

Meadowbridge SURGERY

September 2025

ISSUE 9



Why do routine calls reach full capacity so early?

Our GPs can safely see a maximum of 25 patients each per day – this is the British Medical Association's recommendation for safe working in general practice. To work beyond this capacity is unsafe for patients.

On top of these 25 patient contacts, they also:

- ✓ Bring patients in for face-to-face appointments
- ✓ Carry out review appointments for ongoing care
- ✓ Sign and process hundreds of prescriptions
- ✓ Respond to patient queries
- ✓ Complete essential admin and clinical tasks
- ✓ Review and action lab results

✓ Read and follow up on hospital correspondence about their patients

✓ Make referrals on behalf of their patients

✓ Complete a variety of reports on behalf of their patients.

Because of very high levels in patient demand, routine appointments are often booked up very early in the morning.

We know it's frustrating when capacity is reached but working this way helps us provide safe, high-quality care to every patient we see.

We have purposefully increased our medical, nursing and clerical staff over the years and offered new placements to medical students in an attempt to help meet future demand however it's still not enough!

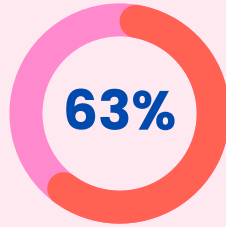
Until General Practice is properly resourced we need to practice safely for the benefit of our patients.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

MBS Online Statistics

AUGUST 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.



Total newsletter subscriptions

1,569
Website
views



58 **NEW**
Newsletter
subscriptions
in August

Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

Do you have any of the following urinary symptoms?



Ask your pharmacist first for Advice, Test & Treatment (if needed) without having to contact your GP

Pharmacy First for sore throat



Ask your pharmacist **FIRST** for free and confidential advice, test and treatment for **sore throat**



SOUTH ANTRIM COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Become a volunteer driver with South Antrim Community Transport today and you could be giving the gift of a lift to someone in your community.

Mileage reimbursement, full training and support provided. Contact us today on 02893342455.

The service provides affordable and accessible transport in rural areas. We are a member only organisation and currently have over 400 individual members using our Dial-A-lift services, and approximately 50 community groups using our group service.

We deliver a quality service to our members and engage with others in partnership to continue to provide a safe and reliable transport option.

MISSION STATEMENT

South Antrim Community Transport's aim is to provide accessible and affordable transport to individuals and groups living in the rural areas of Antrim, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus and Larne Borough Council.

We particularly wish to assist people with reduced mobility through our group hire, or single usage through our Dial-A-Lift Scheme.

AIM AND VISION

To reduce the level of isolation caused by a lack of an accessible and affordable transport system to the South Antrim area.

We are committed to continue to work with all interested parties and agencies to deliver a safe and friendly service for the benefit of all.

**South Antrim Community
Transport**

**Unit 30, Dennison Industrial
Estate, Mill Road
Ballyclare
Co. Antrim
BT39 9EB**

**[info@southantrimcommunity
transport.com](mailto:info@southantrimcommunitytransport.com)**

AUGUST STATISTICS

An summary of work output throughout the month of August by all practice staff.
MEADOWBRIDGE SURGERY | 2025

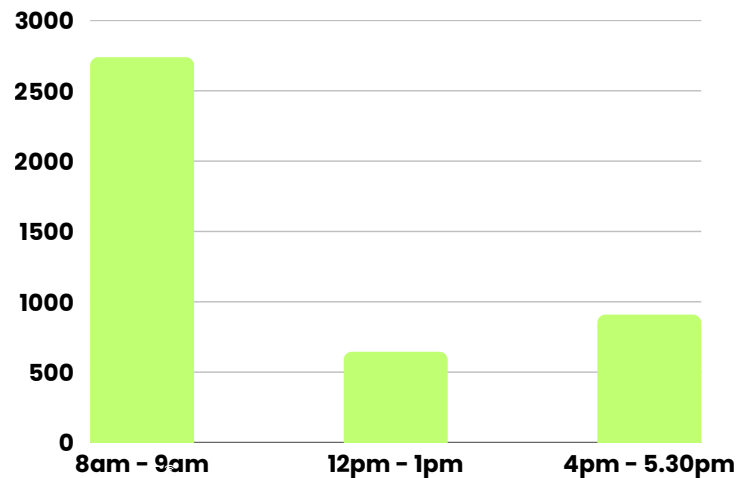
TELEPHONE STATISTICS

9,833

Incoming Telephone Calls to
the Practice



AVERAGE CALLS RECEIVED HOURLY



**Average Patient Wait Time
once in the queue**

**3 minutes
14 seconds**



DAILY TRIAGE AREAS

40



**Patient Home
Visits by a GP**

2,624



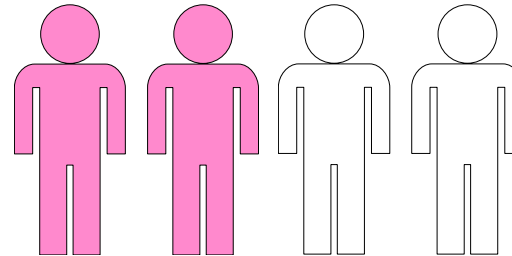
**Face to Face
Appointments**

660



**Triage call back to
Patients**

APPOINTMENTS BOOKED AND NOT ATTENDED DNA (Did not attend)



123

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

ADMINISTRATION TASKS



1,962

Hospital letters
actioned by Practice staff



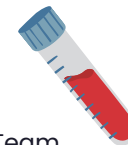
14,104

General Admin
Tasks by Clinical and Admin Team



5,646

Prescriptions
Issued



2,394

Patient Results
Reviewed



Diabetes and Women's Health

Diabetes UK have online podcasts available specifically for women with Menopause who have a diagnosis of Diabetes. <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/support-for-you/diabetes-uk-in-your-area/northern-ireland/lets-talk-diabetes>

A session of online health support will be available on 12th November 2025 with Dr Gwenyth Hinds, a retired doctor and menopause specialist.

Patients can avail of this support at <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/support-for-you/diabetes-uk-in-your-area/northern-ireland/local-womens-health-support>

Shingles Vaccination Programme

On 1 September 2025, the Northern Ireland Shingles vaccination programme will change to allow all severely immunosuppressed people aged 18 years and over to receive the shingles vaccine.

This is an expansion of the current severely immunosuppressed cohort, who until now became eligible from aged 50 years of age. There is now no upper age limit for the severely immunosuppressed cohort of patients.

Severely immunosuppressed individuals who have already received 2 doses of Shingrix® do not need re-vaccination. Severely immunosuppressed individuals who had received Zostavax® prior to developing immunosuppression should be offered 2 doses of Shingrix®.

The age-based eligibility remains unchanged with individuals becoming eligible if they are aged 65 or 70 on 1 September each year and remaining eligible until their 80th birthday

From the 2 September 2025 patients who fall into the age cohorts below can now book an appointment with Julie Weir, Health Care Assistant to receive the Shingles Vaccine. DOB: 2nd September 1954 - 1st September 1955 or 2nd September 1959 - 1st September 1960



Patient information links

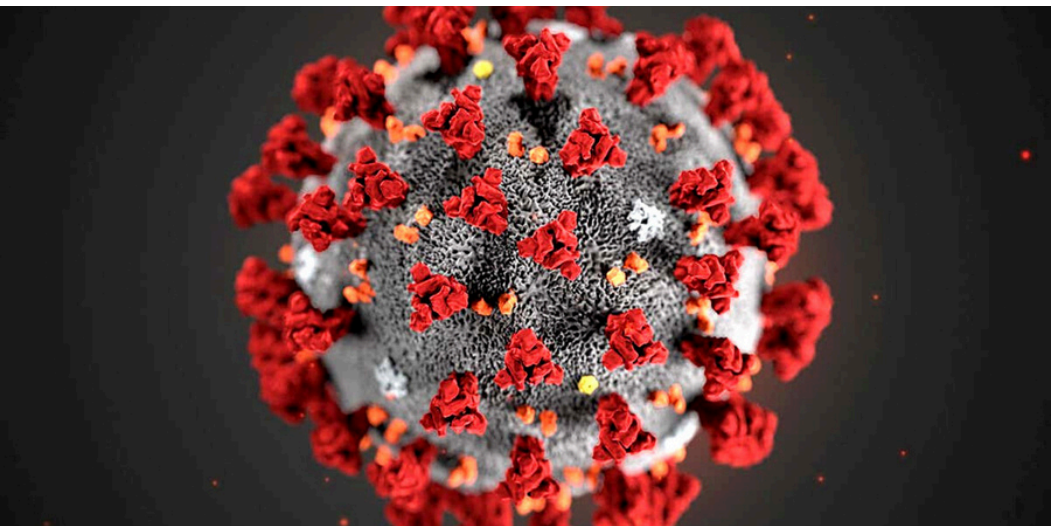
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/shingles-vaccine#toc-2

www.publichealth.hscni.net/search/node?keys=shingles



COVID 19 CAMPAIGN

AUTUMN 2025



Vaccination remains the best form of defence against severe illness, hospitalisation, and death as a result of COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccination is aimed at protecting the most vulnerable in our society.

Appointments for Covid vaccination clinics will be available to book from mid September on line or via reception.

Eligible Patients are:

- all adults aged 75 years and over; born before 31 March 1951.
- residents in a care home for older adults (in NI this will apply to all residents of a care home for older adults);
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed


Unlike in previous autumn campaigns, adults aged 65 to 74 years of age and people aged under 65 years of

age with underlying medical conditions, including pregnant women (apart from those who are immunosuppressed) will not be eligible for Covid vaccination.

JCVI does not advise the inclusion of health and social care workers (HSCWs).

Immunosuppressed patients aged 5 to 17 years (i.e. those born between 1 October 2008 and 31 September 2020), are advised that they are eligible for vaccination, and can attend a Trust led clinic to receive the vaccine.

Community Pharmacies will be responsible for vaccination of all care home residents, including mop-up visits.



General practice in Northern Ireland is underfunded.

We asked the government for an extra **£39 per patient** to maintain and improve your GP services.



They gave us less than 50p per patient.

We know you deserve better than this.
#GPsAreOnYourSide



We want you to know that we hear your concerns and understand how difficult it can be to get a GP appointment right now.

Behind the scenes, we are working tirelessly to improve our services for our patients, but the challenges we're facing are very real.

Over 28 GP practices have closed in Northern Ireland since 2018. GP surgeries are seeing a high volume of patients every week with only 5.4% of the health budget.

These issues directly affect how quickly and efficiently we can care for you.

We're doing everything we can, but general practice in Northern Ireland needs proper funding to meet your needs.

**Thank you for your patience,
your support, and for standing
with us.**

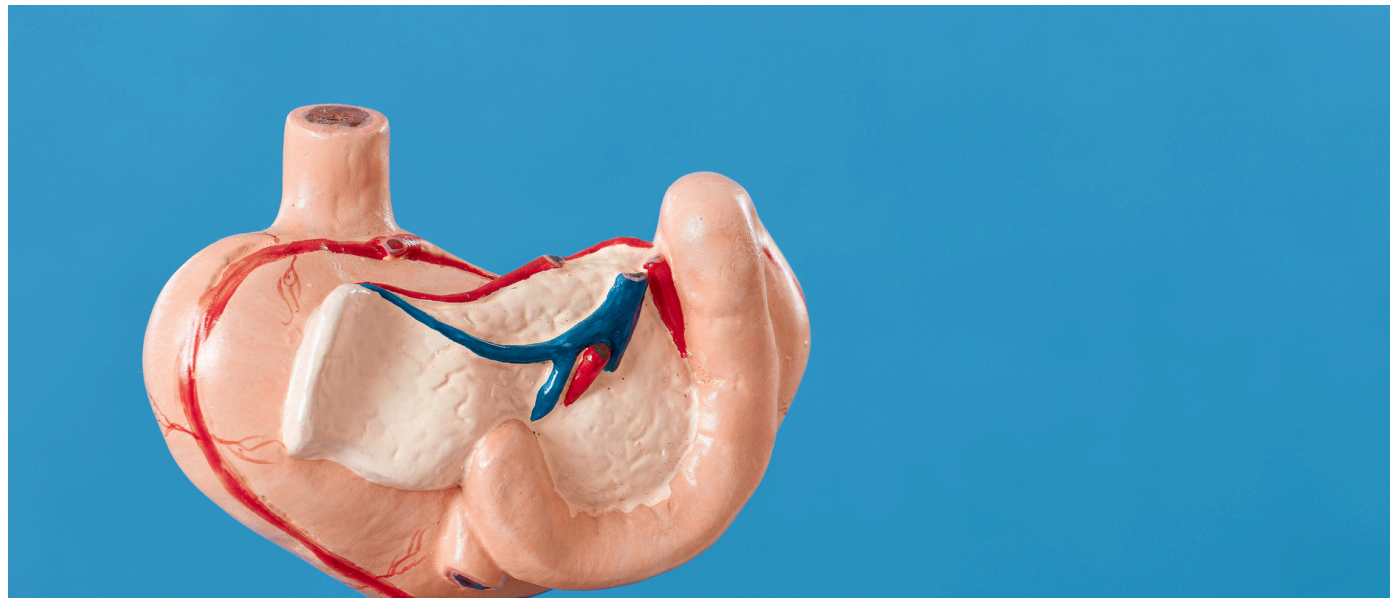
LIVING WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

Many people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) are able to live long lives without being unduly affected by the condition. Although it's not possible to repair damage that has already happened to your kidneys, CKD will not necessarily get worse. CKD only reaches an advanced stage in a small proportion of people. But even if your condition is mild, it's important to take good care of yourself to help stop it getting worse and reduce your risk of other health problems, such as cardiovascular disease. It's very important that you take any prescribed medicine, even if you do not feel unwell. Some medicines are designed to prevent serious problems from happening in the future.

If you have CKD, you may not need a special diet. A healthy, balanced diet can help improve your general health and reduce your risk of developing further problems. Regular physical activity can also help improve your general health. Do not be scared to exercise. Exercise is good for anyone with kidney disease, however severe. If you smoke, stopping smoking can improve your overall health and reduce your risk of many other health problems.

You may still be able to drink alcohol if you have kidney disease, but it's advisable not to exceed the recommended limits of more than 14 alcohol units a week. Kidney disease can put a significant strain on your body and make you more vulnerable to infections. Everyone with the condition is encouraged to have the annual flu jab and the one-off pneumococcal vaccination.

For more information, go to <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/living-with/> on how to manage Chronic Kidney Disease.



Did you know?

Since 2018 over 28 GP practices have closed in Northern Ireland meaning the remaining practices are having to deal with more patients.

This is why you struggle to see your GP.

General practice in Northern Ireland needs to be properly funded.



#GPsAreOnYourSide

Pharmacy First Pilot Service for Treatment of Shingles



Participating Pharmacies

Boots Carrickfergus
3B Market Place
BT38 7AW
028 93351200

B McGrath
19 Cross Street
Larne
BT40 1JW
028 28260675

For more information, go to
<https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/operations/family-practitioner-services/pharmacy/contractor-information/contractor-communications/hscb-services-and-guidance/pharmacy-first-service/pharmacy-first-pilot-service-for-treatment-of-shingles/>

General Practices in NI need to be properly funded
We know you deserve better than this.
#GPsAreOnYourSide



The BMA safe working guidance for daily consultations per clinician is 25 consultations max.

If demand for urgent care exceeds safe levels, patients should be aware that they can utilise other options available to them through appropriate alternative settings. These include:

Local Pharmacy schemes
Urgent Care Centre
Phone First
GP Out-Of-Hours
Accident and Emergency
NI Ambulance Service

We know you deserve better than this.
#GPsAreOnYourSide.



GP staff will no longer be arranging patient transport for non-urgent outpatient hospital appointments.
Please contact the hospital department secretaries to make these arrangements.

This is due to General Practice in Northern Ireland being underfunded.

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RSV VACCINATION



RSV is a common respiratory virus that can cause serious lung infections.

For most people, RSV infection causes a mild respiratory illness. Globally, RSV infects up to 90% of children within the first 2 years of life and frequently reinfects older children and adults.

While RSV infection can occur at any age, the risk and severity of RSV and its complications are increased in older adults and in neonates and small infants.

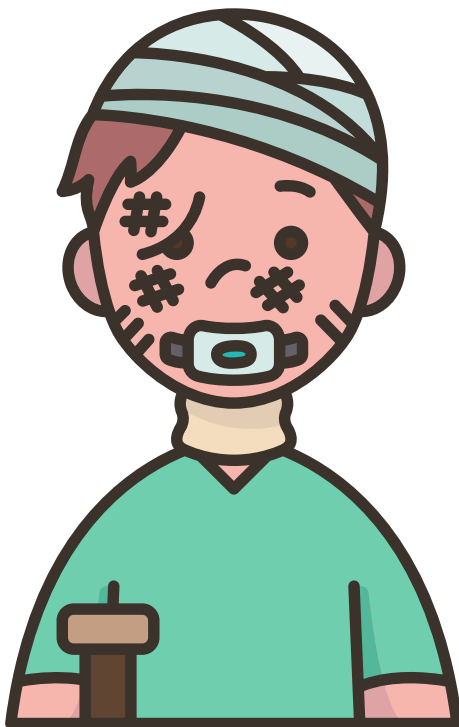
The clinical significance of RSV in infants is that it can cause bronchiolitis which leads to the inflammation of the small airways and significant breathing difficulties.

It is a leading cause of infant mortality globally, resulting in 20 to 30 deaths per year in the UK.

Adults are invited for the RSV vaccine from they turn 75 until the day before their 80 birthday and can contact reception to book an appointment.

Infants receive the RSV vaccine as part of their baby vaccination schedule.

General Practices in NI need to be properly funded. We know you deserve better than this. #GPsAreOnYourSide



To protect our Treatment Room appointments for primary care & the care of our patients, GP Practices will be following BMA recommendations:

Patients who require suture removal following surgery will be signposted back to the hospital to have their sutures removed in secondary care. Patients who have already been booked for appts for suture removal can still attend their MBS appt.

Patients who require a Treatment Room appointment **MORE** than twice a week for dressings will be sign posted back to the hospital.

Hospitals have already been advised in writing by SPPG that primary care Treatment Rooms will no longer be accepting complex secondary care dressings or suture removal work etc.

This is in the best interests of our patients to ensure capacity is protected for acute bloods etc referred into the Treatment Room by our own GPs.

BEST FOODS FOR YOUR BODY

Fuel your body with the right nutrients for each part



BRAIN

- Salmon
- Tuna
- Sardines



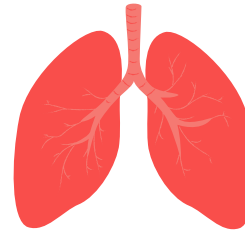
BONES

- Oranges
- Celery
- Milk



HAIR

- Green vegetables
- Beans
- Salmon



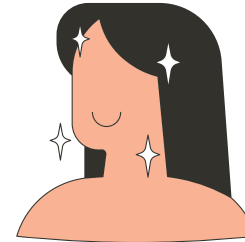
LUNGS

- Broccoli
- Brussel sprouts



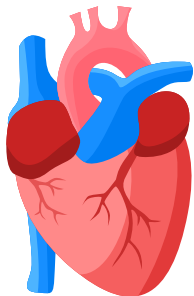
EYES

- Eggs
- Corn
- Carrots



SKIN

- Blueberries
- Salmon
- Green tea



HEART

- Tomatoes
- Potatoes



MUSCLES

- Bananas
- Red meat
- Fish

AUTUMN FLU VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Child nasal flu appointments are available to book for pre-school children aged from two years of age, born between 2nd July 2021 and 1st Sept 2024. Appointments are available to book online or via telephone after 9.30am any morning.

Appointments for the Flu vaccine will be available to book from mid September for all patients aged 65 years and over born on or before 31st March 1961 and for those in an AT RISK group.

In 2025/26, healthy 5-64 year olds will NOT be eligible for the flu vaccination.

