

# Meadowbridge S U R G E Y

## Monthly Newsletter February 2026

**CHANGES ARE COMING**  
We are Preparing for our  
new system 'Emis'



# EMIS

• NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW

In the next few months the Practice will be beginning to make plans and preparing to migrate from our current clinical system 'VISION' to a new clinical system being rolled out in N Ireland called 'EMIS Web VDI'. Our go live date is currently scheduled for 12 May 2026.

A total of 125 N. Ireland Vision practices will have migrated to 'EMIS Web VDI' by June 2026 as Vision will no longer be available to N Ireland practices.

Regular patient updates will be posted on our Facebook page and our website.



# CLINICAL SYSTEM CHANGE

## Changes for Our Patients: Management of Online Patient Services

From May **patients will no longer have access to Patient Online Services**. The practice will manually go through all patients currently using online services after the changeover and email out codes and instructions on how to complete the registration for EMIS patient Access. This process cannot be completed beforehand.

We sincerely ask for your understanding and patience at this time as we navigate to move **approximately 5500 patients manually** to the new patient services system.

There will be 3 preparation training days with an EMIS Trainer on-site in the 2 weeks prior to our go-live date on 12th May 26 where services will be limited to ensure a smooth transition for staff & patients alike on the go-live day.

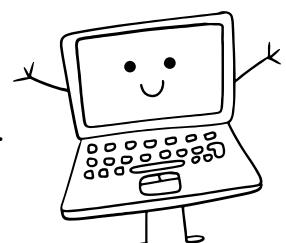
**Downtime during the 4 day migration will take place Friday and Monday for a Tuesday Go Live on 12 May 26.** Migrations are booked in for a Tuesday go-live so as to utilise the weekend in the 4 day migration. We will have **no computer system during this period** so it is essential that prescriptions are ordered at least 10 – 14 days in advance of Fri 8th May 2026.

**During this 4 day period we will be recording clinical consultation information on paper only and this will also require a reduced emergency only service.**

For a period after Go Live it is strongly advised that practices continue to run a **reduced appointments service (urgent only)** to allow for unexpected issues.

This is also important to **allow staff to become used to the new Emis Web VDI system** and to benefit from the floor walking service that will be provided by the EMIS trainers to support users on Go Live & the 3 days after.

We will keep you informed as we progress through this journey together.



# Dementia clinics

## In partnership with Nationwide Fairer Futures

Dementia UK is offering free, confidential clinic appointments with a specialist dementia nurse, known as an Admiral Nurse – coming to your local branch soon. You don't need to be a Nationwide customer. Everyone is welcome.

Your nearest branch clinic is

[Carrickfergus Nationwide Branch- 10th, 11th and 12th February](#)



To book your appointment, please visit [dementiauk.org/nationwide](http://dementiauk.org/nationwide), scan the QR code or speak to a Nationwide colleague in your branch. If you are unable to book online send a text message with the word: **APPOINTMENT** to **0747 872 4000**, and we will call you to help make a booking

If you have any questions about the clinics please contact [nationwide@dementiauk.org](mailto:nationwide@dementiauk.org).

For immediate support, contact Dementia UK's Helpline on **0800 888 6678** or book a phone or video appointment at [dementiauk.org/book](http://dementiauk.org/book)



## 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

# I'm ~~not~~ alright

Talking really helps

Lifeline

0808 808 8000

[www.lifelinehelpline.info](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info)



## Public Health Agency ‘Talking Really Helps’

**November 2025 to March 2026.**

The campaign aims to encourage anyone with feelings of anxiety or distress, or who is in crisis, to start the conversation about their real feelings. The campaign also promotes Lifeline, Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline. The campaign aims to encourage anyone with feelings of anxiety or distress, or who is in crisis, to start the conversation about their real feelings. The campaign also promotes Lifeline, Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline. The campaign was developed in 2022 and last ran during February and March 2025. The campaign evaluated well with high levels of reach and positive action taken as a result of the campaign. Calls to Lifeline also increased during the campaign period.

Men in their late teens to mid 60s are the most at-risk group in society and the risks increase further for men who are single, unemployed, and living in socioeconomic disadvantage. Further information on suicide trends and incidences is available from NISRA. Suicide is not inevitable; it can be prevented. Help and support is available for those experiencing suicide ideation and those who have self-harmed. Recovery is possible. Recovery means leading a good life, with or without symptoms of a mental health condition.

Suicide affects people of all ages and all walks of life. Suicide is complex and often occurs as a result of a number of interacting factors. Social deprivation increases risk of suicidal behaviours. The most recent NISRA data is for 2023. The percentage of suicides in 2023 from Northern Ireland's most deprived areas (28.5%) was over twice that of the least deprived areas (13.1%). There is also a gender aspect to suicide. In 2023, 77.4% of suicide deaths were male and 22.6% were female.

# PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

## “Talking Really Helps”

Talk to someone if you are feeling low and you are struggling to cope.

Opening up to someone about how you are feeling will help.

With the right help and support, things will get better.

If you are in distress or despair, or you know someone who is, call Lifeline on 0808 808 8000 for advice and support

### Campaign target audience

The target audience is the Northern Ireland population, especially those people at greater risk of suicide. The highest rates of suicide are among males aged late teens to mid 60's from more deprived areas. Family and friends of those most at risk of suicide are a secondary audience.

### ‘Talking really helps’ campaign resources

Help support the campaign and raise awareness of Lifeline by using and sharing resources at

[www.pha.site/talkingreallyhelps](http://www.pha.site/talkingreallyhelps)

- Video advertising (for viewing only)
- Social assets and suggested post wording
- Webpage banners and email signatures
- Posters



# LIFELINE - 0808 808 8000



# Pharmacy First for sore throat



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



Health and  
Social Care

# World Cancer Day

## 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026

### Be Aware of the Signs and Symptoms

This World Cancer Day on Tuesday 4 February, the Public Health Agency (PHA) is encouraging people to take notice of their bodies and contact their GP if they feel something isn't right.

Dr Louise Herron, Deputy Director of Public Health at the PHA, said: "Everyone knows what feels 'normal' for them and it's important to be aware of any changes in your body, but there are some common changes and symptoms to look out for and act on. Being aware of the general signs and symptoms of cancer can help in early detection and increase your chance of survival.

"Cancer is a common condition. It is estimated that around 1-in-2 of us will develop some form of cancer in our lifetime."

Some signs and symptoms to look out for include:

- coughing up blood;
- blood in urine;
- blood mixed through bowel motion (stools);
- a change in bowel habit that lasts for three weeks or more;
- unexplained, significant weight loss (5kg/10lbs over a couple of months);
- a lump anywhere on your body;
- changes on your skin or to an existing mole (such as itching, bleeding or a change in shape or colour);
- a sore that doesn't heal;
- symptoms that refuse to clear up, for example a cough or hoarseness that lasts for more than three weeks.

Dr Herron continued: "If you notice any of these symptoms and you feel something isn't right, do not hesitate to contact your GP. In many cases, these symptoms will turn out to be a sign of something far less serious, but it is always best to get them checked out. If it is cancer, an early diagnosis means treatment is more likely to be successful.





# Better Days

Pain Support Programme



## Support for Living Well with Chronic Pain

Are you living with chronic pain that affects your daily life, mood, or independence? You are not alone — and support is available. The Better Days programme, run by the Healthy Living Centre Alliance, is a free community-based initiative designed to help you take back control, manage your pain and improve your wellbeing.

### The 8-12 week programme offers:

- ✓ Support in a local Healthy Living Centre or online
- ✓ Simple strategies for pain relief & better movement
- ✓ Practical sessions on sleep, nutrition and relaxation
- ✓ Support from experts & people who understand



## What does the programme include?

- Understanding pain: Learn how pain works and why it persists
- Medicines: Appreciate how to get the best from medicines
- Practical self-management: What can help, including simple techniques to reduce the impact of pain on your daily life
- Gentle movement: Safe ways to stay active
- Mind and mood: Support for anxiety, low mood and fatigue
- Peer support: Share experiences and encouragement in a friendly group
- Further support: Guidance to local and online help

## Who is this programme for?

This programme is suitable for adults living with long-term (chronic) pain, including conditions like:

- Arthritis or joint pain
- Fibromyalgia
- Back and neck pain
- Nerve pain
- Other ongoing pain conditions

**You are very welcome to join us!**

**SCAN ME!**



Scan the QR code to sign up and take the first step to better days!

Or email us at  
[betterdays@hlcalliance.org](mailto:betterdays@hlcalliance.org)

# MEADOWBRIDGE SURGERY ONLINE

Practice  
Website  
Views  
**1738**

Newsletter  
Subscriptions  
in January  
**8**



**TOTAL** Newsletter Subscriptions  
**840**

**SIGN UP** to our newsletter at the bottom of our website by adding your name and email to receive the newsletter automatically to your inbox each month.

## Online Patient Services

**24/7** ACCESS TO PRESCRIPTION ORDERING  
REQUEST A **TRIAGE** SLOT FROM 8.30AM DAILY  
UNTIL CAPACITY REACHED  
TO **REGISTER**, EMAIL  
[RECEPTION.Z00382@GP.HSCNI.NET](mailto:RECEPTION.Z00382@GP.HSCNI.NET)

# Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day will take place on the 10th of February 2026, with celebrations and learning based around the theme 'Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI'.

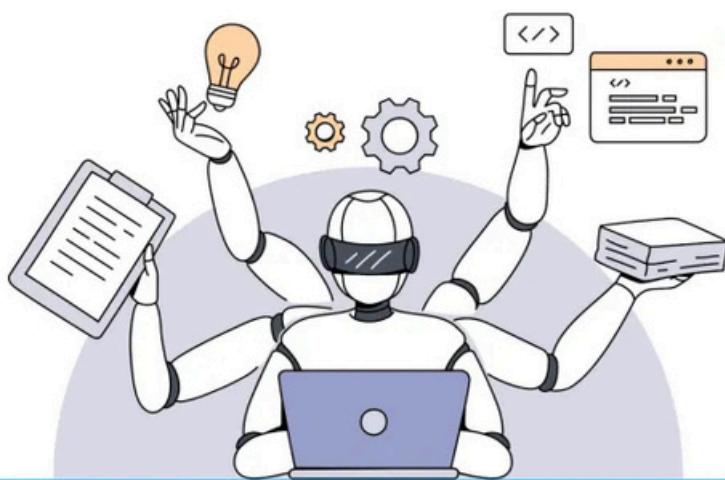
With many children and young people hearing about and using AI online, it's important they have the skills and confidence to make safe choices when they are using smart technology.

This UK-wide campaign is the biggest celebration of online safety. This year's focus is on how AI impacts our lives, exploring its benefits and providing advice to help everyone use AI safely and responsibly.

The UK Safer Internet Centre offers free resources in English and Irish for schools and youth groups, covering topics from voice assistants and chatbots to ethical considerations in AI use. There are also tips for parents, carers, and grandparents on talking about AI and encouraging safe, responsible use of technology.

Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI

 UK Safer Internet Centre



10th February 2026

## Fertility Network Northern Ireland

Fertility Network works across Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK to provide support for anyone experiencing issues with Fertility. Fertility issues impact 1 in 7 couples in Northern Ireland and can cause very significant emotional trauma.

Fertility Network UK offer a wide range of services to couples and individuals on a fertility journey, including support line, information and education, online chat service, webinars, podcasts and peer support groups.

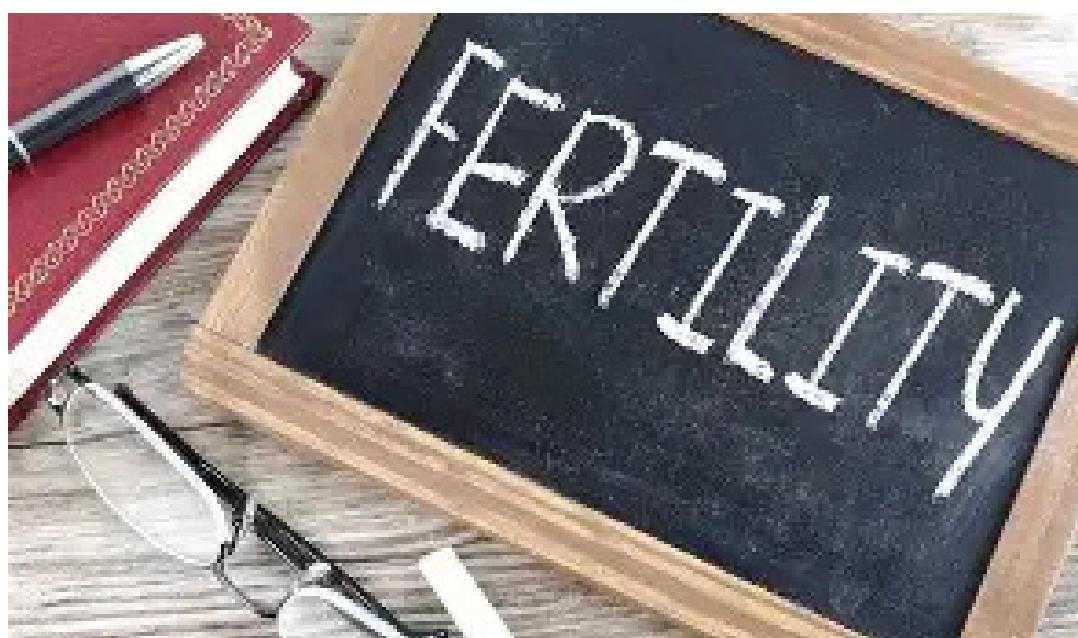
Over 3.5 million people in the UK go through some kind of fertility challenge.  
Nobody should struggle alone.

Whether you're trying to conceive, going through treatment, or living without children, we're here to help you.

We know there's no 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to fertility, so that's why we offer a wide range of resources and support. We provide an info line, online support groups, web chat, online resources, webinars, a podcast and interactive tools. We fight for fair access to NHS fertility treatment, provide education and guidance, support workplaces and promote research to improve fertility care for all.

Support and Information Line:

0142473231



For more information please contact: [TeamNI@fertilitynetworkuk.org](mailto:TeamNI@fertilitynetworkuk.org)

# Eating Disorders Awareness Week

## 23rd February

# Eating disorders. Know the first signs?



**Lips**  
Are they obsessive about food?



**Flips**  
Is their behaviour changing?



**Hips**  
Do they have a distorted beliefs about their body size?



**Kips**  
Are they often tired or struggling to concentrate?



**Nips**  
Do they disappear to the toilet after meals?



**Skips**  
Have they started exercising excessively?

Eating Disorders Awareness Week is a national campaign led by Beat, the UK's eating disorder charity. It focuses on encouraging UK medical schools to introduce comprehensive eating disorder training.

Eating disorders can develop for many complex reasons. They occur when a person has a negative relationship with food and their body, which seriously affects their life.

These disorders may involve overeating or undereating, with a strong preoccupation with weight and body image, causing significant distress.

Eating disorders can affect anyone, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, or background. The good news is that treatment is available, and it's important to reach out for support and advice from Beat or a GP by submitting an online consultation. Recovery is possible, though it's a journey that looks different for everyone.

# Children's Mental Health Week

9<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026



In 2026, Children's Mental Health Week takes place from 9-15 February. The initiative was launched by children's mental health charity Place2Be with the aim of giving a voice to all children and young people in the UK.

We know that our sense of belonging as individuals, in our friendships, in school, and in communities plays a vital role in our mental health and wellbeing. To know our place and really feel part of our environment is a basic human need. It can have powerful and long-lasting impacts in lots of areas of our lives, including our physical and mental health, education, employment and relationships.

When we feel that we belong, it empowers us to contribute to the world and make a real difference. This year, Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week will aim to support the groups and systems surrounding our children. We'll encourage peers, families, schools and communities to create inclusive and nurturing environments, where children and young people feel they belong and can say "This is My Place"

## About Place2Be

Place2Be is a children's mental health charity who have provided counselling, mental health support and training in UK schools since 1994. We launched the official Children's Mental Health Week in 2015 and run it each year in February. We believe that children should not have to face mental health problems alone.

We offer mental health and counselling services in schools, training and support for school staff and parents and carers, as well as counselling qualifications for anyone wanting to become a qualified counsellor for children.

Place2Be equips people with the skills and experience they need to help and transform the lives of children and young people.

# Diabetic Eye Screening

## There are 125,000 Diabetic patients in Northern Ireland

**Diabetic eye screening** is a test that looks for an eye condition called Diabetic Retinopathy that can be caused by diabetes.

Diabetic eye screening is not the same as a regular eye test with an optician. Having regular eye tests is important to check for other conditions.

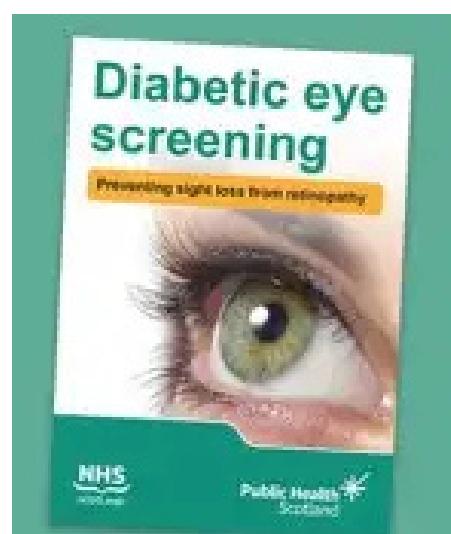
There are 1 and 2 yearly screening available and if patients have 2 negative screens in 2 consecutive years, 12 months apart with no diabetic retinopathy, they move to 2 yearly screening. If there is a change in 1 eye they will go back to yearly screening.

If a patient develops a cataract they will be referred to the optometrist for slit lamp consultation and referral for surgery if required. More advanced diseases go to digital surveillance clinic (6-12 months). This pathway will eventually close down Apr 26 as referrals reduce - will get OCG scan Saturday and Sunday & evenings. Results from screening tests will go to your GP surgeries.

Cancellation and DNA (did not attend) is high in normal clinic screening service and we encourage patients to attend their scheduled appointments or re book as required.

In Northern Ireland, new patients are seen within 89 day of getting notified. Now over 30% have severe eye changes once seen and that percentage has grown over the last few years especially for those with Diabetes - Type 2.

The Diabetic Eye Screening is working with pregnancy clinics to get eye issues sorted out early to avoid sight loss in pregnant women.



For more information  
visit: [www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/diabetic-eye-screening](http://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/diabetic-eye-screening)

# MBS WORKLOAD STATISTICS

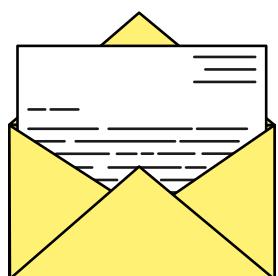
JANUARY 2026

## DID NOT ATTEND APPOINTMENTS

**193**

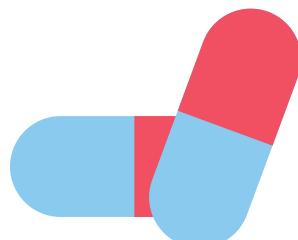
These are appointments that have been booked and the patient did not attend. The appointment was not refilled and therefore wasted.

## ADMINISTRATION TASKS



**2,233**

Hospital letters  
actioned by  
Practice staff



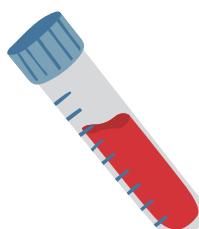
**5738**

Prescriptions  
Issued



**15776**

General Admin  
Tasks by Clinical  
and Admin Team



**2420**

Patient Results  
Reviewed

## TRIAGE STATISTICS



**49**

Patient Home  
Visits by a GP



**3103**

Face to Face  
Appointments



**2735**

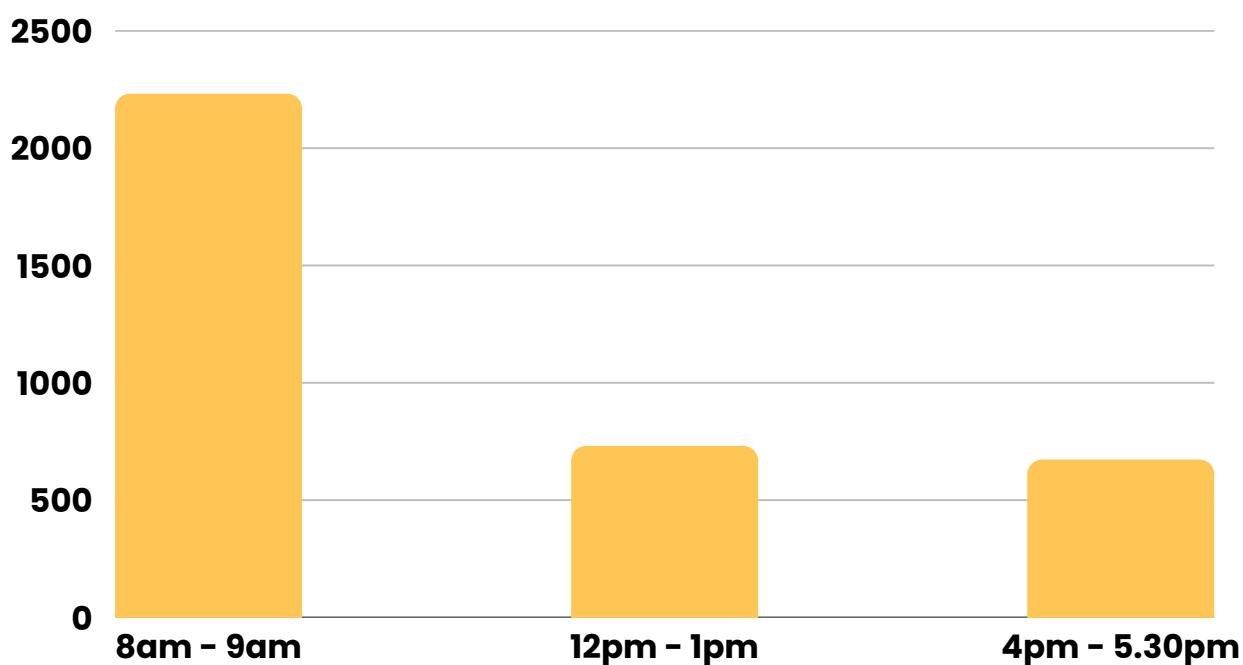
Triage call back to  
Patients

## INCOMING TELEPHONE CALLS TO THE PRACTICE

**16131**

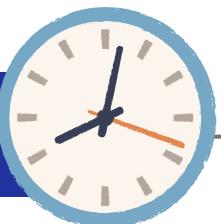


## AVERAGE HOURLY CALLS RECEIVED



## AVERAGE PATIENT WAIT TIME IN A TELEPHONE QUEUE

**1 minutes 04 seconds**



# PRESCRIPTION INFORMATION



**Meadowbridge Surgery is closed every weekday between 1pm - 2pm for lunch. An emergency line is available for urgent and emergency symptoms that cannot wait until our telephone lines reopen.**

## Prescriptions

- We remind patients that prescriptions can be ordered 7 days in advance
- We encourage and remind patients to allow sufficient time to order repeat prescriptions and have it dispensed prior to the practice closures especially bank holidays..
- Nominate your chemist preference and your prescriptions will be available for collection within 72 hours. This is essential prior to bank holiday closures.
- Dalriada are for emergency clinical consultations not for requesting prescriptions when there is a practice closure
- It is vital that patients take responsibility for their own medications and prescription ordering arrangements.

## Guidance on Prescriptions after seeing a Private Practitioner

In Northern Ireland, most patients get their medical treatment from the Health and Social Care (HSC) service which means that you don't need to pay anything for the treatment which includes:

- Seeing a healthcare professional such as a GP for advice and/or treatment
- Getting a prescription written for any medicines that you need
- Getting the prescription dispensed by a community pharmacist
- Receiving other treatment such as physiotherapy or having surgery

However sometimes patients may choose to have a private consultation and/or treatment. This is treatment that is provided outside the national health service and is privately paid for. Please click the link below to download a patient information leaflet on 'prescriptions after seeing a Private Practitioner':

**Please allow 3 working days for prescriptions to be ready to collect in your local chemist**



# MEDICATION SAFETY

While Medicines are hugely important in healthcare, they also have the potential to cause problems.

## Five Moments for Medication Safety



### Starting a medicine

- ▶ What is the name of this medicine and what is it for?
- ▶ What are the risks and possible side-effects?



### Taking my medicine

- ▶ When should I take this medicine and how much should I take each time?
- ▶ What should I do if I have side-effects?



### Adding a medicine

- ▶ Do I really need any other medicine?
- ▶ Can this medicine interact with my other medicines?



### Reviewing my medicine

- ▶ How long should I take each medicine?
- ▶ Am I taking any medicines I no longer need?



### Stopping my medicine

- ▶ When should I stop each medicine?
- ▶ If I have to stop my medicine due to an unwanted effect, where should I report this?

# CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME

The immunisation programme gives vaccines to babies and children at different ages. Routine immunisation for babies begins when they are eight weeks old. Your child needs several vaccines to protect them from infections, so it's important to complete their immunisation programme.

Summary of the changes to the routine childhood schedule from 1 July 2025

From	Change to be implemented
1 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First PCV13 dose moved from 12 weeks of age to 16 weeks of age. Second MenB dose brought forward from 16 weeks of age to 12 weeks of age</li><li>• Cessation of routine Hib/MenC (Menitorix®) offer to those turning 12 months for those born on or after 1 July 2024</li><li>• Removal of monovalent HepB dose at one year for infants on the selective HepB pathway schedule born on or after 1 July 2024</li></ul>
1 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction of an additional (fourth dose) of DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB (hexavalent) vaccine at a new routine appointment at 18 months for children born on or after 1 July 2024</li></ul>
1 January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Second MMR dose moved from 3 years 4 months to the new routine 18-month appointment for children born on or after 1 July 2024</li></ul>

There are no new vaccine products in the amended schedule – the hexavalent vaccine administered at age 18 months is the same vaccine that is given at 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age. Further information about potential issues or questions that may arise will be available in the '2025 and 2026 childhood immunisation schedule changes Information for healthcare practitioner' guidance on GOV.UK



# CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION PROGRAMME

## When and where your child will get vaccines

The Child Health system or your doctor's surgery usually sends out your invitation to make vaccination appointments. Your child can get some vaccinations in school. The school will contact you before they give your child a vaccine.

It is important that vaccines are given on time for the best protection, but if your child missed a vaccination, contact your GP to catch up. You will continue to be called for all your child's scheduled vaccination appointments when they are due. Remember, vaccinations are safe, effective and can save lives.

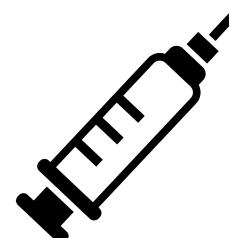
## Why your baby might not get a vaccine

There are some reasons why immunisation might not be right for your baby. It's important to tell your GP or nurse about any illnesses or allergies your baby has had.

Before vaccination, the doctor or nurse needs to know if your baby:

- has a very high temperature, vomiting or diarrhoea on the day of the appointment
- has had convulsions or fits
- had a bad reaction to a previous immunisation
- is allergic to anything
- has a bleeding disorder
- has had or is having treatment for cancer
- has an illness that affects the immune system, for example leukaemia, HIV or AIDS
- takes medicine that affects the immune system, for example high dose steroids or treatments given after organ transplant or for cancers
- has any other serious illness

For more information please visit: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/childhood-immunisation-programme](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/childhood-immunisation-programme)



# FREE CHICKENPOX VACCINATION FOR KIDS GOES LIVE IN JANUARY 2026

The PHA has announced that chickenpox vaccination will be added to the childhood immunisation programme from January, which will help protect thousands of children from this unpleasant and potentially serious illness each year.

This will be the first time in Northern Ireland that children will be offered protection against chickenpox for free through the childhood programme. Immunisation is the safest and most effective way of protecting our children against serious diseases.

Eligible children will be offered a combined vaccine for measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (the clinical term for chickenpox) – (MMRV) – as part of the routine infant vaccination schedule. The decision to roll out the MMRV vaccine is based on expert scientific advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), following research showing the significant impact of severe cases of chickenpox on children's health and hospital admissions.

If you are unsure if your child is up to date with vaccinations the easiest way to check is to look at your child's red book or speak to your health visitor or GP.



For children born on or after 1 January 2025, your child should receive one dose of MMRV just after their first birthday and a second dose at 18 months old.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY FOR THE MMRV SEE [WWW.NIDIRECT.GOV.UK/CHILDHOOD-IMMUNISATION](http://WWW.NIDIRECT.GOV.UK/CHILDHOOD-IMMUNISATION)