

Meadowbridge SURGERY

WELCOME TO OUR

Monthly Newsletter

MAY 2025



AM I USING MY INHALER CORRECTLY?

If you don't use your inhaler correctly it will not work properly for you when you need it most. For more information go to <https://niformulary.hscni.net/patient-area/asthma-copd/am-i-using-my-inhaler-correctly/>

Here, videos and leaflets are available showing you how to use your inhaler. You can choose your inhaler from the list provided, if you are not sure what type yours is ask your pharmacist or asthma/COPD healthcare professional.

MAY BANK HOLIDAY CLOSURES

The practice will be closed on Monday 5th May 2025 and Monday 26th May 2025. Please ensure you order any medications in a timely manner and allow 72hrs for your prescription to be delivered to your nominated pharmacy.

In the event you require medical attention during these closure dates, please contact Dalriada Out of Hours on 02825 663 500.



CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT

What is Chronic Pain?

Chronic (or persistent) pain, is pain that lasts for more than 3 months. Most people return to normal after an acute pain episode, e.g. after surgery or injury, however, sometimes the pain continues, or occurs without any such history. Chronic pain is less about injury/damage and more about changes to sensitivity of the nervous system.

Types of Chronic Pain

Chronic primary pain has no clear underlying condition, or pain impact is disproportionate to observable injury/disease, e.g. fibromyalgia, chronic primary headache/ musculoskeletal pain.

Chronic secondary pain is a symptom of an underlying condition, e.g. osteoarthritis, sciatica, neuropathic pain. If medication is considered necessary, use alongside alternative strategies, and according to the relevant NICE guidance and Northern Ireland (NI) Formulary.

How should Chronic Pain be managed?

Factors such as personal beliefs, emotions and past experiences can turn the pain 'volume' up or down. The most important aspect of chronic pain management is retraining the brain using a biopsychosocial approach. This involves keeping active, mind-based activities and social connections. It is important to listen to the patient's pain story and use this to agree an individualised management plan.

Patient Education

Patient education on how chronic pain develops and is managed is key. This should include the role of medication and importance of alternative strategies in chronic pain management.

There has been a move away from the use of medication to manage chronic pain due to its limited benefit (estimated 30% pain reduction only). The primary purpose of medication should be to facilitate engagement in evidence-based pain management strategies, and improve functioning / quality of life. If medication is considered necessary this should be evidence-based in line with relevant NICE guidance and options within the NI Formulary.

Alternative Strategies to Manage Chronic Pain

Numerous patient community support programmes are available to patients such as: Better Days, Versus Arthritis and Managing the challenge. All are open for self referral and offer 'in person' and online options.



Reducing Risks – Key Points

Opioids

- All opioids are high risk medicines
- They are controlled drugs (CDs), governed by legislation
- Long-term use is associated with minimal benefit and potential harm, including dependence and addiction
- Strong opioids are not recommended for chronic non-cancer pain by NICE or the NI Formulary, and weak opioids have a limited role only (should be used infrequently or short-term, when other treatments are unsuitable)

Gabapentinoids

- Pregabalin and gabapentin (Gabapentinoids) are high risk medicines
- They are CDs, governed by legislation
- They have the potential to cause serious side-effects if used inappropriately, e.g. respiratory depression, cognitive impairment, dependence and addiction
- Gabapentinoids may have a role in the management of neuropathic pain (except trigeminal neuralgia)

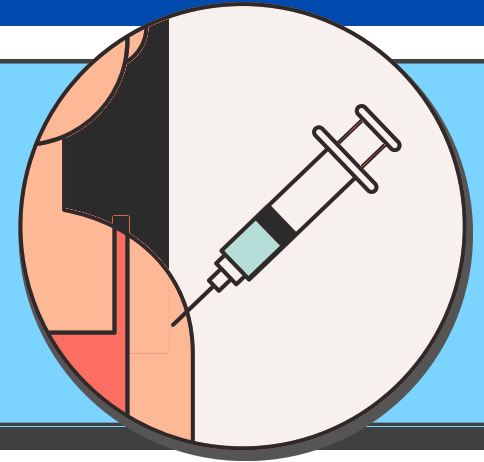
For more information and advice, please speak to your GP or Pharmacist.

Spring 2025 Covid Booster Vaccination Campaign

Contact the surgery on 02893353454 or go online to book an appointment

Eligible Groups will be invited to attend Meadowbridge Surgery as follows:

- Patients 75 years and older - born on or before 30 June 1950.
- Patients aged 18 yrs+ - born after 30 June 2007 who are immunosuppressed



Immunosuppressed children born 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2019 will be invited to Trust Led Clinics.

As will children 6m - 4 yrs who are immunosuppressed.



Patients in Care Homes will be attended by community pharmacy teams.

House bound teams will be out to those who are strictly housebound (can not leave the house) dates to be confirmed.





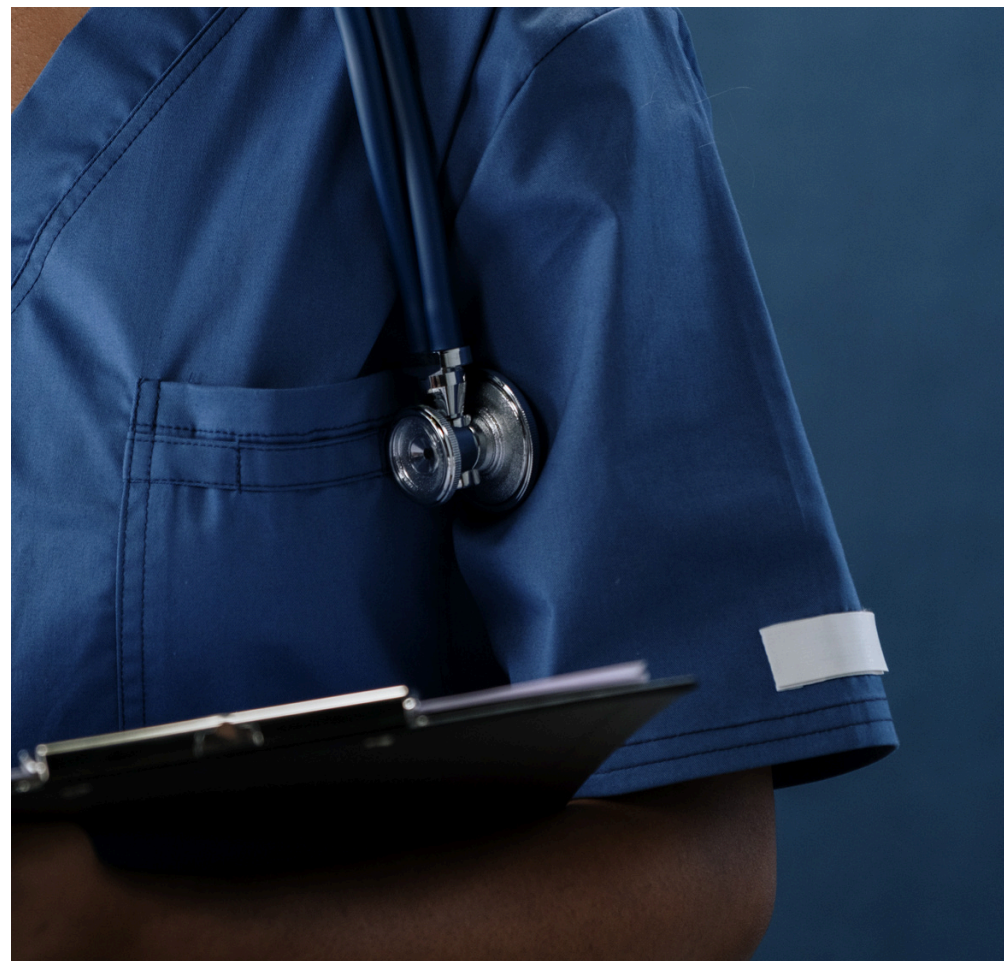
New Patient Registration

Patients requesting to join the practice list – Procedure. When individuals express interest in joining our practice, we uphold a policy of non-discrimination based on race, gender, social class, age, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, disability, or medical condition.

For urgent care, there is no requirement for proof of identification, address, immigration status, or an NHS number; however, we do request that you provide registration documents at your earliest convenience to let us finalise your patient registration with our practice. We utilise text messaging to communicate with patients.

To facilitate this, please ensure that we have your current mobile phone number and notify us promptly if there are any changes. If a patient relocates outside our practice area, they will be required to register with a different GP practice that is closer to their new residence within 28 days.

Unfortunately, we cannot make exceptions to this rule to maintain fairness for all patients. Residents within our practice area are encouraged to register with us on line or with our reception staff will be pleased to assist through the registration process. Eligibility can be quickly verified based on your address, so providing a recent utility bill as proof would be beneficial. BSO Family Practitioner Services has created desk aids for both GP practices and patients, covering most scenarios. Please refer to the link below for more information.



The purpose of these aids is to clarify what is required from patients and to ensure this information is widely accessible. BSO web page: <https://hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1814.htm> We will request that you complete a health questionnaire, which will provide valuable information while we await the arrival of your medical records from your previous healthcare provider.

All new patients will be offered a health check with a member of our healthcare team to ensure that any necessary tests are current and that we have an accurate record of any repeat medications you may be taking. This policy is in place because we may not be able to adequately address the needs of patients with complex health issues or provide necessary support services beyond our catchment area.

**CAN YOU
SUPPORT US?**
Please donate to:
Whitehead Storehouse
Acc No. 30273201
Sort Code 95 06 79
THANK YOU!

Whitehead Storehouse exists to provide emergency food supplies to those in genuine need.

We provide support to the following areas:
Whitehead / Ballycarry / Islandmagee

If you are, or know someone in need who could benefit from a food delivery contact us on
0759 621 3763, via our **Facebook** page or email: **whiteheadstorehouse@gmail.com**

All contact will be treated with the strictest confidence

You can donate non-perishable food to the Storehouse at:
Any Church, The Spar on Edward Road, The Spar in Ballystrudder and Whitehead Community Centre



GP PRACTICE AUTISM AWARENESS RESOURCES

Welcome to your regional Autism Awareness resource area. Please view the videos and web links listed below for more information. This training will take around 40 minutes.



VIDEOS

Click on each of the titles to view



WHAT IS AUTISM?

What is autism – a brief description of autism and the challenges that autistic individuals face. This video lasts approximately 14 minutes.



SERVICES & SUPPORT

What services and supports are in the BHSC area including BHSC Paediatric ASD and Adult ASD Service, alongside services and supports in the Community and Voluntary sector. This video lasts approximately 10 minutes.



LIVED EXPERIENCE

Those with lived experience explaining what simple adjustments GP's and GP practices can make to be more autism friendly. This video lasts approximately 11 minutes.

OTHER RESOURCES

CYPSP YOUTH WELLNESS WEBSITE

[Click here](#)

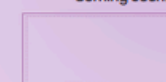
or

Scan



TRUST RESOURCE HUB

Coming Soon!



EVALUATION



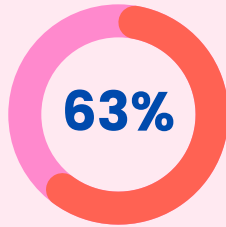
We would be grateful if you could fill out this short evaluation. [Click here to complete.](#)

DISCLAIMER: PLEASE NOTE THIS MATERIAL SHOULD NOT BE DISTRIBUTED TO ANY PARTY EXTERNAL TO HSCNI

MBS Online Statistics

April 2025

Patients Registered for Patient Online Services

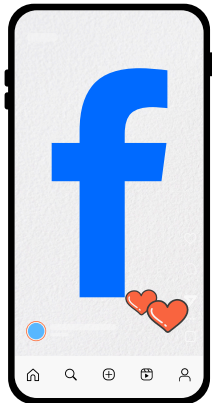


To register for this service, send an email to reception.z00382@gp.hscni.net including your name and date of birth. You will receive a registration token.



706

Total newsletter subscriptions



105,327
Facebook
views in last
28 days

1,387
Website views

27 **NEW**
Newsletter
subscriptions
in April

APRIL STATISTICS

An summary of work output throughout the month of April by all practice staff.

MEADOWBRIDGE SURGERY | 2025

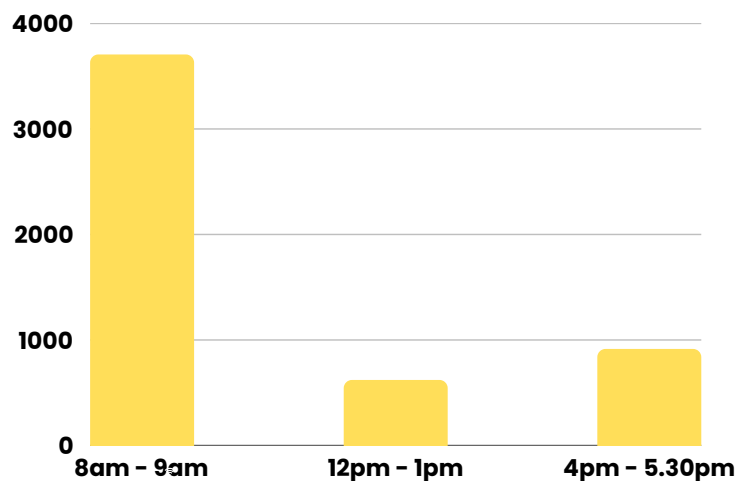
TELEPHONE STATISTICS

8,528

Incoming Telephone Calls to the Practice



AVERAGE CALLS RECEIVED HOURLY



**Average Patient Wait
Time once in the queue**
3 minutes
10 seconds

DAILY TRIAGE AREAS



45

Patient Home
Visits by a GP



3,371

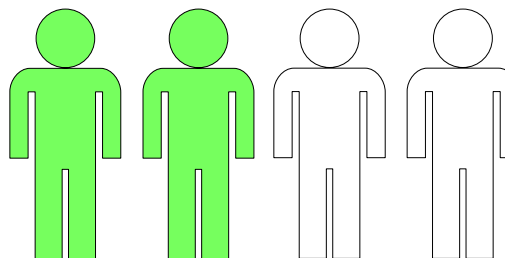
Face to Face
Appointments



1,413

Triage call back to
Patients

APPOINTMENTS BOOKED AND NOT ATTENDED



117

These are appointments that have been wasted and could have been offered to another patient.

ADMINISTRATION TASKS



2,202

Hospital letters
actioned by Practice staff



5,502

Prescriptions
Issued



16,966

General Admin
Tasks by Clinical and Admin Team



2,539

Patient Results
Reviewed

General Practice Activity Data

Meadowbridge Surgery

1/4/2024 – 31/3/2025



39,730

People had a Face to Face Consultation



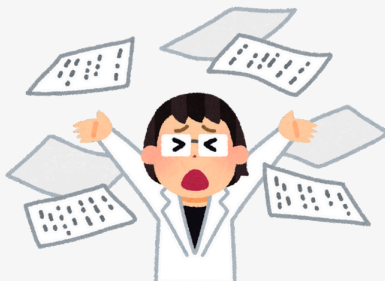
15,843

People had a Telephone Consultation



570

People had a Home Visit



311,694

**Administration encounters were completed
by the practice**

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Tirzepatide (Mounjaro) for Obesity

What is Tirzepatide?

Tirzepatide (brand name Mounjaro) is an injectable medication which helps manage obesity by reducing appetite and supporting weight loss. It works alongside diet and exercise changes.

Current availability in Northern Ireland

NICE Approval

In December 2024, National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) approved Tirzepatide for adults with a BMI of 35 or higher AND at least one weight related health condition.

Can it be prescribed for Obesity on the Health Service in NI?

Tirzepatide is not currently available through the health service in NI for the treatment of obesity. It will be introduced as a *phased approach*, over a number of years. This will ensure that Tirzepatide is prescribed safely and patients are given the support they need. We appreciate your patience whilst we work through these plans and kindly request you do not ask your GP practice to prescribe Tirzepatide at this time.

Other Weight Loss Medications e.g. Wegovy (Semaglutide) and Saxenda (Liraglutide)

NICE recommends that these treatments should only be prescribed within a specialist multidisciplinary weight loss management service. Northern Ireland does NOT currently have such a specialist weight management service, therefore, these treatments are also not yet available to prescribe on the Health Service.

Private Treatment

If considering private treatment, consult a qualified healthcare professional. Ensure treatment includes diet and exercise support and note that GP's *CANNOT* take over prescribing on the health service.

Safety Warning

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) advises the public: the only way to guarantee you receive a genuine weight loss medicine is to obtain it from a legitimate pharmacy, including those trading online, against a prescription issued by a healthcare professional. Unauthorised suppliers may provide fake or unlicensed products which can carry serious health risks.

Support Options

While waiting for treatments to become available: speak with your healthcare provider about OTHER approaches. Visit the NI Direct website (www.nidirect.gov.uk/conditions/obesity) for obesity management information.

The Department of Health are considering how Tirzepatide could be prescribed to patients in Northern Ireland for obesity and are committed to developing weight management services.

For more information, go to www.meadowbridgesurgery.co.uk for access to the websites advised.