on **0191 203 1253** to book an appointment.

Or for more information, visit our website at [www.northumbria-health.co.uk](http://www.northumbria-health.co.uk)



Scott Bell,  
ENT Nurse Practitioner

Northumbria Health can now offer ear wax removal via microsuction from our trained specialist ENT nurse – Scott Bell. The service will start on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.

No GP referral is required – You can contact us by telephone for an appointment - 0191 2031253.

Cost - £70

The clinics will be held at:

Spring Terrace Health Centre  
Ground Floor North Shields  
NE29 0HQ

Morpeth NHS Centre –  
Morpeth  
NE61 1JX

There are also private ear clinics run by Sarah Tyson who deals with ear irrigation. Sarah runs a session in Berwick every Wednesday and also in Wooler every second Thursday. The cost of an appointment is £30 for both ears. Home visits can also be arranged at a cost of £50.

If you would like more information please contact Sarah on 07368931179 or email [sarahtysonhealthcare@outlook.com](mailto:sarahtysonhealthcare@outlook.com)

### COVID 19 PRECAUTIONS

Covid is still active and we still have vulnerable patients.

Face coverings are now optional in the surgery but we do ask that if you have a cold or chest infection that you wear a mask. There is a hand sanitiser on the right as you come through the door which we ask you to use. Social distancing seating is provided.

## CURRENT OPERATING PROCEDURES

### **Current Opening Times**

#### **Belford Surgery**

**01668 213738**

**8.30-6.00 Monday to Friday**

#### **Prescription Ordering**

**9am–2pm**

#### **Blood/X-ray Results**

**9am-2pm**

#### **Seahouses Surgery**

**01665 720917**

**Monday and Tuesday**

**8.30-6.00**

**Thursday**

**8.30 –5.30**

**Friday**

**8.30-12.30**

**Wednesday**

**Closed**

#### **Prescription Ordering**

**9am-2pm**

#### **Blood/X-Ray Results**

**9am-2pm**

#### **Website:**

**[www.belfordmedicalpractice.nhs.uk](http://www.belfordmedicalpractice.nhs.uk)**

#### **Facebook Page:**

**Belford Medical Practice**

### **Appointments**

The surgery uses a telephone triage system. This means that patients will initially be phoned by a Doctor or Nurse Practitioner and if they need to be seen the Clinician will organise a surgery time with the patient for a face to face consultation. Staff will ask for a brief summary of your problem so you can be directed to the most appropriate clinician which may not be a GP. Also for any urgent problems the Doctors can then prioritise those calls.

This does have an advantage in that patients with urgent medical symptoms can be seen straightaway. Other patients are usually seen either that day or the day after or if appropriate, triaged to another team member such as the first contact Physio.

We are in fact busier than ever with telephone calls and face to face appointments, our last figures showing that clinical contact has increased compared to pre-pandemic levels. These figures do not include covid or flu vaccination numbers or additional appointments with staff such as physio, mental health, social prescribing and pharmacist. These provide additional options for patients on top of our background figures. Annual Reviews

We are still carrying out annual reviews and will be contacting patients in the month of their birth to attend for their annual health review.

### **Access to the Surgery**

Face coverings are now optional in the surgery but we do ask that if you have a cold or chest infection that you wear a mask. There is a hand sanitiser on the right as you come through the door which we ask you to use. Social distancing seating is provided.

### **Collecting Prescriptions**

When you enter the surgery please make your way into the booth to the left, this will take you to the dispensary window and you will be able to collect your medication form there.

### **Home Visits**

Home visits by the GP's and District Nurses are still being undertaken as necessary. Doctors still routinely wear face masks where necessary to protect vulnerable patients. If you feel you need a home visit we would ask you to contact the surgery as soon as possible in the morning so that you can be added to the visiting list for that day (before 11am). You will be asked your name and address and the reason for the visit. As usual the request will be triaged by the GP's.

### **Telephone System**

You will hear a message at the start and will be offered three options. Select Number one if requiring a prescription or results, select number two if requiring an appointment and select number three for all other enquiries. Requests for prescriptions and results are only available between the hours of 9-2. If you select this option out with those times then you will hear a message and the phone line will cut off.

### **Online Services**

You can register for online services which will enable you to order medication and book certain appointments online. If you are interested in this then please enquire at reception.

### **E consult form**

This can be found on the practice website. Complete the form and send this into the surgery. This is another way to contact us about health problems, sick notes or requesting a contraception review.



## ADDITIONAL STAFF

We are very fortunate at the practice to have access to additional staff to complement our core team of GP's, nurses and healthcare assistant and our administration team. You may have had letters, text messages or seen posts on Facebook offering appointments in addition to the regular service offered. This is a brief introduction to some of these staff members. All of which you can self-refer to, just ask at reception.

**Rebecca Hall-** Our recently appointed Health and Wellbeing coach. Rebecca offers face to face and telephone appointments to patients who would like to make some lifestyle changes and would like some support with this. This can be anything from help with diabetes care, weight loss, increasing exercise or helping with low mood in conjunction with other health care professionals.

**Jannette Casson-** Dementia lead social prescriber. Jan offers support to anyone diagnosed with dementia or their families.

**Carol Gunn-** Social prescriber. Carol supports patients with all manner of issues, from housing and benefits to loneliness and isolation. Appointments can be face to face or telephone.

**Jack Lees and David Pearse-** Clinical pharmacists. Jack and David see patients either face to face or via telephone to discuss any medication queries and conduct medication reviews, an essential part of ongoing care to ensure your medication is the most suitable for you and that it is working the way it should.

**Judith Sefton-** Mental Health Occupational therapist. Judith offers support and care with Mental health issues which may not be covered by talking matters. Appointments are face to face or telephone.

**Miles Calum-** First contact Physiotherapist. All musculoskeletal conditions and chronic pain.

**Jenna Moffat-** Care Coordinator. You may have had messages and letters from Jenna covering everything from blood pressures to Asthma care. Her role here at the practice is to tackle ill health and medical conditions before they cause symptoms leading to early diagnosis and better care outcomes. You may also see Jenna working alongside our Health care assistant Sharon, taking bloods and conducting health checks and long-term condition reviews.

## NURSE PRACTITIONER CARRY HORROCKS

I joined the Belford team in February 2021 on a locum basis to support our GP's on medical student training days. I currently work Mondays, Thursday and Fridays. I have been an Advanced Nurse Practitioner for just over 9 years and work to support the GP role. I am able to assess, diagnose, refer and prescribe for patients. I have a broad interest in general practice and really enjoy the variety this role provides. I have a special interest in women's health, diabetes and mental health. For those patients I have met already, thank you for your warm welcome.



## SUMMER SAFETY

The weather can affect our health, particularly in those who are more vulnerable or have long-term health conditions. If hot weather hits this summer, you can help protect yourself and others by:

- Looking out for those who may struggle to keep themselves cool and hydrated – older people, those with underlying health conditions and those who live alone are particularly at risk
- Staying cool indoors – closing curtains on rooms that face the sun can keep the temperature lower in indoor spaces
- Drinking plenty of fluids and avoiding excess alcohol
- Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals
- Try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm, when it's strongest
- Walking in the shade, applying high factor sun-screen regularly can protect your skin, and it's helpful to wear a wide brimmed hat while outside on sunny days

If you feel unwell or feel as if you have heat stroke drink plenty of fluids and stay out of the sun. If there is no improvement dial 111.

## INSECT BITES

- Cover exposed skin – if you're outside at a time of day when insects are particularly active, such as sunrise or sunset, wearing loose clothing and keeping shoes on can help you avoid bites. Apply insect repellent to exposed skin – repellents that contain 50% DEET (diethyltoluamide) are most effective.

Be mindful that some insects such as horseflies are commonly found near water.

