

Patient Q&A – The Practice Group, Brighton

1. What is happening to the GP surgeries in Brighton and Hove that are currently run by The Practice Group?

The Practice Group, a healthcare provider which manages services at five local surgeries, has informed NHS England that they wish to stop providing these services.

In response to the provider's decision, NHS England has been working to ensure you can continue to get the care you need once The Practice Group stops providing services at your surgery.

You do not need to take any action at this stage and you can continue to receive your medical care from your surgery as usual at the current time.

We will write to you again as soon as we can, once a final decision has been made about how to ensure your continued access to local GP services.

2. Which GP surgeries are affected by this?

- The Practice Whitehawk Road, Wellsbourne Health Centre
- The Practice Hangleton Manor, Northease Drive, Hove
- The Practice North Street, c/o Boots, North Street, Brighton
- The Practice Willow House, Heath Hill Avenue, Lower Bevendean

We have considered the needs of patients from each of these surgeries and need to do some further checks to make sure we can get the right solution for patients from each surgery.

We will write to you again as soon as we have completed this work to confirm final arrangements for your care.

The Practice Group also runs the Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery in Morley Street, Brighton. Having considered the needs of the vulnerable patients who use the surgery, we will carry out a procurement process to secure a contract with another healthcare provider to deliver this service once The Practice Group stops providing care at this surgery.

We are working to give all other affected patients clarity about their ongoing care as soon as possible, as we know this is important to people, but want to make sure we get this right for them.

3. When will The Practice Group stop providing services at each of the surgeries?

At NHS England's request, The Practice Group has agreed to continue providing services at each of the surgeries beyond their required notice period. This is to make sure we have as much time as possible to put in place new care arrangements for patients and to ensure a smooth transition for them across each of the five GP surgery sites they run.

The Practice Group will now continue to provide services to patients at each of the five surgeries until the following dates:

- The Practice Hangleton Manor, Northease Drive, Hove (until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice North Street, c/o Boots, North Street, Brighton (until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice Willow House, Heath Hill Avenue, Lower Bevendean (until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice Whitehawk Road, Wellsbourne Health Centre (until the end of November 2016)
- Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery, Morley Street (until the end of January 2017)

4. Why will The Practice Group be providing services to patients at some surgeries longer than others?

Under national regulations, The Practice Group had to give NHS England six months' of their intention to stop providing care at each of the five surgeries.

It would have been difficult for us to put in place new arrangements for the care of patients from all five surgeries within this limited timescale. We have therefore secured an agreement with The Practice Group to extend the time they will provide services across each of the five surgeries, in order to help us ensure a smooth transition for all affected patients.

We have had to stagger the dates when The Practice Group will stop providing services at each surgery, in order to make sure we can give proper focus to putting in place new care arrangements for patients registered with each surgery.

5. What will happen to patients/is my surgery closing?

NHS England has been working to determine how we can ensure you can continue to receive care, once The Practice Group stops providing services at each surgery.

We have been considering the needs of patients from each of the different surgeries and have been able to plan a solution that will deliver ongoing care for the vulnerable patients who use the Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery.

We also want to make sure we can secure alternative care for patients who use the other four GP surgeries currently run by The Practice Group. Following discussions with local community representatives, and having taken into account patient feedback and other factors, we need to do some further checks to make sure we can get the right solution for patients from each surgery.

If you are registered with The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Willow House, The Practice North Street or The Practice Hangleton Manor we will write to you again as soon as we have completed this work and to confirm final arrangements for your care.

6. Will I have to register with another GP practice if I am a patient at one of these four GP surgeries?

If you are registered with The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Willow House, The Practice North Street or The Practice Hangleton Manor, no final decisions have yet been made about how to guarantee your ongoing care.

You do not need to take any action at this stage. You can continue to receive your medical care from your surgery in the usual way at the current time.

NHS England may need to ask you to re-register with another GP practice, in order to guarantee your ongoing care. If this is the case, you will be given as much notice and support as possible to register with a new GP practice.

We will write to you again as soon as we can, once we are able to confirm final arrangements for your ongoing care.

7. What are the recommendations you are making for my future care?

We have written to patients from The Practice Hangleton Manor, The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Willow House and The Practice North Street to explain the current situation and the extension to current services we have agreed with The Practice Group while further work takes place to secure their long term care. Copies of the letters will also be available on our website, or from your surgery.

The letters explain that you do not need to take any action at this point. We need to do some further checks to make sure we get the right solution for patients from each surgery.

If you are registered with one of these four surgeries we will write to you again as soon as we can to confirm final arrangements for your care.

8. I haven't received a letter, what should I do?

Copies of the letters will also be available on our website at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/news/>, or from your GP surgery. If you have recently moved, check with reception staff at your surgery that the NHS has the right current address listed for you.

You can also contact NHS England using the details below if you need help:

Primary Care Team
NHS England South (South East)
York House
18-20 Massetts Road
Horley
Surrey
RH6 7DE

Alternatively, you can email england.primarycare.southeast@nhs.net or call 01293 729298.

9. When will I find out what is happening next?

If you are registered with The Practice Willow House, The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Hangleton Manor or The Practice North Street we will write to you again as soon as possible to confirm final arrangements for your ongoing care.

You can continue to get your care from your surgery in the normal way in the meantime.

10. Why can't you just employ new doctors to work at each of the GP surgeries affected?

As a commissioner of GP services, NHS England is not legally permitted to directly employ GPs itself. Only GP practices and other organisations which provide healthcare services can employ GPs.

NHS England holds contracts with GP practices to provide care for patients. GP practices are responsible for employing GPs and other staff who can meet the needs of their patients.

11. How are you making sure that vulnerable patients will continue to get the care they need?

We are working closely with each of the GP surgeries affected to identify any patients who may need additional support as we put in place new arrangements for their care.

12. I rely on home visits – will I continue to get these once The Practice Group stops providing my care?

We expect all local GP practices to provide home visits to any housebound patients, as appropriate. If you are registered with The Practice Willow House, The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Hangleton Manor or The Practice North Street we will write to you again as soon as possible to confirm arrangements for your ongoing care so that you can ask your new GP about this.

13. I was asked to leave another local GP surgery – what help can I get to find an alternative GP surgery?

If you are registered with The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Willow House, The Practice North Street or The Practice Hangleton Manor no final decisions have yet been made about how to guarantee your future care.

You do not need to take any action at this stage. You can continue to receive your medical care from your surgery at the current time.

NHS England may need to ask you to re-register with another GP practice, in order to guarantee your ongoing care. If this is the case, you will be given as much notice and support as possible to register with a new GP practice.

We will write to you again as soon as we can, once we are able to confirm final arrangements for your ongoing care.

14. Will there be enough space at other local GP practices if I need to register with a new GP surgery?

We have been working with local GP practices to determine their current capacity to register new patients.

Should we need to ask you to register with another local GP practices in order to guarantee your ongoing care, we will support you by providing details of which other local practices can register new patients.

15. I need repeat prescriptions from my GP – what should I do?

You can continue to order repeat prescriptions as normal from your GP surgery at the current time. If you are registered with The Practice Whitehawk, The Practice Willow House, The Practice North Street or The Practice Hangleton Manor, we will update you as soon as we can about future arrangements for your care.

16. I have a question about my ongoing care that I need further help with – what should I do?

You can contact NHS England using the details below if you need further help:

Primary Care Team, NHS England South (South East)
York House, 18-20 Massetts Road
Horley, Surrey
RH6 7DE

Alternatively, you can email england.primarycare.southeast@nhs.net or call 01293 729298.