



Questions and Answers

Briercliffe Medical Centre, Briercliffe, Burnley

1. Is the practice closing?

The GP practice (Briercliffe Medical Centre) is not closing. The GPs who ran the GP service from the health centre decided to dissolve their partnership for personal reasons. As a result Briercliffe Medical Centre, Burnley, is now under new management. The Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. (*The EU*) has taken on a temporary contract for the management of the surgery as the former contract ended on the 28th May.

This is a management change. There is no change to patient services although there have been some staff changes. Patients will continue to receive GP services as normal and should continue to use the surgery as usual. All members of the staff team, old and new are qualified professionals who are looking forward to providing high quality services to local people.

We will ensure that patients and those with an interest in the surgery are kept informed and updated.

For more information please go to the practice website <https://www.briercliffmedicalcentre.co.uk/> or to the CCG website www.eastlancscg.nhs.uk

2. Who is running the practice now?

The Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. (*The EU*) is now running the practice.

The Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. is a network of local GP practices which already provides extended GP access appointments and blood tests across East Lancashire for all GP practices. The Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. is owned by 34 of the 51 local GP practices in East Lancashire. It was established to support GP practices to be sustainable and resilient, and to help develop and transform local services for local people.

The GP federation model of service delivery is supported in NHS England's Five Year Forward View for primary care, as there is evidence that when GP practices work as a network or federation, they can ensure primary care, particularly GP services, are protected and preserved and patients can receive continuity of care from experienced local GPs.

The Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. was able to step in at short notice to ensure that GP services could be provided as a temporary measure while the CCG seeks a long term, and more permanent arrangement for the practice.

Briercliffe Medical Centre will continue to be run by experienced local doctors and staff, many of whom are the same GPs, reception and nursing staff that patients have known over recent years. The surgery is committed to providing high quality care and modern services for patients in the area.

3. How has this situation come about?

The four GP partners at Briercliffe Medical Centre decided to dissolve their partnership, at which point the CCG, which has a responsibility for ensuring that patients receive GP services, had to make arrangements at short notice for new management of the surgery to ensure there was continuity of GP care for patients.

4. What will this mean for patients at the practice?

This practice remains an important part of the local community. Set up by Dr Lishman in 1953 and supported still by an active Patient Participation Group and dedicated local people, the practice looks after the healthcare needs of nearly 8000 patients.

The CCG are committed to ensuring that the practice maintains its heritage and goes from strength to strength. There has been no change to patient care or services, although there have been staff changes as a result of the previous contract being dissolved. Patients will continue to receive GP services as normal and should continue to use the surgery as usual.

We will ensure that patients and those with an interest in the surgery are kept informed and updated. The practice has an active Patient Participation Group (PPG) and we are meeting regularly with PPG members to keep them informed and up to date. Any patient registered with the practice can join the PPG – just ask at reception.

5. I'm a patient at Briercliffe Medical Centre, what should I do?

You don't need to do anything. There has been no change to patient services. Patients will continue to receive GP services as normal and should continue to use the surgery as usual.

6. I receive repeat prescriptions and I am worried that I won't get my medication

You will still be able to receive repeat prescriptions as normal. You will be able to receive repeat prescriptions as you usually do without any interruption or difficulty in the same way you do now.

7. There are a lot of GPs retiring and GP practices are closing, GP services are under real pressure. Is this closure anything to do with that?

No. Retirement has not been a factor in this instance, and this is not a practice closure but a management change.

8. What happened to the staff at the practice?

A number of staff have transferred their contracts of employment to the Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd so there will be some continuity of care for people. We recognise that this has been a period of uncertainty for staff and both the CCG and the Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. are doing everything we can to reduce this uncertainty as quickly as possible.

9. How quickly can you get a permanent GP service in Briercliffe?

The CCG has agreed with the Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. to provide interim GP services from Briercliffe Medical Centre so that all registered patients are continuing to receive GP services without any interruption at all.

This will allow us time to seek a permanent GP service for Briercliffe. We will achieve this by inviting GP service providers to submit proposals to provide this service. The process is known as procurement, and is tightly regulated. This typically can take about 10 months and this is why we have asked the Lancashire EU of GPs Ltd. to provide the service in the interim.

10. I heard there is a shortage of GPs and it is getting harder to recruit GPs due to the work pressure – how are you going to find a permanent replacement?

We recognise that there are challenges that GPs face now including high demand and pressure as well as a changing workforce. Locally, we are delivering the NHS long term plan which should help respond to these pressures. This refers to GP practices working together as members of a local primary care network within a collaborative and broader model of service delivery. We are confident that this new model will address the challenges that GPs face and will deliver a sustainable and resilient solution for GP services

11. Is there a risk that a private company might come in? Is this an opportunity to privatise the NHS?

All GPs provide GP services as independent (private) contractors. They are contracted by the CCG and NHS England to provide NHS GP services. The NHS is established to provide health services, including GP services, free at the point of delivery. This is written into the NHS constitution. Any future potential provider will be required to meet these constitutional duties and standards as an NHS GP service provider.

12. I'm concerned about this change, who can I speak to?

Please do speak to the Practice Manager, Farheen Munir in the first instance. You can do this by contacting the reception staff on 01282 648052. We have also created an email where you can write to us, or you can call us. Our email is: MLCSU.customercaarelancashire@nhs.net and our number is 0800 032 2424.

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