

Meadowbridge SURGERY

October 2025

ISSUE 10



DRUG SAFETY UPDATE

Paracetamol and pregnancy – reminder that taking paracetamol during pregnancy remains safe.

Patients should be reminded and reassured that there is no evidence that taking paracetamol during pregnancy causes autism in children. Paracetamol is recommended as the first-choice pain reliever for pregnant women, used at the lowest dose and for the shortest duration. It also acts as an antipyretic and is therefore used to treat fever. Patients should not stop taking their pain medicines as untreated pain and fever can pose risks to the unborn child.

BOOK YOUR WINTER VACCINE

Eligible patients can book their appointments via Patient Services.

If you have an account set up, you can select an appointment to suit you with one of our Nursing Team for Covid, Flu or any other vaccines you may be entitled to. To check what you may be entitled to receive, go to www.meadobridgesurgery.co.uk to view all at risk group criteria.

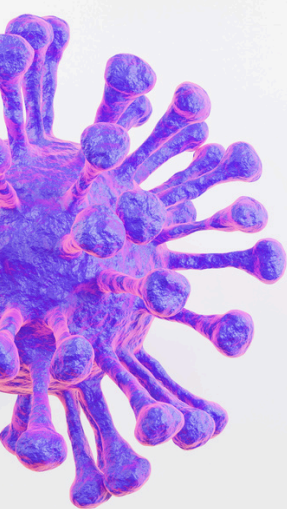
If you would like to set up a Patient Services account to access Online appointments, please contact reception.z00382@gp.hscni.net.

Alternatively, eligible patients can call the surgery any day after 9.30am to arrange an appointment.



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).

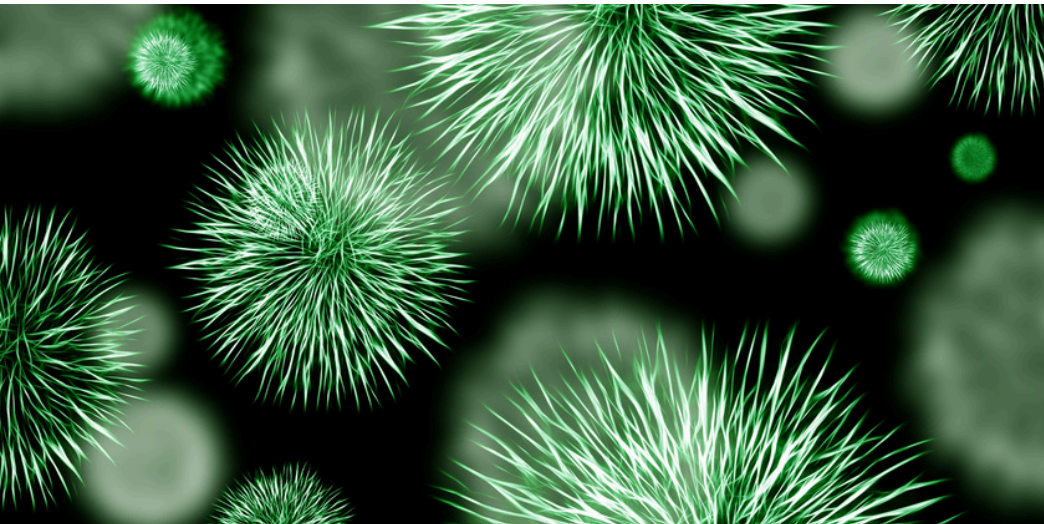
Immunosuppressed patients aged 5 to 17 years (i.e. those born between 1 October 2008 and 31 September 2020), are advised that they are eligible for vaccination, and can attend a Trust led clinic to receive the vaccine.

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





RSV VACCINATION



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

leads to the inflammation of the small airways and significant breathing difficulties.

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.

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.

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



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.

Flu can be serious,
if you are over 65 or in an 'at risk' group.

Between 18 September 2024 and 18 May 2025

3158 people aged 18 and over had a hospital admission with influenza in Northern Ireland.

2155 were as an emergency hospital admission.



If eligible help protect yourself against flu

Last year 862 children and young people, and 3,158 people aged 18 and over were hospitalised with influenza in Northern Ireland. Of those 2,922 were as an emergency hospital admission.





This year the flu vaccine is being offered to:

- all adults aged 65 years and over;
- people aged six months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as laid out in the Immunisation Green Book influenza chapter (Green Book);
- pregnant women;
- residents and staff in care homes;
- all health and social care workers;
- all preschool children aged two to four years on 1 September 2025;
- all primary and secondary school children (up to and including year 12);
- carers;
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals.
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The COVID-19 vaccination will be offered to:

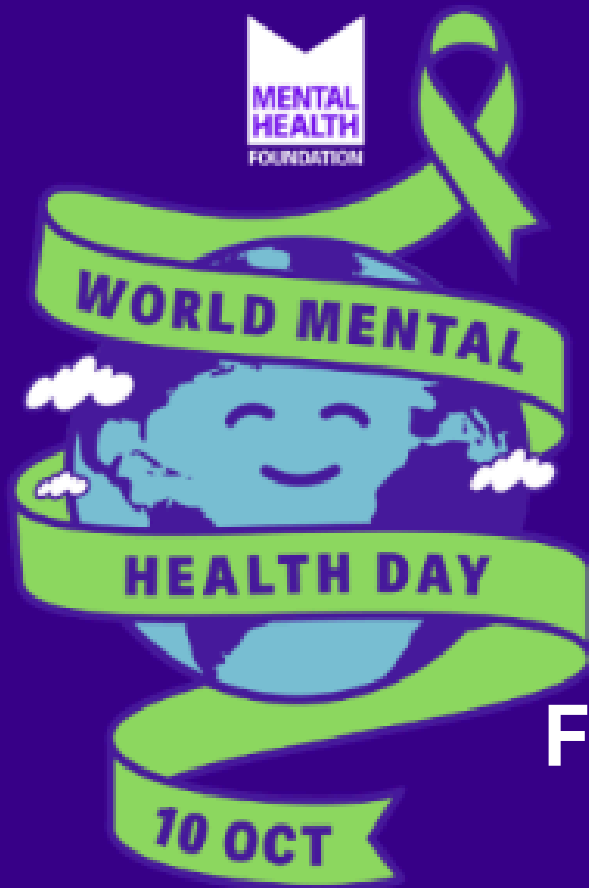
- adults aged 75 years and over;
- residents in care homes for older adults;
- individuals who are immunosuppressed, aged 6 months and over.

Winter viruses can be serious, who is eligible and where to get your vaccine.

Where to get your vaccine	COVID vaccine	Flu vaccine
GP Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults aged 75 years and over • 18 and over who are immunosuppressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 years and over • 6 mths. - 64yrs. clinical risk group (excluding those eligible in school) • Pregnant women • Pre-school children • Carers • Household contacts of immunosuppressed
Community Pharmacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents in care homes for older adults • Adults aged 75 years and over • 18 and over who are immunosuppressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care home residents and staff • All HSC workers • 65 years and over • 18 - 64yrs. clinical risk group • Pregnant women • 18- 64 yrs. who are carers • 18- 64 yrs. household contacts of immunosuppressed
HSC Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed • Housebound via home visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All HSC workers • Pregnant women via maternity • Housebound via home visits
In school 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children in primary and secondary school (up to Year 12), including children in risk groups

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

FRIDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2025



World Mental Health Day takes place every year on 10 October. It's a reminder of the importance of good mental health and the need to prioritise and invest in good mental health.

This year's theme is 'access to services - mental health in catastrophes and emergencies'. The theme highlights the importance of people being able to protect their mental health in times of global instability.

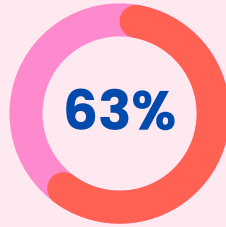
Feeling overwhelmed? You're not alone

For more information on advice, activities and news on what's happening this World Mental Health day go to www.mentalhealth.org.uk

MBS Online Statistics

SEPTEMBER 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.



799

Total newsletter subscriptions

2,294
Website
views



19
NEW
Newsletter
subscriptions
in September

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**



SICKLINES AFTER HOSPITAL CARE

If you are likely to need a sickline (AKA a "sick cert" or a Med3) when you come out of hospital or following Outpatient attendance please ask the Dr treating you in hospital to provide you with one before you leave. This information sheet gives you some myths and facts about this issue

Why is this important? Why doesn't the GP just do it?

Thousands of appointments and telephone calls with GPs are taken up each year by patients requesting fit notes when they could have been issued by Hospital Drs and Healthcare Professionals.

This has a direct effect on how other patients can access the GP. Please help us to keep our appointments free for patients who have genuine clinical need rather than administrative paperwork that could easily have been dealt with by others at the end of your hospital visit or stay.

MYTHS

"Consultants and junior doctors don't write sicklines, that's a GP's job"

"The hospital don't have any sickline pads" - the hospital order these like many other stationary items from BSO

"The hospital can't issue a sickline if you've only been to outpatients"

FACTS

The doctor who is treating you at the time has a statutory obligation to provide you with a sickline if you need one. This includes all Hospital doctors. The Dr who is treating you should sign you off for the appropriate period according to the condition you have been treated for.

Each fit note in first six months of an illness can only have a maximum duration of 3 months. Many patients will not need that length of med3 and a note is not required to go back to work sooner than the duration

As a last resort if you are encountering difficulty please contact

Belfast Trust

028) 9504 8000

complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Northern Trust

028 9442 4655

user.feedback@northerntrust.hscni.net

Southern Trust

028 3756 4600

serviceuserfeedback@southerntrust.hscni.net

South Eastern Trust

028 9056 1427

complaints@setrust.hscni.net

Western Trust

028 7161 1226

complaints.department@westerntrust.hscni.net

Ulster Independent Clinic

028 9066 1212

<https://ulsterindependentclinic.com/contact/>

Kingsbridge

028 90 667 878

governance@kingsbridgehealthcaregroup.com

SEPTEMBER STATISTICS

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

MEADOWBRIDGE SURGERY | 2025

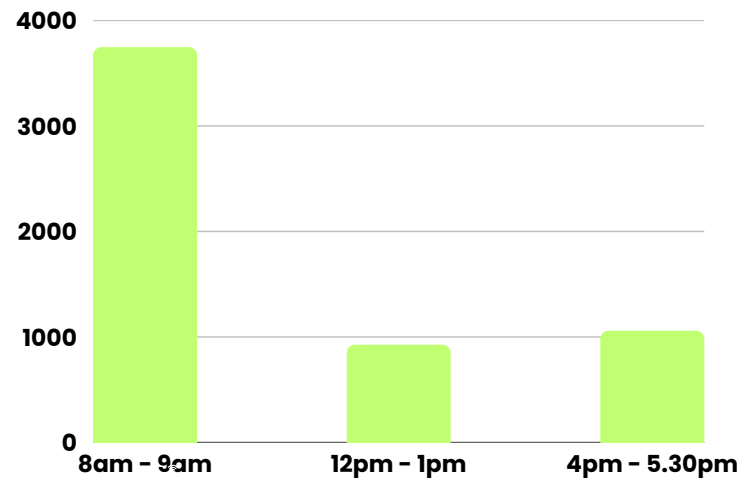
TELEPHONE STATISTICS

12,747

Incoming Telephone Calls to the Practice



AVERAGE CALLS RECEIVED HOURLY



Average Patient Wait Time once in the queue

3 minutes 24 seconds



DAILY TRIAGE AREAS

49



Patient Home
Visits by a GP

3,524



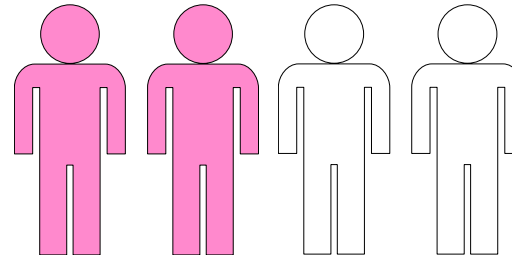
Face to Face
Appointments

2,026



Triage call back to
Patients

APPOINTMENTS BOOKED AND NOT ATTENDED DNA (Did not attend)



165

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

ADMINISTRATION TASKS



2,573

Hospital letters
actioned by Practice staff



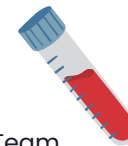
19,481

General Admin
Tasks by Clinical and Admin Team



5,949

Prescriptions
Issued



2,525

Patient Results
Reviewed

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.**



WE'VE MADE A CHANGE

From now on our team at Meadowbridge Surgery will focus on what we do best- providing you with appropriate care in the practice.

Carrying out complex post-operative dressings is not our job and all Hospital Services within NI have been collectively informed that they must continue to provide care to their patients until it is appropriate to either discharge them or ask GP Treatment Rooms to take over- this will be when the patients dressing needs changed once or twice a week and requires simple dressing techniques.

While this decision has been made as part of GPs' Collective Action to try to match what services we provide to the existing funding, we also think that this is a safer service for patients. Surgical teams will have a better oversight of how you are healing and they will be best placed to intervene if problems arise.

This does not have any impact on provision of GP services to you.

Our Treatment Room staff have been asked to adhere to this guidance and need to treat patients equally so please show them understanding if they advise they are not able to take over your dressings from the surgical team.

Last year, general practice generated

10.1 million

appointments for the general public



Currently, there are approximately

2 million

people living in Northern Ireland

Last year, there were

650,000

patient A+E attendances recorded



LET'S TALK DIABETES - A PODCAST FROM DIABETES UK

Join us as we explore the world of diabetes through our new podcast 'Let's Talk Diabetes' – here you'll hear first-hand from people living with diabetes, local healthcare professionals and members of the [Northern Ireland team](#).

Whether you or someone you know is living with diabetes, you'll find lots of helpful information, resources and advice to support you and your loved ones. Make sure to also keep an ear out for our special guest's top tips for people living with diabetes.

Find us on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), or you can stream for free on our hosting site [Acast](#). Make sure to hit subscribe so you never miss an episode.

Episode 1: Know Your Team

Our host Suzy Hull, Healthcare Engagement Manager, is joined by Heather Bell, a GP in Carrickfergus, and Paul McMullan, a Consultant in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. Both Heather and Paul took an interest in diabetes care early on in their career and now specialise in it.

Here we discuss what you'll start to experience when newly diagnosed and the healthcare professionals you will begin to work with along the way.

