

33 WEST
STREET
ALFORD
LN13 9HT



Surgery data September 2021

Total number of registered patients	7,514
Phone calls in	29,616
Average call waiting times Reception	2 mins 7 seconds
Average call waiting times Dispensary	4 mins 46 seconds
AskMyGp requests	2461
Face to face appointments	1,242
Appointments not attended	83
Prescription items dispensed	6,996
Electronic tasks completed	3921
Test results analysed	1604
Referrals sent	196
Clinical letters processed	1550

Merton Lodge Surgery Newsletter

September 2021

Welcome to the Merton Lodge Surgery newsletter.

We know everyone has had a hard year, we are keen to give our patients some information about the surgery and about our services.

The surgery as you know it today was first established in 1989 and quite a lot has changed since then.

We have staff members who have been with us for more than 30 years but no matter their service length, all staff strive to provide a quality service to the Alford community and surrounding areas.

‘The pandemic’

We know, everyone is so tired of hearing that, we are too! But it is a fact that the Covid-19 crisis affected the surgery and our community in ways that could never have been predicted.

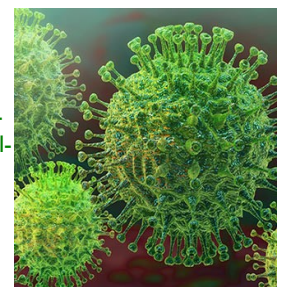
Fortunately, the surgery was already up and running with an online triage system ‘AskMyGp’ before the pandemic hit, so we had the tools to adapt quickly to helping patients while they were still in their own home. We also found that the majority of our patients

did not feel worried about how to contact us or how speak to a GP during this time, as the system was already well established.

Our elderly or vulnerable patients who don’t use the internet have called us instead and the reception team have manually taken their requests on the same system.

Some of our AskMyGp users are in their 90s!

We are aware that some surgeries followed guidance that allowed closure of their surgery during the pandemic, so patients could not physically walk in. However. Merton lodge surgery has never closed it’s doors during usual opening times, we have been here. Our clinicians have seen patients face to face throughout the pandemic and we continue to do so now.



Patients have been mostly very supportive of the way the surgery responded to the pandemic and for that we sincerely thank you!



GP's

Dr M Tant (Male)

Dr Y Ojo (Female)

Dr S Limage (Male)

ANPs (advanced nurse practitioner)

Emma Watson

Claire Morgan

Rebecca Underwood



AskMyGp & Surgery capacity

AskMyGp is an online service that our patients can access themselves to talk to us.

As a patient, you can use this service to talk to any of our departments or one of the clinicians.

How does the service work ?

When a patient sends us their request, it is first seen by trained care navigators. All the requests come in to one place and they are delegated out to the various teams relevant to the request. A medication enquiry will be assigned to dispensary and a question about a booking a blood test

will go to reception and so on. Requests that may need a GP/clinician are also seen and allocated in the same way. We look for symptoms that may mean the request is prioritised these are called 'red flag symptoms'. Sometimes more information may be requested to help with this process.

Why is the service not available all the time ?

Due to clinician shortage we have had to limit the service availability to try and manage the demand. The service is online from 8am until 12 noon Monday to Friday, but sometimes it will be offline earlier

than 12noon. This is likely because we have reached 'maximum capacity'. In this instance, capacity is the amount of patients a clinician can safely tend to in a day. So the point at which we reach capacity depends on how many clinicians are available that day and then how many requests come through for them.

If your medical problem cannot wait for the service to resume the next day, please call reception.



Your Pharmacy may be able to help and advise you, and we can refer you for a consultation with a qualified pharmacist local to you!

Please ask us about the community pharmacy scheme.

Community Pharmacy Scheme

The community pharmacy is able to deal with many ailments that may have been previously dealt with by your GP. This means the clinicians are available to deal with more complex needs.

Your GP surgery and the 111 service can now refer patients directly to a qualified Pharmacist for a consultation to discuss your condition & treatment options. The Pharmacist is a highly trained medical professional who really can help with many conditions. Below is a list of some of those conditions:

Cold and flu symptoms	Headache	Cystitis	Mouth ulcers
Worms, ringworm and scabies	Migraine	Thrush	Sore throat
Conjunctivitis	Muscle pain	Acne	Skin rashes
Bunions & corns	Wounds	Spots & pimples	Athlete's foot
Diarrhoea & Constipation	Hair loss	Cold sores	Verruca & warts
Earache & ear wax	Nappy rash	Bites & stings	

FLU CLINICS

Some Flu vaccinations have been delayed this year due to a national logistical issues. However we have been able to start our flu clinics already and if you have not yet received an invite and have a long term condition please only contact

07708667166 on Monday-Thursday's 9am-1pm.

We have sent out text messages with a link for patients to book their own appointment slot and we were pleased to see so many of you accessing the clinics and booking.

As usual we contact patients in order of vulnerability criteria. If your are 50-64 and not seen in an annual review we will be in touch at a later date.

Please don't call reception as we have been overwhelmed with calls. Please use the dedicated line only as above so that those with medical issues can be dealt with quickly.



COVID CLINICS

As with the Flu clinics many of our staff have been busy helping at our PCN vaccination site in Spilsby (many in their own time too) and are pleased to be involved in the booster programme too!

We are currently in the process of inviting those eligible for COVID boosters and know that the NHS have already started sending out text reminders and letters. You can ring 119 to book at the mass sites or if you wish to go the Franklin Hall at Spilsby Clinics please await your phone call or booking link unless you have been left a message by us to phone back.

Cervical screening information

- Cervical screening (a smear test) checks the health of your cervix. The cervix is the opening to your womb from your vagina.
- It's not a test for cancer, it's a test to help prevent cancer.
- All women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64 should be invited by letter.
- During the screening appointment, a small sample of cells will be taken from your cervix.
- The sample is checked for certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that can cause changes to the cells of your cervix. These are called "high risk" types of HPV.
- If these types of HPV are not found, you do not need any further tests.
- If these types of HPV are found, the sample is then checked for any changes in the cells of your cervix. **These can then be treated before they get a chance to turn into cervical cancer.**

You'll get your results by letter, this can take up to 6 weeks. It will explain what happens next.



Book your cervical screening (smear test) when you get your invite letter.
You can book by phone or on AskMyGP.



Community Nursing & wound care

We know that sometimes your hospital team might ask you to contact your GP surgery for stitches, clips and wound care following your discharge from hospital but this service is provided for us by the Community Nursing Team. They run their own clinics or visit at home for those that are housebound and do not leave the house for any other reason.

You will be able to arrange this by calling the Community Nurse Operations Centre. For any new requests please ring 0300 1234 868 and select option one.. They see patients from the age of 2 upwards. If you are already under their team for something else then please call 01754 767554.

Help & support

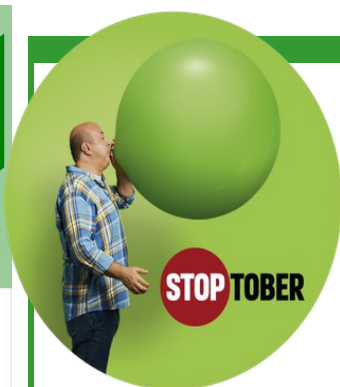
*In a world where
you can be
anything,
be kind*
x



Don't grieve in
isolation, call the
new St Barnabas
Bereavement
Helpline

The helpline is open
Monday to Friday,
11am to 3pm

Call: 0300 303 189



Quit smoking this Stoptober

Giving up smoking is one of the best things you'll ever do for your health. There are lots of other benefits too, and they start almost immediately.

It's never too late to quit, so join the thousands of people stopping smoking this October. Search [Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Or contact One You Lincolnshire on : 01522 705 162

Useful numbers to get help and support when you or someone you know is struggling with mental health:

No Panic: 0300 772 9844

Mental Health Helpline: 088 001 4331

STEPS 2 CHANGE Lincolnshire: 0303 123 4000

Please search NHS Steps2change Lincolnshire for self referral to talking therapies, counselling and support.



Alford Dementia Support Group

Receiving a diagnoses of dementia can be life changing for everyone involved.

The Alford Dementia Support Group offers local people an opportunity to meet for coffee, refreshments and a chat with other people in a

similar situation.



Informed helpers are on hand to offer support, information and a listening ear. The group meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 10am until 12 noon at the Alford War Memorial hall on Chantry Road Alford.

You can also find us on Facebook.



Early detection saves lives!

Do not delay your breast screening, book your breast screening appointment when you get your invite. Details of how to book will be on your letter. Talk to the surgery if you are not due for screening but you have concerns about your breasts.

To find out more about how to check your breasts search :

[How should I check my breasts? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Help & support

We are proud to be part of our local Primary Care Network SOLAS please find us at:
<https://www.facebook.com/solaspcn>

Podiatry services in Lincolnshire

What is Podiatry?

Podiatry is the diagnosis and treatment, by podiatrists, of diseases and other disorders of the feet.

Podiatrists are highly skilled health professionals who have been trained to prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate abnormal conditions of the feet and lower limbs. They also prevent and correct deformity, keep people mobile and active, relieve pain and treat infections. Some of the common conditions they help with are:

Dry Skin, Fungal infection, Nail care, Diabetic foot care, Corns & Callus, Flat feet, Sweaty feet, fall prevention & specialist shoes.

You can self refer to Podiatry by visiting our practice website. Go to the 'services' section and the form is under 'referrals'. Alternatively you can ask for one at the reception desk.

Visit:

[Podiatry Service : Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS](#)



Almost half of the public in England say if they could make one improvement to their GP practice, it would be to increase the number of doctors

Show your support for your surgery so it can be there to support you by signing our petition

#SupportYourSurgery

Patient behaviour online

Unfortunately we are aware that some of our patients have taken to social media platforms to raise concerns about the surgery, practice staff and the services we offer.

We do understand that when patients feel frustrated, they might post their feelings online.

What we do not understand is the need to be disrespectful, abusive and offensive. The practice staff have worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic and we are still working hard now under immense pressure with much higher demand than before the pandemic. Most of the surgery staff are also members of the local community who feel very hurt and distressed when such posts and comments are seen on community forums.

We encourage patients to contact us directly if you have concerns relating to your treatment, the service you receive or the advice you are given by us. By talking to us (not shouting) we are able to listen to you and try to help resolve any issues you may be having.

As always, the surgery does not tolerate aggressive or abusive language & behaviour when you are in the building or on the phone and the same applies online too.