

August 2022

Number of Patients Registered (02.8.22) 7,237

Clinicians

GPs:

Dr M Tant
Dr S Limage

Advanced Nurse Practitioners:

Emma Watson
Clare Morgan
Rebecca Underwood
Jennifer Simpson

Appointment types available:

Face-to-face
Telephone
Video consultation
Evenings & Weekends



Faster, easier access to your GP surgery
Rapid | Personal | Secure



livi

Merton Lodge Surgery Newsletter

AskMyGP & Surgery capacity

AskMyGp is an online service that our patients can access themselves to talk to the surgery staff.

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 off-line 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 in a confidential triage form at the desk in reception and we will put the request on AskMyGp for you.

New GP consultation Service :

Merton Lodge Surgery has always been keen to engage proactively with technology. Our patients too have shown great support & patience when we try new systems to help improve our service.

The surgery continues to offer recruitment for additional clinicians to help increase our capacity and meet patient demand. We also actively engage with our CCG to find ways that we can increase our service capacity in the meantime. We have decided to trial a service offered by the CCG called Livi that offers video consultations with NHS GP's.

Find out more about Livi on page 2.

About this service:

Livi is an NHS service, it is now available free of charge to our patients.

We will offer you a video call with a GP either today or within the next 3 days.

This service runs Monday - Friday 7am - 10pm and Saturday's & Sunday's 8am - 4pm so we have a range of appointments available.

Livi GP's work regular hours in general practice as well as working for the Livi service.

The GP will be able to prescribe medication for you to collect locally, they can refer you for tests and to hospital specialists etc exactly as your GP in the surgery would.

The GP will record all information to your medical records and they will contact the surgery if we need to arrange any additional tests etc.

Please call the surgery or use AskMyGp to request a video call.

When we have booked your preferred time, you will receive a text message with your appointment details. Simply follow the instructions and register. Then just confirm your Appointment and it's all booked

Once registered you will have an account and won't need to do this again
(like with AskMyGP).

You will be sent a notification before your appointment time to remind you.

The GP will video call you at your appointment time - you can take this call at home, work, in your parked car etc - wherever you feel comfortable.

If you have any queries or concerns before or after your appointment - Livi have a dedicated patient support team and you can contact them directly as follows:

Email: Support@Livi.co.uk

Phone: 02038703029

They are there to help from 9am-10pm Mon-Fri and 9am-4pm Sat & Sunday.

We understand this may seem strange to patients, that you would have a video call with a GP but we encourage you to engage with this service. This service has been up and running for many years in other practices and has a CQC rating of outstanding.



NO ABUSE CAMPAIGN

With this campaign we are sending a **clear message – abusive behaviour will not be tolerated and there is no excuse for it.** Our staff are human too and they get affected by these incidents so we need to clamp down on any such behaviours.

There are times when practice staff fear for their physical safety. Even when that's not the case, the impact can be significant. Ultimately, abuse can lead to unhealthy stress levels and may adversely affect mental health. When staff feel that their job is becoming emotionally damaging on a severe scale, they are more likely to take sick leave or even choose to leave their job and general practice altogether.

There is a legal obligation on practices to manage and protect employees' health, safety and welfare at work. This includes their emotional safety

Unfortunately we have experienced abusive, aggressive and threatening behaviour towards our practice staff. This is also appearing to become a regular occurrence.

Merton Lodge Surgery records all calls, some of the comments heard during a review of the calls are simply not acceptable and have been very upsetting to the staff involved. Our staff have been left visibly upset and distressed following contact with aggressive patients.

This surgery **will take action** against any patient who is aggressive, abusive or threatening towards our staff. NHS England has updated it's guidance to GP surgeries, we will actively deduct patients from our list who's behaviour is:

- Abusive verbally, physically or digitally / online
- Using bad language or swearing at staff or other service users
- Using verbal, non verbal and environmental slights, snubs and insults that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative messages. **This applies to social medial platforms too.**
- Aggressive physically, in their tone, mannerisms or communications
- Violent or threatening to be violent—this can also lead to prosecution
- Unnecessarily Persistent or has unrealistic service demands that cause disruption
- Targeting a person based on their protected characteristic. Intentional or not.

We are not here to be shouted at, abused or threatened and it is not 'just part of our job'.

When issues arise, we ask patients to remain calm, respectful and polite. By talking to us, (not shouting) we are better able to understand the problem and offer solutions.

We do understand that when people are unwell, they are not at their best, but the level of abuse seen recently is becoming severe and persistent.

High levels of abuse are proven to increase staff illness & stress and contribute to high staff turnover, which in turn affects the service we can offer.

The abuse is becoming so frequent that some staff don't want to do the job anymore, and that's a big threat—perhaps the biggest threat to patient care!

This applies to all staff & clinicians.

More campaign details: www.Lincolnshire.nhs.uk/latest-news/no-excuse-abuse

NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE

Example of abuse aimed at Lincolnshire NHS staff

“You are just a stupid receptionist, I could do a better job than you.”

Our NHS staff are real people.
Please treat them with the same respect you and your family would expect to receive.

Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated and may lead to prosecution.





Zero Tolerance Statement

As a healthcare organisation we are very aware that visiting can, at times, be stressful and concerning for patients.

We always strive to meet patient expectation and deliver the highest standards of healthcare. For the vast majority of our patients we achieve this, despite the finite resources and steadily increasing demand for services that exists today within the NHS.

Our staff come to work to care for others, and it is important for all members of the public and our staff to be treated with respect.

In line with the rest of the NHS, and to ensure this is fully observed we have instigated a Dignity at Work and Zero Tolerance policy, whereby aggressive, abusive or violent behaviour towards our staff will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Shouting at practice staff is a form of abuse and is an aggressive behaviour.

Anyone who verbally abuses or is aggressive to a member of our practice staff will be sent a warning letter confirming that this behaviour will not be tolerated.

Any future violation of this policy may result in removal from the Practice patient list. The Police will be called in all cases of violence.

If the level of abuse is severe in the first instance, the patient may be removed from the list without a warning letter.

We are sure you will understand that appropriate behaviour is absolutely necessary for our staff and patients and that non observance will not be accepted.

Thank you,
Practice Management:

Dr Tant - GP Partner
Mr I Atkinson - Practice Manager
Mrs A Denman - Deputy Practice Manager
Mrs Donna Anderson - Dispensary Manager
Mrs R Harness - Recalls Manager
Mrs A Duncan - Nurse Team Lead

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 2 days a week.

Clare Wattie

We are pleased welcome Clare to the surgery team.

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

SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR CARERS INFORMATION....

NEW!!!

Clinic for Carers!

We care because you care!

Do you care for someone ?

Whether you care for someone full-time, or just help with the shopping — if someone you look after could not manage without the things you do, this clinic is for you!

Merton Lodge Surgery now holds a monthly Carers Clinic. Amanda Nottingham from **Carers First** will be here once a month for face-to-face appointments. If you provide un-paid care for a friend, relative or neighbour then please get in touch!

The advisor can help with the following:

- ⇒ Financial assessment
- ⇒ Applying for care benefits and Financial help
- ⇒ Care plans for the cared for
- ⇒ Emergency care planning
- ⇒ Advice, support and emotional wellbeing help
- ⇒ Advice on local support services

Please ask at reception and we can arrange an appointment. You can request this over the phone, on AskMyGp and at the reception desk.

Carers
First



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 Trust](#)

or call 01522 308 686

Self referral services in Lincolnshire:

Why should I self refer? Why doesn't my GP do it?

Many services have now been made 'Self-referral' which means you do not need to wait to see a GP to refer, you can go directly to the care you need, when you need it.

Some of these services include:

- **Podiatry**
- **Mental Health help for adults**
- **Mental Health help for children & young people under 18**
- **Midwife services**
- **Pharmacist consultations**
- **Community Nursing or wound care post-op or post discharge**
- **Weight loss services**
- **Stop smoking services**
- **NHS Hearing tests with Specsavers**
- **Help with drug and alcohol addiction**
- **Sexual health services**
- **Termination of pregnancy services**

Hay Fever season is here!



Symptoms of hay fever can include:

- Sneezing and coughing
- Runny, sore or blocked nose
- Itchy, red or watery eyes
- Itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears
- Loss of smell
- Pain around your temples and forehead
- Headache
- Earache
- Feeling tired



How to treat Hay Fever yourself:

There's currently no cure for hay fever and you cannot prevent it but you can do things to ease your symptoms when the pollen count is high.

- put Vaseline around your nostrils to trap pollen
- wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting into your eyes
- shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off
 - stay indoors whenever possible
 - keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
 - vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth
- buy a pollen filter for the air vents in your car and a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter

Speak to your pharmacist about treatments to help relieve your symptoms, there are now a large range of treatments available such as drops, tablets & nasal sprays that are very effective but you may need to take a combination of treatments and use these regularly throughout the high pollen season.

Your pharmacist will advise you regards the best products for you and your lifestyle.

Your pharmacist can help you - various antihistamines & treatments are available now over the counter without prescription, including some higher strength medications that were previously available on prescription, such as Fexofenadine.

We can refer you to the chemist for a consultation with a qualified pharmacist, or you can contact them directly.

You can get more advice from Allergy UK online.

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 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
Worms, ringworm and scabies
Conjunctivitis
Bunions & corns
Diarrhoea & Constipation
Earache & ear wax

Headache
Migraine
Muscle pain
Wounds
Hair loss
Nappy rash
Allergies

Cystitis
Thrush
Acne & Eczema
Spots & pimples
Cold sores
Bites & stings
Hay-fever
Fungal infections

Mouth ulcers
Sore throat
Skin rashes
Athlete's foot
Verruca & warts
Herbal sleep remedy
Pain and inflammation
Head-lice

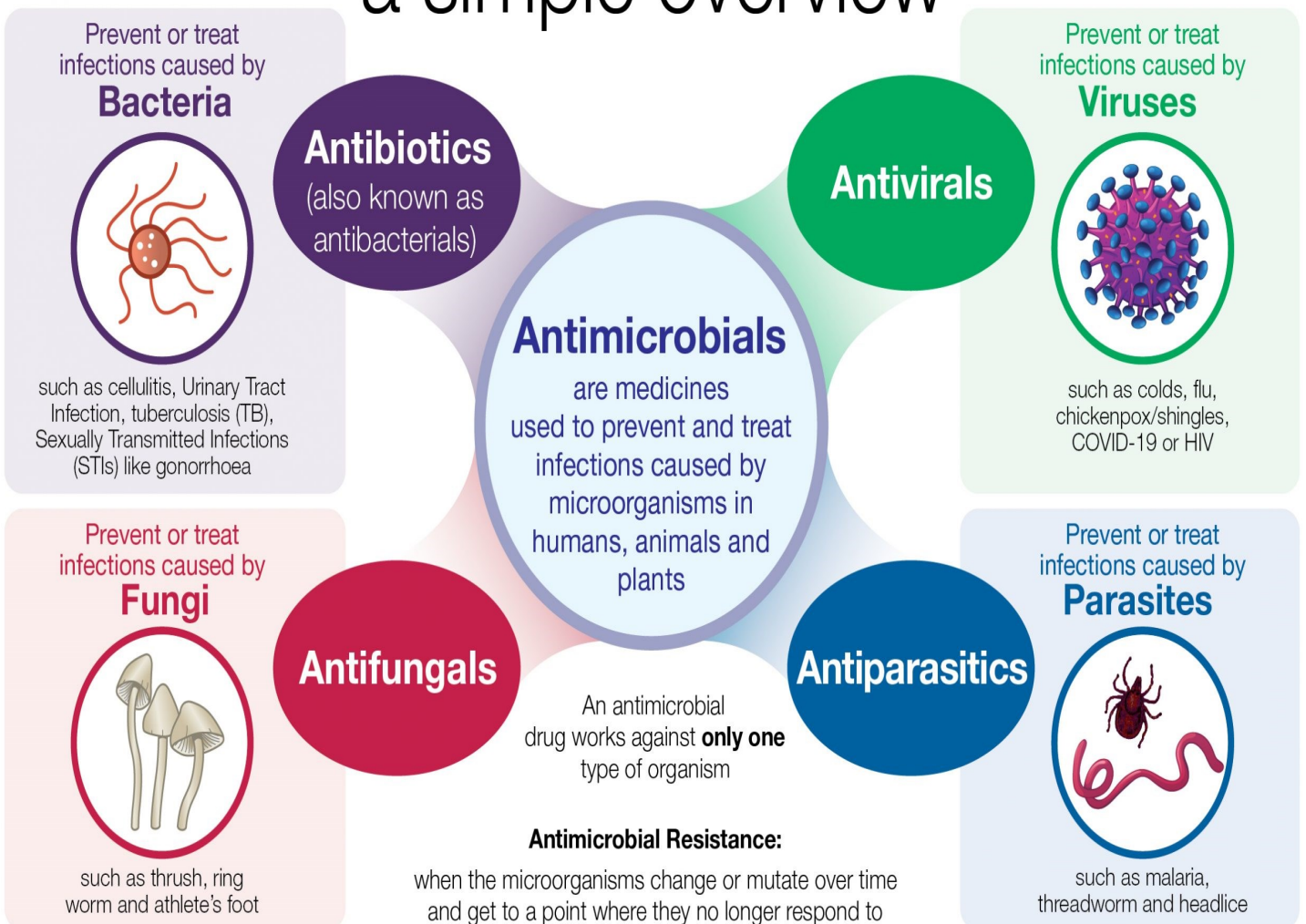
Antimicrobial Resistance:

This is where microorganisms change or mature over time and get to a point where they no longer respond to medicines previously used to treat them



Public Health
England

Antimicrobials: a simple overview



What is the main cause of antimicrobial resistance?

The main cause of antibiotic resistance is **antibiotic use**. When we use antibiotics, some bacteria die but resistant bacteria can survive and even multiply. The overuse of antibiotics makes resistant bacteria more common. The more we use antibiotics, the more chances bacteria have to become resistant to them and the harder it is to treat infection. This can lead to serious illness and increased risk of mortality.

Viruses

There are many viruses about at the moment with varying symptoms from coughs, high temperatures and colds to vomiting and diarrhoea bugs. Possibly this is the result of prolonged isolating, reduced social contact with other people and regular sanitisation during the covid pandemic.

As we have moved out of the pandemic it is clear there are other viruses that are now 'doing the rounds' in our communities.

The NHS encourages patients to think 'Pharmacy' first if you are unwell with viral symptoms. We do understand symptoms can be unpleasant, but these symptoms usually begin to resolve or clear within a week or two on their own as the body fights the virus off.

Sometimes you will be left with a cough or tiredness for 3-4 weeks post-viral infection. You can help your body to fight viral infections by keeping your fluid intake up, eating healthy foods and getting rest when you need it.

Your pharmacist or local chemist can 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.

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

Patients who are at high risk from complications, such as those receiving chemotherapy, should still contact the GP to check their symptoms.

Flu vaccines:

This years Flu Vaccine clinic planning is already underway. We expect that this year's clinics will possibly be held on Saturdays, this will reduce disruption to our weekday work-load.

Due to the success of last year's clinics, with minimal waiting times and happy patients, we will likely do this by booked appointments again. We usually aim to start these clinics from October onwards.

We do not yet have details about winter covid boosters.

Once we have more information and clinics available to book, we will release an update on the website and in the newsletter.

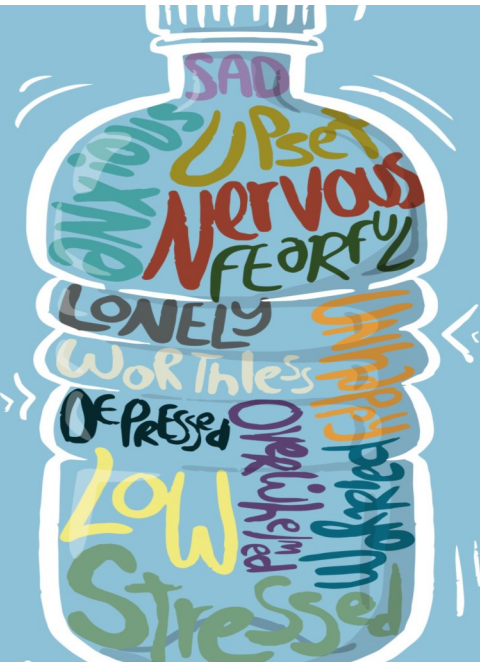
Remember, you will also be able get your flu vaccine at any chemist, you would just need to ask the chemist how to book.

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.

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 for you or your loved one.

Mental Health Services in Lincolnshire :

Mental Health Helpline: 0800 001 4331. A safe place to talk, open 24/7

Here4You: Mental health and emotional wellbeing advice line for children & young people **under 18**, parents and carers, call 0800 234 6342, open 24/7

Steps2Change service: talking therapies: anyone **over the age of 16** can self-refer via the website, call 0303 123 4000, or talk to your GP for a referral

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

Book your cervical screening (smear test) when you get your invite letter.

You can book by phone or on AskMyGP.

You can book with us or with the local LISH service by calling 01522 309 309



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

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 the surgery team. This applies when you are in the building or on the phone and the same applies **online too**.

Thank you for your support