

33 WEST
STREET
ALFORD
LN13 9HT



Surgery data October 2021

Total number of registered patients	7,514
AskMyGp requests	2,463
Face to face appointments	2,864
Appointments not attended	144
Prescription items dispensed	6,891

COVID CLINICS

As with the Flu clinics many of our staff have been busy helping at our PCN vaccination site in Spilsby (most in their

own time too)
We are currently in the process of inviting those eligible for Covid boosters. You can book by calling 119 or await a call / SMS from us. Please avoid calling reception if possible as this increases call waiting times.

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 it 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 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 out 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.

What if you don't have the internet or you're not 'tech savvy' ?

Please don't worry, we hope that with more patients using the online platform, the phone lines will be more available for those who need to call us instead & when you call, the care navigator will manually put your request in the system for you.

What if you don't have a phone or the internet?

No problem, please come and fill a form in at the desk in reception and we will put the request on AskMyGp for you.



Clinical team:

Dr M Tant
Dr Y Ojo
Dr S Limage
ANP Emma Watson
ANP Claire Morgan
ANP Rebecca Underwood

Cold and Flu season is here!

There are plenty of colds and viruses about at the moment but self-care can help you feel better and relieve some of your symptoms.

We do understand that symptoms of a cold can be quite unpleasant and some can make you feel really quite unwell but you can often treat a cold without seeing a GP.

You should begin to feel better in about 1 to 2 weeks, some can take longer to clear all your symptoms and some symptoms can last longer in children.

It is best to check that you have not contracted covid-19 by booking a PCR test at : www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119.

“I know it’s not Covid” is something we are hearing many times a day.

There is no way to tell if you have contracted covid-19 or not, unless you take a PCR test.

It simply cannot be ruled out for sure without a test.

Lateral flow tests are currently not advised for patients who have symptoms or are unwell.

Your pharmacist or local chemist can also help you with self care advice and there are a range of ‘over the counter’ remedies that can really help to ease symptoms such as coughs, sore throat, blocked nose, head ache and fever. Call your local chemist, or ask us about the community pharmacy scheme and we can refer you today!

GPs do not recommend antibiotics for colds because they will not relieve your symptoms or speed up your recovery and you may experience unwanted side effects on top of your viral symptoms.

Antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections, and colds are caused by viruses.

Community Pharmacy Scheme

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.

The community pharmacy is able to deal with many ailments that may have been previously dealt with by your GP . This service means that our 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.



Merton Lodge Surgery Staff

Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP's)

The Advanced Nurse Practitioners' clinical duties and scope of practice are very much the same as the GP's within the practice. The only duties that an ANP cannot do by law is to sign a MED3 (fit note) and issue death certificates. Only registered medical professionals (Doctors) can legally do those two things.

Most of our patients will already be familiar with ANP Emma Watson who brought her expertise and wealth of experience to the surgery 2 years ago. Emma qualified as a nurse 16 years ago. She worked at Pilgrim Hospital in Acute Medical and Surgical Admissions and the DVT clinic. She completed her independent prescribing at Lincoln University in 2010. Emma left Pilgrim Hospital to train as a Nurse Practitioner at Louth Urgent Care Centre where she worked within the GP out of hours service until she transferred to Skegness UTC whilst completing her Masers Degree in Advanced Professional Practice at Sheffield Hallam University in 2016. Emma has worked in general practice since 2018 and joined our team in 2019.

Claire Morgan has recently joined the practice team as an ANP. Claire qualified as a Nurse 17 years ago, she worked at Pilgrim Hospital on a diabetes and endocrine ward from qualifying. She has also worked with the school nursing & health visitor teams before going to work at Louth and Skegness Urgent Care Centres where she started her Masters Degree in Advanced Professional Practice at Sheffield Hallam University, she is due to finish her dissertation this year.

Claire is an independent prescriber and can treat patients of all ages and all presentations.

Rebecca Underwood (Becky) qualified as a nurse 8 years ago, since qualifying she worked as a Practice Nurse until she took a post within the community nursing team. She then returned to practice nursing here at Merton Lodge. Becky has just completed her Masters Degree in Advanced Practice at Lincoln University, she is also an independent prescriber and has decided to transition into the role as ANP at the surgery and no longer works in her Practice nurse role.

Becky has a keen interest in women's health and wishes to pursue further education within this field to offer a women's health service within the practice.

Becky and Emma will also continue to undertake cervical cytology (smears) for our eligible patients at the practice.

Help & support for older adults

Alford Dementia Support Group

Receiving a diagnosis 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.



Older Adult services at Alford Surgery

At Merton Lodge Surgery we are very proud to have a fantastic team of Care Co-ordinators for our enhanced older adults services.

As people age they can become more at risk of falls, or may have experienced falls that have resulted in a loss of confidence.

The Care Co-ordinators can provide help and support in referring to services that can assist with mobility, restoring confidence and providing aids for living.

They can also offer advice & assessments to anyone concerned that they are experiencing memory loss.

Coping on return from hospital admissions, especially with changes of medication can be challenging for the older person, our team can offer advice, support and referral to appropriate agencies.

We also provide care-planning & vaccinations for house-bound patients with long-term conditions.

This service can be accessed through Ask My GP and on the phone.

About the Care Co-ordinator team:

Anne Duncan

Anne Duncan is a qualified District Nurse with a wealth of experience caring for the frail & elderly. Anne has cared for the patients in Alford for 22 years and continues to work at the surgery 3 days a week.

Clare Wattie

We are pleased to welcome Clare to the surgery team.

She will be joining our practice as a Care Co-ordinator and working along side Anne.

Clare Wattie is a highly experienced nurse who has extensive experience in palliative care and the care of older adults. Clare will be working 4 days a week.

Happy retirement!

Claire Thornalley has now left the surgery to enjoy her retirement after a 47 year career in Nursing. We know she will be missed but we are sure our patients will agree, she deserves the very happiest of retirements!

Health & Screening Information

Testicular cancer awareness:

Cancer of the testicle is one of the less common cancers, and tends to mostly affect men between 15 and 49 years of age.

Typical symptoms are a painless swelling or lump in one of the testicles, or any change in shape or texture of the testicles.

Although men of all ages can get testicular cancer it's mostly younger men, the average age is 28. Testicular cancer has a survival rate of over 95% and is still classed as a rare cancer but early detection is the key to successful recovery.



It's important to be aware of what feels normal for you. Get to know your body and contact your GP surgery if you notice any changes.

For more information about how to check your testicles please search: "What should my testicles look and feel like" at www.NHS.uk

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.



Early detection saves lives!

Don't 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)
Or visit www.breastcancer.org.uk to find out more.

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

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

Visit: www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/covid-19/gp-practices/support-your-surgery
To sign the petition and support your surgery.

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. 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. The surgery does not tolerate aggressive or abusive language & behaviour towards any member of staff when you are in the building or on the phone and the same applies online too.

Thank you for your support

Talking helps

Call the confidential emotional and mental health support line in Lincolnshire.

0800 001 4331

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



People across Lincolnshire are being reminded that the county has its own confidential mental health and emotional wellbeing helpline.

Launched late last year, the mental health helpline is a joint initiative across health, social care and the third sector, it is available 24/7 and can provide emotional support, advice and guidance if you are feeling low, anxious or stressed, and think you might benefit from speaking to someone.

By calling 0800 001 4331 you can speak to a member of a highly trained and experienced team of support workers who will be able to provide appropriate support.