

**Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees  
Clinical Commissioning Group**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Billingham Health Centre  
Queensway  
Billingham  
TS23 2LA

Tel: 01642 745982

24 May 2017

Dear Patient

**Important Information about your GP Practice**

You may recall that we wrote to you in July 2016 to advise you that the current contract for services provided by your doctor at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre is due to end on 31st March 2017.

We proposed that the practice would run as a branch surgery from 1st April 2017 (a branch surgery is a surgery that is run and staffed by a GP practice that has its main surgery in a different location to the branch surgery).

We invited local practices to apply to provide the branch surgery, with opening hours between 8am and 6pm, Monday-Friday. Unfortunately no applications were received.

We have therefore made alternative arrangements for you to be able to continue to access GP services at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre from 1st April 2017. Elm Tree Surgery has agreed to provide this service on a temporary basis from Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre, Tithebarn House from 1st April 2017 until 30th June 2017.

**Please note you will still be registered with Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre and you do not need to take any action.**

If you no longer wish to receive GP services at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre, there are other GP practices that you can register with. A list of local GP practices that are accepting new patients has been included with this letter. More detailed information about practices is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

I understand that this may be concerning to you, but I would like to assure you that our main priority is to ensure that you have access to high-quality GP services. I have included an information sheet which will help to answer some of the questions which you may have.

Please note this letter is only in relation to the GP practice that you are registered with and not the walk-in centre, which is a separate service. The walk in service will become part of

the new integrated urgent care centres at University Hospital of North Tees and University Hospital of Hartlepool from 1st April 2017.

Although we have not received any applications from local GP practices to run a branch surgery, we are still keen to retain your GP services at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre. Our final option to do this is to look for a local GP practice that may be willing to run the service as a part-time branch surgery from 30 June 2017.

This would mean that GP services would still be provided from Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre, but with reduced opening hours. However, you would also be able to access appointments at other times at the main surgery of the GP practice running the part-time branch surgery.

If we are unable to secure a local GP practice to run a part-time branch surgery, we will then have no option other than to ask patients to register with another GP practice. However, this is not our preferred option, and this will only happen if a local GP practice cannot be found to run a part-time branch surgery at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre.

To help us understand what days and times would be best for patients to access a part-time branch surgery at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre, we would be grateful if you could complete the enclosed survey. You can return the survey in the enclosed Freepost envelope (no stamp needed) or you can complete the survey online via the following link [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/stocktontithebarn2017](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/stocktontithebarn2017)

We are also holding two patient information sessions to give you the opportunity to ask any questions you may have, and to discuss the future of your GP practice in more detail.

The drop-in sessions will be held as below:

Date and Time	Venue
Thursday 06 April 2017 5.30pm to 7pm.	Hardwick Community Centre Whessoe Road Hardwick Stockton-on-Tees TS19 8LB
Wednesday 26 April 2017 2.30pm to 4pm.	Hardwick Community Centre Whessoe Road Hardwick Stockton-on-Tees TS19 8LB

If you would like to attend one of the sessions, please let us know by registering your details by calling the Communications and Engagement Team on 0191 374 2795 or by email [NECSU.Engagement@NHS.net](mailto:NECSU.Engagement@NHS.net).

I hope you will be able to take part and help us to improve the local service for the future.

If you have any other queries or concerns, please contact Healthwatch Stockton on 01642 688312 for further advice and support or alternatively email [healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net) .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ali Wilson', followed by a period.

**Ali Wilson**  
Chief Officer

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: Where will I be registered from 01 April 2017?**

A: You will continue to be a registered patient of Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre; however, your primary medical care will be delivered by the GPs and staff from Elm Tree Surgery for a temporary period from 01 April 2017 until 30 June 2017. The practice will provide all services from the current practice premises at Tithebarn House.

### **Q: Will the opening hours change?**

A: Yes. The opening hours will be 08:00 – 18:00, Monday – Friday.

### **Q: Elm Tree Surgery has a practice in Thornaby; will I be asked to travel to that surgery?**

A: No. You are registered with Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre not Elm Tree Surgery; all appointments will be provided at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre only.

### **Q: How do I make an appointment to see a Doctor or nurse from 01 April 2017?**

A: You must make an appointment either by telephoning the practice or face to face at reception; you can no longer walk-in to the surgery and wait for an available appointment.

### **Q: What will happen after 30 June 2017?**

A: Over the next few weeks we will be contacting patients to ask for views on the future of the practice, including the option for the practice to be ran as a branch surgery of another practice, with fewer opening hours.

### **Q: What If I want to register with another practice, where else can I register?**

A: A list of GP practices in the area which are currently accepting new patient is attached to the letter. If you have any difficulty or need assistance, please contact Healthwatch Stockton on 01642 688312 for further advice and support or alternatively email [healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net) .

### **Q: What if I approach a practice and they won't register me?**

A: As a patient, you have a right to register with any GP practice as long as you live within their practice boundary. The practice may, in some circumstances, decline to register you. The reason cannot be based on your medical condition, age, sex, gender or race. The practice will normally accept you as soon as you approach them; you may be asked for identification, and you will be required to complete some forms. You may also be asked to make an appointment to see the practice nurse for a health check. Making all these arrangements may take a week or two, but the practice will be able to deal with any health needs as soon as they receive your application.

### **Q: I am ill now and need to see a Doctor; can I still come to Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre?**

A: Yes. You can continue to be seen by the GPs and nursing staffing at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre. However, from 01 April the GP and nursing staff at the surgery will change.

**Q: Will the practice provide the same services?**

A: Some services will differ slightly, such as the opening hours. However, the majority of services will remain the same.

**Q: I have been referred to hospital. Will I need to be re-referred?**

A: No, if you have been referred to hospital recently by Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre you do not need to be re-referred. The hospital will communicate with you directly regarding your appointment time.

**Q: I have been to see a specialist at the hospital who was writing to my GP, where will this letter go to now?**

A: Any correspondence from the hospital will be sent to Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre or if you have chosen to register with an alternative practice any correspondence will be sent to that practice.

**Q: I am undergoing treatment, how will the practice know about this?**

A: Your medical record contains details of your previous and ongoing treatment and this will be available to the new staff at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre, if you choose to remain a patient of Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre or your new practice if you choose to register elsewhere. You will have the opportunity to discuss any ongoing treatment or other health issues with health care staff at the practice.

**Q: I am waiting for results of my blood tests/x-rays, how will I get them?**

A: Any test results will be added to your patient record which will be available to staff at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre or your new GP if you choose to register at an alternative practice.

**Q: My baby is due his/her injections; will I get a letter advising me of the date and time?**

A: Yes, you will receive this information from Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre or your new GP practice if you choose to register with an alternative practice. If you think your child has missed any injections, please speak to either your Health Visitor, or the staff at your GP practice. Please note that you may have a new Health Visitor allocated to your family.

**Q: I am pregnant; will I still have the same midwife?**

A: Yes if you remain registered with Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre. If you choose to register with an alternative practice your midwife may change. You can speak to your existing midwife about this letter and they will advise you.

**Q: My sick note is due, where will I get this from?**

A: Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre will continue to provide sick notes to its registered patients, where appropriate. If you choose to register with an alternative practice any sick notes become the responsibility of that practice.

**If you do not wish to remain as a patient of Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre and wish to register with another practice, you need to take certain actions;**

A list of practices in the local area accepting new patients is enclosed for you along with their addresses and telephone numbers.

Once you approach a practice, practice staff will talk you through their registration process. In order to register you will need to provide one photographic identification and one proof of address. The list below gives some examples:

- birth certificate
- marriage certificate
- medical card
- driving licence
- passport
- local authority rent card
- paid utility bills
- bank/building society cards/statements
- National Insurance number card
- pay slip
- letter from Benefits Agency/benefit book/signing on card
- papers from the Home Office
- P45.

The following will not be accepted as proof of identity on their own:

- library card
- video rental card
- health club card
- private rent book.

You are likely to be asked to attend a new patient check appointment. This will be to ascertain basic facts about your health such as your weight and height and may also include a brief discussion about any regular medication you take or treatment you are undergoing.

### Local Practices

Practice name and address	Telephone number	Distance from Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre
Riverside Medical Practice, Alma Street, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 2AP	01642 604117	1.7 miles
The Arrival Practice, Endurance House, Clarence Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 2EP	01642 615415	1.8 miles
Norton Medical Centre, Billingham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 2UZ	01642 745350	1.8 miles
Queens Park Medical Centre, Farrer Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 2AW	01642 679681	1.8 miles
Tennant Street Medical Centre, Tennant Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 2AT	01642 613331	1.8 miles
Woodlands Family Medical Centre, 106 Yarm Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1YE	01642 607398	1.9 miles