

**APRIL 2026**

## **SPRING NEWSLETTER**

### **PRACTICE NEWS**

Hello and welcome to the Spring edition of the practice newsletter.

We have new members of staff that have joined the practice and we would like to give them a warm welcome. Dr Louisa Murray and Dr Elliott Philips.

### **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 111

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

### **DISPENSARY**

**Just a reminder that if you order medication online at the weekend please remember that as we do not work weekends this will not be dealt with by staff until Monday so will not be ready until Thursday under the three working days. Therefore it would not make the medication deliveries that week.**



## **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.

# EAR CLINICS

The flyer features the Northumbria Health logo at the top right. The main heading is 'Have you heard?' in a large, bold font. Below this, it states 'Microsuction is now being offered at Northumbria Health.' A key message reads: 'We are delighted to be offering this safe and pain-free ear wax removal service for only £70.' A photograph of Scott Bell, an ENT Nurse Practitioner, is included. Text next to the photo describes him as a microsuction expert based between Morpeth View and Spring Terrace, providing outstanding care. It also notes that no GP referral is needed and provides the contact number 0191 203 1253. At the bottom, it directs readers to the website www.northumbria-health.co.uk for more information.

Northumbria Health can now offer ear wax removal via microsuction from our trained specialist ENT nurse – Scott Bell.

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)

**We are still offering  
RSV, Shingles and  
Pneumonia vaccinations..**

**Please enquire if you  
are ELIGIBLE .**

## 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,

### Home Visits

Home visits by the GP's and District Nurses are still being undertaken as necessary. 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.

### Annual reviews

At Belford Medical Practice we like to offer safe care to our patients. We prescribe medication on repeat for many of you. So that we can provide the safe issue of this medication we like to have a review with you at least once a year. We prefer to do this in your Birth month as this makes it easier for us to pick up if this has been missed.

You should therefore expect a message from us to invite you to book an appointment with one of our nursing team. We send out invites as this means you can book an appointment on a day that suits you as we have these each day and at both sites (Belford & Seahouses). The receptionist booking this appointment may need to ask a few questions so that you can be booked with the most appropriate nurse.

Once you have had your review and all the information attached to this appointment such as blood results are collated then the repeat medication will be authorised for another year.

We are constantly striving to keep up to date with new guidelines relating to all the long term conditions and medications we monitor so it is another opportunity for us to share this information with you and provide the very best care we can. We may also feel it is appropriate to involve other members of our extended team such as the Pharmacists, Physiotherapist or Health and Wellbeing coach.

## 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.

**Aimee Hesp** - Is our **Health and Wellbeing coach**. Aimee is in the surgery every Monday and 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.

**Carol Gunn - Dementia lead social prescriber**. Jan and Carol offer support to anyone diagnosed with dementia or their families.

**David Pearse and Louise Brown—our** Clinical pharmacists. David and Louise 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.

**Joe Waugh—**First contact Physiotherapist. All musculoskeletal conditions and chronic pain. Is available in the surgery every Wednesday.

**Maxine Shell— Bereavement Counsellor—**We are pleased to share that HospiceCare North Northumberland have launched a new pilot service with Well Up North Primary Care Network. Since January, Therapeutic Counsellor, Maxine Shell from HospiceCare has provided anticipatory and post-bereavement counselling in Wooler, Berwick (Well Close and

Union Brae) and Belford GP practices.

Referrals are made via a GP or another health professional at these surgeries.

**JOE WAIGH**

**EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**9AM—3PM**

**AIMEE HESP**

**EVERY MONDAY**

**9AM – 5PM**

**CAROL GUNN**

**EVERY MONDAY**

**8:30 AM—5PM**

**JUDITH SEFTON**

**WEDNESDAY 08:30 –5PM**

**DAVID PEARSE**

**MONDAY 10-4PM**

**THURS 9-2:30PM**

**LOUISE BROWN**

**WEDNESDAY + FRIDAY**

**MAXINE SHELL**

**ALTERNATE WEDNESDAY**



## 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:

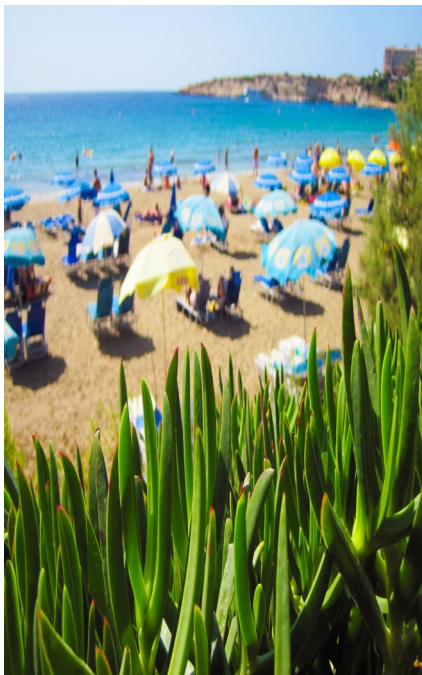
- Looking out for those who may struggle to keep themselves cool and hydrated – older people, those with underlying health conditions and those who live alone are particularly at risk
- Staying cool indoors – closing curtains on rooms that face the sun can keep the temperature lower in indoor spaces
- 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 its 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.



## TRAVEL ADVICE

The Practice no longer offer any travel advice or medication.

The first point of contact for travel advice is MASTA via 0330 100 4272.

Online travel advice can also be accessed through:

- **Local Pharmacy's**
- **Lloyds Pharmacy**
- **Superdrug Health Clinic**
- **Boots Travel Clinic**

Travel clinics based locally are:

- **MASTA at Newcastle and Forrest Hall**
- **Health Hut at Morpeth**
- **Travel Clinics at local pharmacies**



It is advisable to be arranging an appointment at least 6-8 weeks prior to travel to ensure you have the appropriate immunisations and medications before you travel.

The surgery will offer the following vaccinations for travel –following a full travel health assessment:

**Hepatitis A, Typhoid and Revaxis (tetanus/ diphtheria/ polio)**

**NEW MEMBERS OF STAFF**

**PLEASE WELCOME**

**DR LOUISA MURRAY**

I qualified as a GP in 2024 after studying at Newcastle University and then completed my training in Northumberland. I have an interest in remote and rural medicine having previously worked in the Shetland Islands and most recently in the Falkland Islands, and I am looking forwards to bringing this experience to my work in Belford. I also have an interest in women's health and menopause care.

I currently work three days a week and outside of work I enjoy spending time with family and friends, climbing hills, sea swimming and cooking

## **DR ELLIOTT PHILIPS**

Dr Philips graduated from Newcastle university in 2019, and completed his GP training across Northumberland with his final placement here at Belford in 2024.

Following a year and a bit working at the nearby Rothbury Practice, he is excited to be returning as a permanent member of the team.

At work, he has particular interests in preventative healthcare, drug and alcohol support and population health. Outside of work, he normally enjoys hiking, cycling and the gym, however, he is currently adapting to life with a new baby.

## SPRING COVID BOOSTER

The Practice is offering the Spring boosters and messages are going out to patients to book an appointment.

During the 2026 spring campaign the following groups are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine:

- **All adults aged 75 years and over including individuals aged 74 who will have their 75th birthday before the campaign ends (June 2026).**
- **Patients under 75 who are at risk.**

If you are not sure if you are eligible, contact the surgery and we will be able to let you know. Anyone not wishing to have one, please contact the surgery to decline.

**The clinics are for vaccines only, please do not discuss any health problems.**

**!! IF ANYONE NO LONGER NEEDS THEIR APPOINTMENT  
PLEASE CONTACT THE SURGERY TO CANCEL !!**

**PLEASE REMEMBER**

**BANK HOLIDAY DATES**

**Both surgeries will be closed :**

**Monday 5th May**

**And**

**Monday 26th May**