



Litchdon Medical Centre

Surgery Newsletter



Welcome to Litchdon's autumn edition newsletter. It gives you all of the latest Practice news which we hope you will find useful.



National GP Patient Survey Results July 2025

The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run on behalf of NHS England. Litchdon's results can be compared against National results and results of the local ICS (Integrated Care Systems) Practices. We discuss the results at team meetings to see what learning we can take from them.

Litchdon's highest patient experiences are:

96% of respondents felt they were involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment during their last GP appointment.

(ICS result: 93%, National result: 91%)

95% of respondents knew what the next step would be within two days of contacting their GP practice.

(ICS result: 92%, National result: 93%)

92% of respondents felt the healthcare professional they saw had all the information they needed about them during their last GP appointment.

(ICS result: 93%, National result: 92%)

Litchdon's lowest patient experiences are:

60% of respondents usually get to see or speak to their preferred healthcare professional when they would like to

(ICS result: 48%, National result: 40%)

58% of respondents find it easy to contact this GP practice using their website

(ICS result: 58%, National result: 51%)

57% of respondents felt they waited about the right amount of time for their last GP appointment.

(ICS result: 68%, National result: 67%)

Full survey results can be found at <https://www.gp-patient.co.uk>

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Through discussions during one of our afternoon shut down events, at various meetings and asking for staff feedback, Litchdon's values and mission statement has been reviewed and updated as shown below. These are displayed around the practice for patients, staff and visitors to see.

Litchdon Medical Centre Shared Values

Compassionate Care

We treat staff, patients, carers, and relatives with kindness, respect, and dignity, fostering a culture of mutual empathy.

Holistic Wellbeing

We prioritise the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of our staff which then enables them to deliver person centred care.

Positive, Reliable Teams

We cultivate professional, approachable, and cohesive teams built on loyalty, trust, and mutual respect, enabling them to deliver safe and effective care to patients.

Family Focused

We support the work-life balance of our staff and recognise the importance of family for patients and colleagues alike.

Innovation and Growth

We embrace change, prioritise sustainability, and nurture professional development across the workforce to improve processes and patient care

Environmental Responsibility

We are mindful and committed to be as eco-friendly as possible by ensuring we consider the impact of our practice on both the community and the planet.

Litchdon's Mission Statement

Providing quality healthcare by valuing both patients and staff in a supportive and sustainable environment.



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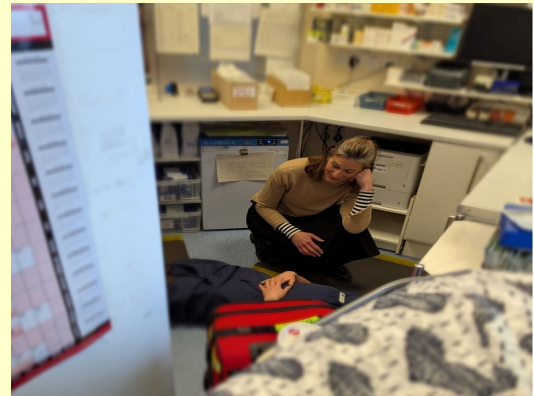
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In March the Practice had an afternoon shut down where we re-enacted and discussed some emergency scenarios. As always we had some learning points and really helpful actions to take away.



As a teaching practice we were delighted to lead an ATOM (A taste of Medicine) programme for local sixth formers who are interested in a career within medicine. The programme was delivered over 4 evenings back in April & May and we were able to offer 20 student places. We were joined by local GPs and colleagues from NDDH who gave career talks and basic life saving training. We also worked with the work placement team at the hospital to provide a 1-day work experience placement at NDDH as part of the programme.

Students got a taste of:

- ♦ Suturing skills
- ♦ Career talks—by GP, consultant anaesthetist, consultant microbiologist and a specialty doctor
- ♦ Emergency scenarios
- ♦ Medical school entry requirements, interview practice tips and practice
- ♦ Ethical questions



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PPG

What we are

Litchdon's Patient Participation Group meets 4 times a year, usually twice at Litchdon and twice with the Primary Care partners of Fremington, Queens and Brannam's PPGs. These meetings provide an opportunity to hear about practice developments and priorities and wider healthcare news affecting our services.



At PPG meetings there are regular updates from the Practice Manager, providing opportunities to discuss the wider impact of NHS funding, structure and priorities. Patients can also discuss their experiences, not just at the GP practice but also their experiences with Royal Devon services.

The chair, Sue is an elected Governor for Royal Devon and regularly reports on new developments and the services provided and takes back to the Council of Governors and the Trust Board any concerns expressed by patients in their experiences in hospital, on the waiting lists and communication about appointments.

They are also used for educational purposes and we invite practice staff, e.g. diabetes and respiratory nurses to come along and discuss the conditions.

The PCN meetings are a great opportunity to find out what other surgeries are doing to manage similar pressures such as staff shortages and the challenging financial situation of the NHS.

We would like to thank all the practice staff who support the PPG and particularly the Practice Manager, Sharon Bates who has been extremely helpful in providing information as well as supporting patients directly. The staff at Litchdon have been working very hard to support patients during challenging times and through enormous change. It is inevitable that we will all feel insecure until there is more information available about how local services are planned. Attending a PPG meeting is a way of having your input and we look forward to seeing you there.

What we've been discussing

Due to budget restrictions and decisions forced on Primary Care by changes of Government policy and in preparation for the introduction of the 10-year plan, there has been a considerable focus on finance. In particular hospital to community, treatment to prevention and analogue to digital.

Hospital to community indicates an even greater responsibility for patient care in the community, including development of new Neighbourhood Hubs.

Treating patients at home has been happening for some time, the Royal Devon Virtual Ward is an example of extending hospital treatment to home with monitoring of patients' vital signs and conditions and community nurse visits. This has been extremely successful and is likely to be extended beyond the current specialisms.

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What we've been discussing continued...

Hip and knee replacements being done as day cases are now commonplace rather than having to stay in hospital for any extended period of time. Jubilee Ward at NDDH and the Nightingale Hospital in Exeter specifically provide this service.

Primary Care Services have developed specialist expertise in respiratory care, diabetes, blood pressure and heart monitoring. Litchdon have a team of nurses and healthcare assistants who run long term condition clinics to help patients and support them with self-management including actions plans and rescue medications in order to try and prevent hospital admissions.

Communication with patients frequently uses computers or mobile phones. The PPG undertook a short survey about digital access, including making appointments or seeking advice online with the GP staff. The survey indicated that whilst 95% of respondents used computers and digital access for watching television, shopping online, banking or communicating with friends, the huge majority did not want to use digital access for medical referrals or appointments.

This is disappointing since the use of digital communication has an environmental impact by reducing the amount of paper required for letters and documents. It can also help reduce DNAs by sending out text message appointment reminders. It helps with patient triage so patients are directed to the most appropriate health professional therefore increasing the effectiveness of the appointment and hopefully reducing the number of appointments/travel needed.



We are keen to see more patients at the PPG, so if you have a particular interest or question please come along.

Contacting us: Sue Matthews, Chair person of the PPG
Rosie Haworth-Booth, Secretary of the PPG

The PPG is an independent group and you can become involved by contacting Rosie on 07713 168331 or leave your details with the Healthcare Administration Team who can forward them on.

For more information visit www.litchdonpatientsgroup.co.uk

**Date of next meeting is: Tuesday 25th November, 2.30pm at Fremington Parish Hall.
Refreshments provided.**

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www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk



Are you waiting for a hospital appointment or operation?

My Planned Care gives you help and support while you wait.

Your hospital will be in touch with you as soon as they can about your appointment. Please check **My Planned Care** before contacting your hospital team or GP for an update.



www.myplannedcare.nhs.uk

You can also use it to find a hospital or treatment centre in order to compare average waiting times for various specialties. This can be useful if a GP needs to refer you for a physical or mental health condition, in most cases you have the right to choose the hospital or service you'd like to go to.

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School aged vaccinations

Did you know children will be offered these routine vaccinations at school?

- ✓ **FLU** - Reception - Year 11
- ✓ **MMR** - Catch-up
- ✓ **HPV** - Year 8 - Year 11
- ✓ **Meningitis ACWY** - Year 9 - Year 11
- ✓ **Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio (DTP)** - Year 9 - Year 11

FLU

MMR

HPV

**MENINGITIS
ACWY**

**DIPHTHERIA
TETANUS
POLIO (DTP)**

Did you miss us?

We also have community clinics across Devon for:

- ✓ Home educated children
- ✓ Anxious children
- ✓ Children who missed the session at school

SCAN
HERE



For further information scan the QR code or please speak with a member of the team

Call us on

01392 342678

Kernowhealthcic.schoolimmsdevon@nhs.net



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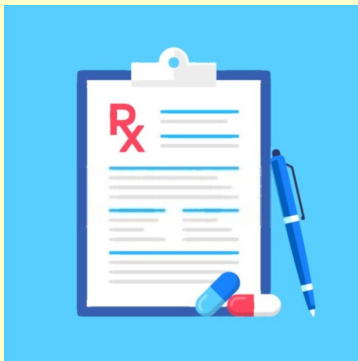
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Flu Clinics

This year's flu clinics will be held over a number of Saturdays and Thursday evenings throughout October and November, with catch up appointments available once these have taken place. Those who are eligible will also be offered a Covid booster. This year eligibility for the Covid vaccine has changed to be 75yrs old and above.

If you are eligible for a vaccination you will receive an invitation by text allowing you to book an appointment of your choice. If you are unable to receive a text message you will be contacted by phone or post. If you have not heard from us please contact us for an appointment.



Repeat Prescriptions

If you need a repeat prescription please ensure you order it by **Monday 8th December** in order for it to be ready before the Christmas break.

Surgery opening hours during the Christmas period.

Monday 22nd December—OPEN
 Tuesday 23rd December—OPEN
 Wednesday 24th December—OPEN
 Thursday 25th December—**CLOSED**
 Friday 26th December—**CLOSED**
 Monday 29th December—OPEN
 Tuesday 30th December—OPEN
 Wednesday 31st December—OPEN
 Thursday 1st January—**CLOSED**
 Friday 2nd January—OPEN





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The Couch to 5k app is a running programme designed to guide beginners from in-activity to running a 5k in about nine weeks through gradual, three-times-a-week workouts. The app offers motivational audio cues from coaches, music integration, progress tracking and virtual communities to support users throughout the programme.

New research by WWF reveals that spending time in nature is the most mood-boosting activity for the UK public. While 89% of Brits say that spending time in nature has a positive effect on their mental health, half wish they spent more time in it and 70% say not enough is being done to protect it.

Just 20 minutes per day on average is enough to improve your wellbeing and WWF is inviting the nation to get their 'daily dose of nature' with a new 'A Prescription for Nature' hub. The hub is aimed at both individuals and families with easy, bitesize, personalised prescriptions to help get their daily dose, no matter their circumstances or the weather to help improve and maintain their mental health.



Barnstaple Alliance Pathway Prescriptions—A programme of support and information to help you find natural routes to boosting your health, through spending more time outside and connecting to nature.

To celebrate the launch of Pathway Prescriptions, members from the 4 GP practices in the area took part in circular walks from their surgeries. On 4th June, facilitated by Rowan Summers (PCN Wellbeing Link Worker) and Huw Davies (from The South West Coast Path) some of the Litchdon staff walked a route from the practice down along Coney Gut and Rose Lane playing field.

https://www.barnstaplealliance.co.uk/pathway_prescription.php



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Estuary walk from Barnstaple Station 11.6 miles (18.6 km)

A walk as long or as short as you want to make it.

2 3/4 - 11 1/2 miles (4.25—18.5km) - mostly on level tarmac path along the Taw Estuary. Look out for wildfowl and waterbirds as you walk past saltmarsh and tiny rocky beaches to the Tarka Inn. For dedicated walkers, the route continues through to Braunton Burrows.

1. From the front of Barnstaple Station turn left and follow the signs for the South West Coast Path and the Tarka Trail towards Braunton and Ilfracombe, through two underpasses and onto the new bridge across the River Taw.
2. At the end of the bridge turn left and follow the path along the old railway track beside the estuary.
3. After you have passed the last buildings out of Barnstaple, the path to the right a couple of miles ahead will take you up to the road at Ashford, from where you can catch the bus back to Barnstaple for the shortest version of this walk. Otherwise continue ahead along the path. There are footpaths leading up to the road ahead this stretch of walk, but it is a busy road and narrow, with no bus stops.

Continued overleaf.....



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4. Before you reach Chivenor, a path to the right leads up to the Tarka Inn. Stop here for refreshments, but there is no bus stop on this dangerous corner of the road, so return to the Coast Path/Tarka Trail afterwards and carry on to Chivenor.
5. At Chivenor the footpath comes out on a roundabout. Catch the bus here for the middle-distance walk, or carry on along the path past the wetlands to Wrafton. Taking the road to the right after the Chivenor crash gate will lead up to the main road, where there is a bus stop, while carrying on ahead will lead to Velator.
6. At Velator the path comes out onto another roundabout. Carrying straight on ahead will lead into Braunton, where there are shops and refreshments, as well as a small museum.
7. For the dedicated walker who is keen to explore the delights of Braunton Burrows, the longest version of this walk turns left at Velator and carries on along the Coast Path and the Tarka Trail as they travel together from the quay around the nineteenth century flood defences towards Crow Point, at the mouth of the estuary.
8. At the White House follow the Coast Path around the back of the beach and onwards to the American Road at Crow Point. Turn right here to walk past the car part at the end of the track and onto Sandy Lane, turning right at the junction to walk around Braunton Marshes and back to the Tesco roundabout - you would have walked 11 1/2 miles at this stage.





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The Woodyard

The original fictional 'Woodyard' is the work of well-known author, Ann Cleeves, who has strong ties to North Devon. In her book 'The Long Call', set in this part of the world, Ann describes a bustling community hub called The Woodyard as a place where people meet, engage in create activities and connect with others.



A consortium of small charity leaders and community organisations are now working together to make the fictional Woodyard a reality—to create a welcoming space and deliver projects to bring people together, support mental wellbeing and strengthen community ties.

The Woodyard—Mindful Mondays

The Castle Chambers Café in Barnstaple hosts Mindful Monday community drop-in sessions on the 2nd and 4th Monday of every month from 10am—2pm. Featuring a combination of well-being activities supported by community artists, mindfulness activities, breathing exercises and creative wellbeing practices. For £5 you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit and take part in any one or all of the following activities:

- *Chatty room
- *Jigsaw room
- *Board games
- *Story telling
- *Reading for wellbeing
- *Craft activities
- *Mindfulness sessions
- *Special guest visitors





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The Woodyard—Reading for Wellbeing

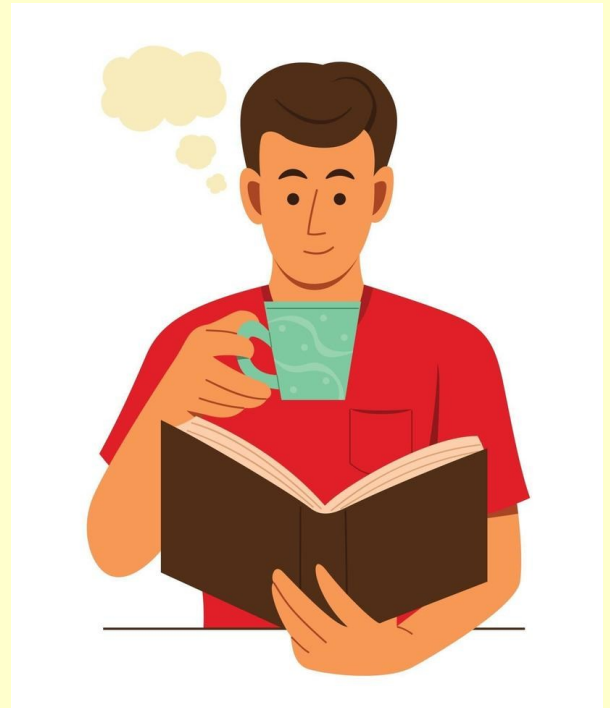
Reading for Wellbeing is a free drop-in session taking place in the foyer of Barnstaple Library on the first Monday of every month from 10am to 12 noon.

The focus is on how to incorporate different types of reading into your life be this through story telling, printed books, e-books, audio books or podcasts.

A gentle, supportive group or individual experience using books and storytelling as a tool for reflection, discussion and emotional healing.

Trained community reading workers engage with groups and individuals to introduce or reintroduce them to the joy and escape of reading and bring people together to share their ideas and enthusiasms without fear of being judged.

Accessing stories is an amazing way to immerse yourself in a world outside of the stresses of day to day life. Reading for wellbeing helps you to discover a way to incorporate words, pictures, audio and visuals into your every day, bringing wellbeing, mindfulness and peace to your busy mind.



THE MOORINGS @ DEVON BARNSTAPLE

Are you feeling distressed, anxious, or that things are too much for you?

The Moorings offer free mental health support to anyone aged 18+ in the Barnstaple area.

No appointment required.

6pm-11pm, Thursday-Monday

Drop in: The Voice Meeting Rooms, Belle Meadow Court, Albert Lane, EX32 8RJ



Our purpose: to provide innovative,
life-changing mental health support
for individuals and communities

mhm
mentalhealthmatters

We're on the Web! www.litchdonmedicalcentre.co.uk



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Never Alone

Below are a number of support lines available, most being 24 hours, to contact if you or someone you know needs help.



Supporting And Improving Your Mental And Physical Wellbeing

During these hard times looking after yourself both physically and mentally can become increasingly difficult.

Did you know that you can self-refer to TalkWorks? A free, confidential, NHS talking therapy service for people over 18 in Devon, helping you to feel better and give you tools and techniques to improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

Visit

TALKWORKS
IMPROVING YOUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELLBEING

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