

IMPORTANT CHANGES TO BOOKING URGENT CARE APPOINTMENTS

We've heard your frustrations — especially about the 8am phone rush and the difficulty in getting an appointment. That's why we have introduced a new appointment system designed to make things easier and more efficient for everyone.

What's Changing?

Our new system aims to prioritise urgent care based on clinical need and reduce the pressure to call first thing in the morning. It will also mean you don't need to keep calling back to get an appointment. ***You'll get the right care, at the right time, with less stress.***



How It Works

Non-Urgent Appointments: If your issue can safely wait more than five days, or you need to see a member of the nursing team you can still book an appointment directly through reception.

Urgent Appointments: If you feel that you need to be seen within 5 days, instead of booking directly, a receptionist will take details about your symptoms. A trained clinician will then review your request and decide the best next step (please try and provide as much information as possible when requesting the appointment to help the clinician assess you quickly). The next steps may include a same-day appointment, an appointment within 1-5 days or advice or a referral to a more suitable service (like the pharmacy or physiotherapist).

Appointment Requests can Be made by **phone, in person** at the practice or **online** via our website: www.churchlanemcscunthorpe.nhs.uk → Click **"Request Appointment"**.

You can request an appointment at any time during the day – no need to rush to ring at 8am as requests will be prioritised on clinical need and not "first come first served". Requests made online, in person and via the telephone will be treated equally and reviewed throughout the day, prioritised on a clinical need basis. We encourage you to use the online facility where you can to reduce the volume of calls coming into the practice and avoid long waits for patients.

All requests made before 12 noon will be actioned the same day (requests made after this time will either be dealt with the same day if clinically urgent or added to the list for assessment the next morning – no need for you to call back). After a clinician has reviewed your request you will be contacted by phone or text. If you are at busy or at work and would prefer to receive an electronic booking link for an appointment rather than a call back then let us know when you make the request.

We know change can take a bit of getting used to — but we believe this system will benefit everyone with more equal access to appointments, faster attention for urgent issues and less pressure to ring at 8am. If you need help using the new system, our team is here to support you. Please refer to our leaflet for more details. Thank you for your continued patience as we improve how we care for you.

TEAM NEWS



Following Dr Worah's retirement earlier this year we are pleased to welcome a new GP to the practice, Dr Deborah. She has a wide range of clinical knowledge with a keen interest in children's health. With our increased capacity we offer approximately 90 more GP appointments each week compared to the start of the year.

APRIL STATISTICS



Inbound Calls Received: 9,730



Appointments Available: 5,352



Appointments Not Attended: 158



New Patients Registered: 52

HEALTH AWARENESS

Men's Health Week 9th – 15th June

Men's Health Week takes place every year during the week leading up to Father's Day. It's happening this year from 9th – 15th June. The focus is on raising awareness about the health challenges men face and encouraging them to prioritise their wellbeing.

Did you know that four in five suicides are by men, with suicide noted as being the biggest cause of death for men under 35 (UK Parliament)? Men's health cannot take a back seat. If you have been putting off seeing your GP please make an appointment today! #menshealthweek

<https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/mhw>

Carers' Week 9th – 15th June

Are you a carer? There are 5.8 million people in the UK caring for a family member, friend or neighbour who's ill, older or disabled. Make sure you let us know if you're caring for someone; it's important that we can look after your health while you're looking after them.

Caring for someone can have a significant impact on your own health, finances, employment and education opportunities. 70% of carers report a long-term physical or mental health condition, disability or illness, compared to 50% of non-carers, so it's important you access the help you need as a carer.

<https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/>. Locally you can access help from [Carers Support](#) in Brigg.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST

Following all appointments, patients are sent an SMS message asking 'Overall, how was your experience of our service?'

The results for April were:



Below are a selection of comments received via the Friends and Family Test for April:

"The GP surgery and all staff are exceptional."

"Very professional and friendly service"

"All the staff at the surgery are caring and friendly."

"The doctor listened, which is important to me, and gave me good advice."

"The nurse was very comforting and understanding."

"The service received at the desk was excellent."

USING ONLINE SERVICES – IS IT FOR ME?

I am Julia, a member of the Patient Participation Group and I love modern technology, even if I struggle every day to keep up with it! Recently I volunteered to spend a couple of hours at the surgery helping people find out about how they could use the online services provided on the [CHURCH LANE MEDICAL CENTRE website](#). We also looked at using the NHS App to access prescriptions, appointments, and test results, both at the practice and local hospitals. I was astounded at the number of people who turned up and delighted to be able to help so many people get themselves set up ready to access the services available.



One of the things I found myself explaining several times was ‘*why would you want to use online services?*’ Many people said they preferred to talk to a real person, and I explained that of course, you could carry on using the phone or visiting in person. The online methods were just another way of doing things that could be useful at times when the surgery is shut. For example, if you are working all day or have something bothering you outside of opening times. For some people, using online services will never be something they feel comfortable with, but if a few more people use them then it could free up receptionists to deal with more telephone and in-person queries.

If you use Facebook, WhatsApp or other functions on a smartphone, tablet, or computer, then you already have the skills to use the practice website or NHS app. However, you do need to fill out a form to get your personal details registered and receive a letter with a passcode and password to help you get into your own records. This protects you and everyone else.

I was pleased to find that some people who came in to see me were already using the services available, particularly through the NHS app which they downloaded onto their smart phones in Covid times. I helped a few people make this easier by setting up face or fingerprint recognition on their phones, so they didn’t have to remember a password each time. I was also able to explain how to save passwords in a secure way and some other ‘tech’ basics such as the difference between using data and WiFi or how to take a ‘screenshot.’ Quite a few people told me they liked being able to order their prescriptions online as it was a very efficient service, but they were unaware of the opportunities the website offers for requesting appointments, accessing test results, checking appointments, medical records and even contacting the Practice to ask a question or get health advice.

During the couple of hours I was in reception, the office had to run off lots of forms for patients to fill in to get themselves set up with passwords on the online system. Several people even asked me if I could offer another ‘drop-in session’ to help them once they were set up with online access.

I think the best thing about my morning in the Practice was how many people trusted me to help them and were so keen to understand ways they could improve access to services by embracing the many functions on their smartphone and computers. On a personal level, I found it rewarding, but a bit challenging when I had to help people with phones that were vastly different to the one I use myself! Technology moves at such an incredible pace, and I appreciate that for many, it is confusing and a bit frightening. I think the fact that I’m just a patient like them, but with an interest in technology, made it less daunting for them to accept my help.

I also found out that there are some great resources available on the [AGE UK](#) website and free digital training from [Lloyds Bank](#) (to name but a few) that can help anyone wanting to improve their confidence with online medical services and many other aspects of modern technology, such as email, online banking, social media, and safe shopping online. I might have a look myself as there is always more to learn!

Julia Pollock

SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

We are a veteran friendly practice! This means we work with the wider NHS and royal college of general practitioners to support and deliver the best possible care and treatment for patients who have served in the armed forces. If you are a veteran or currently serving member of the armed forces and would like to discuss any issues please come and speak to us at the surgery. There is an increasingly large support network for ex and currently serving forces members.

Nationally – SSAFA – tri forces charity. SSAFA helps the armed forces community in a number of ways, though their focus is on providing direct support to individuals in need of physical or emotional care. Addiction, relationship breakdown, debt, homelessness, post-traumatic stress, depression and disability are all issues that can affect our members of our Armed Forces community. Many of these problems only become apparent when an individual has to leave their life in the Forces and join 'Civvy Street'. SSAFA is committed to helping our brave men and women overcome these problems, and rebuild their lives.

<https://www.ssafa.org.uk/>

OP Courage - Op COURAGE is an NHS mental health specialist service designed to help serving personnel due to leave the military, reservists, armed forces veterans and their families with a range of support and treatment, including:

- helping you transition from military to civilian life by providing mental health care with Defence Medical Services (DMS)
- helping you recognise and treat early signs of mental health problems, as well as more advanced mental health conditions and psychological trauma
- providing support and treatment for substance misuse and addictions
- helping you to access other NHS mental health services if you need them, such as [finding an NHS talking therapies service](#) and eating disorder services
- liaising with charities and local organisations to support your wider health and wellbeing needs, such as help with housing, relationships, finances and employment
- supporting armed forces families affected by mental health problems, including helping them to access local services

[Mental health support for veterans, service leavers and reservists - NHS](#)

If you would like further help accessing op courage please book an appointment at the surgery with Amanda Fordham (our Veteran Lead).

Combat Stress - 24-hour Helpline [0800 138 1619](tel:08001381619) is available to all veterans and their families for confidential mental health advice and support. They also have a range of online self-guided resources, to help veterans with a variety of mental health difficulties, including: PTSD, depression, anxiety, anger, and alcohol and substance misuse. These guides have been created by their specialist clinical team, in partnership with veterans. Guides are also available for veterans' families and employers of veterans. Visit <https://selfhelp.combatstress.org.uk>

Local Network – Armed forces Hub - North Lincolnshire Armed Forces Hub aims support all members of the armed forces community with wrap around care, whether that be in relation to health, housing, employment or access to social activities or volunteering opportunities. The hub is supported by an experienced Covenant Officer as well as external partnerships together with voluntary community sector groups who are all able to provide expert information advice and support to the whole of the armed forces community. The Hub has a vibrant community and has lots of activities which take place each week. For more information, please visit Livewell or alternatively contact the Armed Forces Hub on : Tel: 01724 298252 email : armedforces@northlincs.gov.uk For information regarding the Armed Forces Covenant see : <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/North-Lincolnshire-Armed-Forces-Covenant-aa.pdf>