

WOOLER HEALTH NEWS

Its now 6 months since we formed Wooler Health so we wanted to update you with our progress so far. We hope you find the information useful.

The New Team

Doctors

Saul Miller	Partner
Elizabeth Batley	Partner
Vikki Long	Partner
Toby Cockill	Salaried GP
Stephen Foley	Salaried GP
Anna Garms	GP Registrar
Tom Davis	GP Registrar

Nursing Team

Maureen Birdsall	Practice Nurse
Alison Bristow	Practice Nurse
Sue Aisbitt	Healthcare Assistant
Dawn Blackman	Healthcare Assistant

Admin Team

Chris James	Manager
Susan Purvis	Office Supervisor/Secretary
Isabel Herdman	Medicines Manager/Dispenser
Gemma Bolam	Assistant Meds Manager/Dispenser
Vera Skeen	Senior Care Coordinator
Harriet Richardson	Care Coordinator
Meg Chapman	Care Coordinator
Alison Price	Care Coordinator
Hazel Cowens	Care Coordinator
Amy Scott	Care Coordinator
Dawn Dunn	Care Coordinator

Attached network staff

Rebecca Hall	Health & Wellbeing Coach
Rebecca Mather	First Contact Physio
Judith Sefton	Mental Health Occupational Therapist
Lorna Chappell	GP Link Worker
Jan Casson	Dementia Link Worker
Nick Hooker	Pharmacist

Bear with us!

As you can imagine, there has been an enormous amount of work to do before, during and following the merger. We are still working on various processes to give everyone the best care we possibly can with the current pressures in the NHS. It doesn't always go to plan so we are having to tweak things as we go along. All we ask is that you bear with us please. If you want to have a grumble because something isn't right, then we are more than happy to listen but we ask that you do this nicely and don't shout at and be rude to the team who are doing an incredible job in trying their level best to help you and also cope with the changes themselves at the same time.

Opening & Clinic Times

**Reception is open 8.30am—6pm
(Thursday 8.30am—8pm)**

GP CLINICS

Dr Miller	Tues, Thurs, Fri
Dr Batley	Mon, Weds, Thurs
Dr Long	Mon, Weds, Thurs
Dr Cockill	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri
Dr Foley	Tues, Weds, Fri
Dr Garms	Tues, Fri
Dr Davis	Mon, Thurs

NURSE CLINICS

Maureen Birdsall	Weds, Thurs, Fri am
Alison Bristow	Mon, Tues
Sue Aisbitt	Mon, Tues
Dawn Blackman	Tues, Weds, Thurs

NETWORK STAFF

Rebecca Hall	Mon
Rebecca Mather	Tues
Judith Sefton	Weds
Lorna Chappell	Thurs & Fru
Nick Hooker	Fri

Late Night Clinics

We hold an evening clinic each Thursday between 6.30pm and 8pm. We hold these predominantly for patients who are unable to make an appointment during normal surgery hours. A GP and either nurse or healthcare assistant is on duty and appointments are made by calling reception in the usual way.

Prescription charges

If you are a dispensing patient who pays for their medication, we ask that you preferably pay by cash or, if necessary via BACS as you order and **before** you come to collect.

We don't have a card payment option and it is taking time for the dispensing team to follow up non payment which we have to pay to the Government on your behalf at the end of each month.

Pressure on Appointments

There are times when we are at full capacity and can't take any more appointments so, if we are full and your problem is not urgent, then there are other options such as NHS 111 - available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week or, for minor illnesses such as rashes, coughs and colds, cystitis, conjunctivitis and minor eye irritations, the local pharmacist is trained to advise and give medication where necessary. There is also a very good self-help A-Z guide for all ailments on our new practice website www.woolerhealth.nhs.uk on the home page under Self Help and Wellbeing.

New GP Clinic Rotas

To help us with the pressure on appointments, we are trialing a new rota for the GPs to help us to cope with the increasing demand. This means that, when a doctor needs to call you back to review you after a certain period of time, if they need to speak to you about blood tests or you want to speak to them about medication, we are setting aside some time for them to do so in the afternoon to leave the mornings to deal with acute on the day requests.

We hope this will help to ease the pressure and allow more on the day appointment availability rather than having to say we are full and can you call back tomorrow.

GP Trainees

We continue to host fully qualified doctors who are training to be GPs. Since August we have had Dr Tom Davis and Dr Anna Garms working with us and, at the start of February, they will move onto their next training posts and two new doctors will join us: Dr Obot Anumbor and Dr Mairead McCormack.

All of our GP registrars are learning to work as GPs so we provide them with support as well as protection from the burden more experienced GPs are expected to handle. They have regular tutorials and debriefs too. Our aim is always to help them help our patients at the same time as safely supporting their learning and development. It is an apprenticeship model that has stood the test of time.

Change of personal details

Please remember to let us know if you change your name, address and telephone contact details. We use mobile numbers to send messages to remind patients of pre-booked appointments and for general information such as flu and covid clinics, smear callups, childrens vaccinations.

Surgery closure

Team Meetings

First Thursday of each month 1-4pm

The surgery will be closed during this time to allow the entire practice team to get together for training and planning of services. A GP will be on call for urgent problems which cannot wait until we re-open and a contact number will be given on our telephone answering machine. For non urgent advice, please call 111 and in an emergency, dial 999. Dispensing patients will be unable to collect medicines during this time.

Staffing update

Since our merger we have been working behind the scenes to try and get our staffing to the right level despite the difficulties with recruitment, especially of clinical staff but also of experienced staff in general. We are pleased that Dr Stephen Foley joined our team on the 3rd January 2023 and we have also recruited a new practice nurse, Alison Bristow who joins us on the 16th January.

In our care navigation team, huge congratulations go to Gemma Bolam who is expecting her first baby and will be going off on maternity leave in February. Gemma will be replaced during this time by Margaret Davison who may be known to some patients having previously worked as a receptionist in Burnhouse Surgery and, following that, for several years with one of our Lindisfarne partnership practices, Well Close Square.

In August, we were also joined by another very experienced receptionist, Dawn Dunn who moved back into the area from living and working in general practice over the border.

We feel extremely lucky to have attracted these four new members to our team at a time when many practices are facing recruitment problems.

Increasing numbers of DNA's

DNA's (did not attend) are a dreadful waste of valuable NHS resources, whether here in general practice or in our hospital outpatient clinics.

The number of patients not attending their pre-booked appointments is on the rise which lengthens waiting times by reducing the amount of available appointments we can offer as well as wasting busy doctors and nurses time.

We send reminders to everyone who we have a mobile phone number for so, if you can't make your appointment, please let us know so we can offer it to someone else who needs it.

Reception: 01668 263852 Prescription Order Line 01668 280020