

# Darwen Healthcare



*where  
your  
health  
matters*

# Practice Information Handbook

July 2022

**Darwen Healthcare  
Darwen Health Centre  
James Street West  
Darwen  
BB3 1PY**

 **01254 964640**

 **[www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk)**

 **[darwen.healthcare@nhs.net](mailto:darwen.healthcare@nhs.net)**



## Welcome to Darwen Healthcare

Everyone at Darwen Healthcare would like to welcome you to the practice and we hope that this patient handbook will help familiarise you with the team and the services we provide. Darwen Healthcare is a General Medical Service Practice with just over 13,000 patients.

Our Clinical team is made up of 6 GP Partners, 4 Salaried GPs, 4 GP Trainees, 1 Advanced Nurse Practitioner, 1 Paramedic, 1 Physician Associate, 1 Clinical Pharmacist, 1 Pharmacy Technician, 4 Practice Nurses, 2 Assistant Practitioners and 2 Healthcare Assistants.

Our Non-Clinical team is led by our Business Manager, Senior Management Team of a Quality Lead, Operations Led, Patient Engagement Lead and a Finance Lead and a team of Medical Secretaries, Clinical Coders, Administrators, Reception and Prescription Staff.

### Practice Opening Times (excluding Bank Holidays)

Monday	08:00 - 20:00
Tuesday	08:00 - 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 - 19:30
Thursday	08:00 - 18:30
Friday	08:00 - 18:30

**Our main telephone number is 01254 964640. To ensure your wait on the phone is as short as possible there are a number of options you can select to speak to the most appropriate person for your query.**

- Option 1: GP Appointments**
- Option 2: Nurse Team Appointments**
- Option 3: Cancellations**
- Option 4: Home Visits**
- Option 5: Prescriptions OPEN 9:-12:00 AND 2:00-5:00PM**
- Option 6 Test Results and General Enquiries 1:30-5:00**
- Option 7: Medical Secretaries Voicemail**
- Option 8: Dr Ninan's Community Cardiology Voicemail**

### When We Are Closed

111 is a NHS telephone number which it easier for you to access local health services. You can now call 111 when you need medical help or prescriptions fast, but is not a 999 emergency.

You will be assessed, given advice and directed straightaway to the local service that can help you best.

Calls are free from landline and mobile numbers and you can ring the 111 number 24 hours a day, days a week, 365 days a year.



## The Clinical Team at Darwen Healthcare

### GP Partners

The General Practitioner Partners are the responsible officers of the Practice and oversee both the clinical and business aspects of the Practice. Many have a wider responsibility for Health & Well being across, Blackburn with Darwen, Pennine Lancashire and Lancashire & South Cumbria

### General Practitioners

Session General Practitioners work at the practice and provide a wide range of skills in addition to their general medical knowledge. The practice may use Locum GPs from time to time to cover for holidays and other absence of leave

### GP Trainees

We are a well-established training practice we host placements for GP Trainees, Medical Students, Physician Associates, Paramedics and Student Nurses. The GP trainees working with us as part of their post-graduate training in General Practice need to ask patient's consent to videotape their consultation for education purposes. You will be advised by the Receptionist booking your appointment if the clinic you are attending is one that is being recorded and give you the opportunity to refuse if you wish.

### Advanced Practitioners

An Advanced Practitioner is someone who has trained in a non GP role and has then carried on their progressive learning to enhance their skills to deal with a wider range of medical conditions. This can include Nurses, Paramedics, Radiographers and roles playing an important part in delivering services in line with NHS recommendations

### Allied Health Professional

Professional in a related professionals that are able to compliment the work of General Practice Staff e.g. Pharmacists who can undertake medication reviews, Physiotherapist who can look at physical problems and ways to improve mobility.

### Practice Nurses

A practice nurse is responsible for the delivery of practice nursing services, working as part of the practice multidisciplinary team, delivering care within their scope of practice to the registered patient population. They are responsible for a number of clinical areas such as health promotion, chronic disease management, health prevention, some women's health and well man clinics, as well as supporting the management team in the reviewing of clinical policy and procedure

### Assistant Practitioners

An Assistant Practitioner is someone who has advanced their skills as an Healthcare Assistant and can undertake health reviews in an number of long term conditions and interpret diagnostic readings and bring items of concern to their mentors

### Healthcare Assistants

Healthcare Assistants carry out Phlebotomy, Flu Immunisation and other routine tasks



## Management & Administration Team

The Practice could not operate without a strong, supportive Management & Administration Team. General Practice is a “Business” in the full sense of the word. It has responsibility for working within budgets, providing a vast amount of medical analytical data to Public Health Bodies and the NHS. This allows the early detection of epidemics, health conditions that may affect a specific geographical area etc. There is also a large amount of correspondence with other services such as Hospital, regularity bodies etc.

### Business Manager

responsible for leading the practices strategic development and overseeing the day to day running of the practice. Committed to the provision of high quality health and care services that are compassionate, inclusive and constantly improving and being a part of the Patient Participation Group and actively listening to patient feedback is an important factor to achieving this goal

### Operations Lead

Assists the Business Manager in the day to day running of the practice and assisting with patient complaints and feedback. Completes the rota programs for Medical Students throughout the year and ensuring that the practice team is up to date with their mandatory training

### Quality Lead

Ensures that the practice meets its targets in the Quality and Outcomes Framework and leads on the practice strategy to develop and implement vaccination programs and ensures that the Clinical Coding Team continue to effectively code medical conditions within patient records

### Finance Lead

Assists the business manager with several financial elements within practice such as payroll, pensions, claims, payments of suppliers etc.

### Patient Engagement Lead

Acts as Deputy Safeguarding Lead within the practice and leads the administrative functions associated with Palliative Care. Takes part in the Patient Participation Group Meeting to note any actions the practice needs to review

### Medical Secretaries

Provide administrations of correspondence between Hospital and other bodies, they also undertake the Clinical Coding of correspondence from those external organisations

### Note Summariser

The move to Digital Health Records from paper based requires a great deal of work to ensure the notes are transferred correctly and easy to understand

### Medical Legal and Subject Access Request Secretary

To comply with requests from organisations and individuals to provide details of records for medical or legal Purposes



## Reception Team

The Reception Team is led by 2 Senior Reception Coordinators assisted by a team of Care Navigators. The reception Team are the “Face and Voice” of the practice when you first contact. They appreciate that most callers or those coming to the reception desk are usually stressed and whilst it may appear they are asking a lot of questions this is to ensure that you are seen by the most appropriate member of the Clinical Team in the time scale to meet the urgency of your need. We ask that you keep this in mind when speaking to the receptionists as we take inappropriate behaviour seriously.

## Prescription Team

The practice receives an enormous amount of request for medication each day, this needs to all be checked against the patients medical record and then to be authorised by the GP before being issued or sent electronically to the nominated pharmacy

## Research Team

Since 2020 the Practice has been developing an infrastructure to support Research within the practice and they have been involved in a number of studies since then

**You can find more information and biography of our team on our website at [www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk)**

## Guide to Abbreviations & Terminology

Term /Abbr	Meaning
A&E	Accident & Emergency Department at the Hospital
AHP	Allied Health Professions (Non GP Clinicians who have specialist training)
ANP	Advanced Nurse Practitioner ( Nurse with advanced skills)
CHD	Chronic Heart Disease
CKD	Chronic Kidney Disease
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
DWP	Dept of Work & Pensions
FIT Note	A Document to confirm whether you are medically fit to work or not
FIT Test	A test to detect Bowel Cancer
GP	General Practitioner
HMRC	Her Majesty's Customs & Revenue (Tax)
Phlebotomy	Taking of Blood Samples
SAR	Subject Access Request (Request for Patient Notes & Records)
Smear Test	A test to detect Cervical Cancer

If you come across terminology in this booklet or General Practice that you are not sure of the meaning please email [darwen.healthcare@nhs.net](mailto:darwen.healthcare@nhs.net) this may help others also.



## Services We Provide

Our highly qualified nurses deal with a wide and ever-increasing range of conditions and health concerns. They are experienced in many areas of disease management such as diabetes, asthma, COPD and coronary heart disease. They also carry out cervical smears and vaccinations, as well as providing a range of other health services. Our healthcare assistants are able to give advice on lifestyle. They can see you for blood pressure/ hypertension reviews, health checks, phlebotomy, diabetes foot checks, urinalysis and flu vaccinations.

### Dedicated Clinics:

- Asthma and COPD - Check-ups and advice from practice nurses on lifestyle, inhaler techniques and medication.
- Baby and Childhood Vaccinations and Childhood Surveillance - Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays however the practice does offer appointments outside of these days if needed.
- Blood Pressure and Hypertension - Carried out by our Practice Nurses and Health Care Assistants
- Cervical Cytology (Smears) - Routine cervical smears are undertaken by our Practice Nurses. Guidelines state that routine smears should commence at age 25 and continue at 3- yearly intervals up to the age of 49. After the age of 49, guidelines state that the interval should be 5 years
- Diabetes Clinics - Carried out by our Practice Nurses and Assistant Practitioners
- Health Checks - Carried out by our Health Care Assistants

### Core Services

General management of medical conditions

- Health promotion advice
- Referral to secondary care and other appropriate services
- Required care for temporary residents

### Enhanced Services

- Minor Surgery procedures (incisions/ excisions)
- Contraceptive services including coils and implants
- Influenza vaccinations

### Non NHS Services

The practice also offers some medical services which are not available on the NHS e.g. HGV/Taxi Medicals and Insurance Medicals. The doctors charge a fee for these services. The receptionists will advise you in advance if you request a service for which there is a fee. The current fees leaflet is displayed on our waiting room notice board and available from reception and our website.



## How to make an appointment

As we are now post pandemic the practice will be reintroducing the booking of online routine appointments. The practice recommends using the myGP app on phone or tablet to find the options for routine appointments. You will see GPs, Clinicians and our Nursing Team Appointments. You can also use the Patient Access website on laptops and PCs.

Alternatively you can ring 01254 964640 option 1 to speak to reception. The current phone system was introduced in June 22 and has the option of a call back system once more than 8 patients are within the queue to be answered.

Appointments can be face to face, video or by telephone. In September 22 patients will have the option to use online consultations.

As with all GP practices in Blackburn with Darwen your request will be answered by a Care Navigator who has received extensive training in recommending the right clinician to deal with your condition, which in some cases may mean you being referred to a community pharmacist who can prescribe for a wide range of conditions. The referral is completed electronically and you can be seen within a couple of hours. If at any time the clinician you see feels your treatment needs escalating they can refer you without delay. You can also request appointments via our website, and we aim to respond within 48 hours.

## Appointment Reminder Service

Text reminder service is provided by Iplato. Please ask for further details.

## Appointments Duration

Please note that appointments are generally 13 - 15 minutes, Patients often present with more than one problem, the clinician you are seeing will endeavour to address most points, however this can cause an inevitable delay to patients booked in for the next and subsequent appointments. If your appointment is delayed by previous patients please be tolerant as it may be yourself that causes the delay next time, thank you.

## Cancelling Appointments

If you have an appointment that you are unable to keep, PLEASE let the surgery know as soon as possible to enable the appointment to be re-allocated to another patient. Our telephone system offers the facility to be connected to the cancellation line. Whenever possible always try to contact our reception team outside the hours of 08:00 am to 10:00 am when the phone lines are extremely busy. You can also cancel your appointment if you use our text reminder service. A failed appointment is a wasted appointment that could have been used by another patient.

## Home Visits

If you are housebound, or your condition prevents you attending the surgery, a home visit may be requested. Please telephone 01254964640 option 4 before 11:00 am if you require a home visit. Please give the Home Visit Administrator as much information as possible. A doctor may contact you by phone and complete a telephone consultation. Please remember that several patients can be seen at the surgery in the time it takes to do a home visit so this facility should only be requested if you are definitely unable to attend the surgery due to medical reasons. Test Results



## Online Access

From January 2020 the practice policy when possible will be for patients to view their results online via their usual online access to their medical records. If however you wish to telephone for test results please ring 01254 964640 opt 6 between 1:30-5:00 pm. When your test is taken you will be told how long it will be before the results are return to the practice. It is your responsibility to check your results and to make an appointment to discuss them with your doctor if you are advised to do so. We will only get results for tests where the tests have been requested by Darwen Healthcare. If your tests were requested by another organisation then please contact them directly for the results. Tests done at the hospital will usually go back to the hospital rather than to us. Please allow between three to five days for most urine and blood tests, 14 to 21 days for x-rays and two weeks for smears.

## Repeat Prescriptions

The Practice accepts repeat prescription requests as follows:

- Online Access via your registered method i.e. Patient Access or myGP app
- Telephone 01254 964640 opt 5 between the hours of 9:00-12 and 2:00-5:00
- Email: repeat.P81051@nhs.net
- Post: to the address on the front cover (If you have mislaid your re-order slip please ask at reception for a print out)
- In person at the practice Please allow a full 48 hours for collection of requested repeat medication from your
- nominated pharmacy.
- If you have a query regarding your prescription, please ring as above or email your query to the team

## Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)

- The Electronic Prescription Service enables our prescribers – such as GP's and practice nurses to send prescriptions electronically to a pharmacy of your choice. This makes the prescribing and dispensing process more efficient and convenient for you. The prescription is an electronic message so there is no paper prescription to lose. You will have more choice about where to get your medicines from because they can be collected from a pharmacy near to where you live, work or shop. If the prescription needs to be cancelled the GP can electronically cancel and issue a new prescription without you having to return to the practice – saving you extra trips. You may not have to wait as long at the pharmacy as your repeat prescriptions can be ready before you arrive. Please contact us or your preferred pharmacy to sign up to EPS.
- **Prescription Orders by telephone** The above is available to all patients. Please contact 01254 964640 option 5 . Please allow a full 48 hours for collection of requested repeat medication from your nominated pharmacy The prescription telephone line is open as follows: Monday – Friday 09:00 am – 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm. The telephone line is closed outside of these hours to allow the prescription staff to complete prescription requests
- **My GP:** The practice recommends using the myGP app on phone or tablet to order repeat medication
- **Patient Access:** Alternatively you can register for Patient Access online for laptops and PCs. Please ask at reception for more details of your preferred method. Once you have downloaded the app or registered on line you will need to contact the practice to verify your identity. Registering also includes appointment booking, ordering of repeat prescriptions and access to summary information in records.
- **Website:** You can request medications via our website
- Online patient records will include detailed coded access on consultations, medication, allergies, illnesses, immunisations and test results.



## New Patients

**Registrations:** We welcome patients located within the Darwen locality. A Registration Pack is given to people wishing to register which includes the forms for completion, practice leaflet and relevant practice information. To register with us you will be asked to complete a registration form along with a medical questionnaire and a contract of care. This is because it can sometimes still take a considerable time for us to receive your medical records if they are not transferred GP2GP. There is an online version of these files too, which you may fill out and send to us. Most of these documents can also be downloaded from our website.

We also have a health monitor which we ask that you use on registering and this will record your height, weight & BP, Smoking and Alcohol status.

## Patients with Particular Needs

As a purpose built health centre we have toilets for the disabled, wheelchair access to the building is via the front entrance. Darwen Healthcare is located on the first floor if you require an appointment at the beginning of a surgery due to access etc please discuss this with the receptionist who will try to find a suitable time to attend. We can arrange interpretation and translation services by phone for patients who do not speak English. Please let us know if you need this service when booking an appointment as prior booking of this is required. The practice has a hearing loop for patients with hearing difficulties. The practice can facilitate a practice leaflet in larger print and can provide a spoken version of this leaflet.

## Chaperone Policy

Darwen Healthcare is committed to providing a safe, comfortable environment, where patients and staff can be confident that best practice is being followed at all times and the safety of everyone is of paramount importance. All patients are entitled to have a chaperone present for any consultation, examination or procedure where they feel one is required. This chaperone may be a family member or friend. On occasions you may prefer a formal chaperone to be present i.e. trained member of staff. Wherever possible we would ask you to make this request at the time of booking the appointment, so that arrangements can be made and your appointment not delayed in any way. Where this is not possible we will endeavour to provide a formal chaperone at the time of request. However, occasionally it may be necessary to re-schedule your appointment. Your healthcare professional may also require a chaperone to be present for certain consultations in accordance with our Chaperone Policy. A copy of our policy is available on our website.

## Statement of Fitness for Work Notes (Fit Note)

You do not require a doctor's sickness certificate for any illness lasting seven days or less. Your employer may however require you to complete a self-certification form (SC2) which is available from your employer or on the HMRC website. If you are sick for more than seven days, your employer can ask you to give them some form of medical evidence to support payment of SSP (statutory sick pay). If you need to contact the practice regarding this please contact us after 11:00 am. It is up to your employer to decide whether you are incapable of work. A medical certificate, called a 'Statement of Fitness for Work' (Fit Note) from your doctor is strong evidence that you are sick and would normally be accepted, unless there is evidence to prove otherwise.

GP practices in Darwen are working with the DWP to help those needing fit notes to get back in to work or volunteering roles which can help improve your overall welfare, staff and clinicians will offer details of the service when you request a fit note

## Comments and Suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions from our patients learning all the time in order to improve our services. Please present your views in writing and forward them to Ann Neville, Business Manager or Kim Cunningham, Operations Lead or alternatively complete a suggestion form and post it to us in the suggestions box located on our reception desk or practice waiting room.



## Patient Participation Group

The practice has a very active group of patients who provide valuable feedback, from a patient's perspective, on the services that we provide. They meet bi-monthly on a Monday evening and are keen to recruit young and ethnic members to the group. They take an active part in preparing our quarterly newsletter and health awareness promotions. If you wish to obtain more information about the group then please contact Ann Neville, Business Manager or Susan Taylor, Patient Engagement Lead.

## Patient Participation Group – Patient Satisfaction Survey

Darwen Healthcare PPG carries out an annual patient survey welcoming valuable feedback from our patients. You can also leave comments and suggestions on our website

## Contact Details

It is the patient's responsibility to provide the practice with up-to-date and reliable contact address and phone number (home and mobile). Many reminders e.g. for cervical smears or vaccinations go astray because we have not been advised of such changes. We are now able to send SMS text reminders for appointments so please ensure that we have an up-to-date mobile number and have provided consent to receive.

## Complaints

We always try our best but sometimes things don't always go right. We aim to give a friendly, caring and professional service to all our patients. If you have any concerns about any aspect of our service, please let Ann Neville or Kim Cunningham know. In the majority of cases, concerns can be resolved quite easily. However, if you feel we have not dealt with the issues you have raised as you would wish; please ask for a copy of the complaints leaflet from our reception staff or our website [www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk)

## Zero Tolerance

In line with all organisations that make up the NHS, we have a zero tolerance policy regarding aggressive or threatening behaviour and physical violence. Such behaviour will result in instant removal from our list and could result in police involvement and legal action. A copy of the Zero Tolerance Policy is displayed within the practice and on our website. Telephone calls are recorded and are listened to for the purpose of quality and training and will be accessed in terms of Zero Tolerance.

## Confidentiality

We respect your right to privacy and keep all your health information confidential and secure. It is important that the NHS keeps accurate and up to date records about your health and treatment so that those treating you can give you the best advice and care. This information is only available to those involved in your care and you should never be asked for personal medical information by anyone not involved in your care. You have a right to know what information we hold about you.

## How Your Health Records are Used

You can find how your health records are used to provide direct care and for purposes beyond your direct care by reading the leaflet enclosed with your New Patient Pack or by having a look at our website Darwen Healthcare - Your Health Records.

This leaflet also includes links for further information on Summary Care Record and how to opt out. Please get in touch with Ann Neville or Kim Cunningham if you have any questions on how your information is used.

## Darwen Healthcare Waiting Room Notice Boards

Our waiting room notice boards are regularly updated including valuable patient information regarding our services, our Patient Participation Group, Non NHS Fees Poster, Chaperone Policy and our current Failed to Attend Appointments Information, current opening times and other patient information. One of notice boards will be dedicated to the services and information provided by our nursing team.



## Developing the NHS for the 21st Century

The NHS Long Term Plan looks at ways of helping people stay healthier longer or for those unfortunate to have a long term health condition, manage the services they need in line with their health.

A new structure of organisations or groups responsible for delivering services has been developing for a number of years and this was passed by Parliament in 2022 with the publication of the Health & Social Care Bill. This will set out how all providers and commissioners of services will work together to both commission and deliver services. You can read more about how services across Lancashire & South Cumbria will evolve at <https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/>

As part of this way of delivering Health Services, groups of GP Practices will be able to develop services to meet the needs of their local population. Our GP Group is Darwen Primary Care Network and consists of the three GP Practices based in Darwen

Together with the Council, Community providers and Voluntary, Community, Faith & Social Enterprise (VCFSE) they will work to improve the health of all who live in the Darwen Primary Care Neighbourhood.

But it is not just about providers and organisations, everyone can play their part by taking control of their own health, trying to eat sensibly, and having a stock of essential items like paracetamol, plasters, antiseptic creams etc at home. Making use of screening programmes to spot the signs of cancer early e.g. Bowel, Breast and Cervical (smear test) etc these can save your life

Getting the right treatment at the right place and at the right time will help everyone and make sure that those who have urgent health needs are able to access treatment without delay.

As most providers of health now have care navigation in place, ensuring those with urgent need are treated first, you could find yourself waiting longer for treatment you could have easily received at a community pharmacist or elsewhere. If you are not sure of the right place to seek help please ring the NHS helpline 111 or go to <https://111.nhs.uk/>

But always remember that if you or the person you are with have problems breathing, lost consciousness or not responding ring 999 without delay

### New Clinical Roles in General Practice

Before the NHS was formed the treatment you received was dependant on how much money you could afford to pay and often stopped many poor families getting help. Hospitals were run almost institutionally or regimentally, for their origins were in

the workhouses or military hospitals of Victorian times. Florence Nightingale, probably the most famous nurse in the world, came to the forefront treating soldiers in the Crimean War.

1948 saw the birth of the NHS and free treatment at the point of care which made it a source of National Pride. This new service focused mainly on hospitals because that was where most change was required. The multidisciplinary team that you see when visiting any hospital to stay or as an outpatient would be unrecognisable to those working in or using services pre 1948. There is team involvement from consultant to registrar, to specialist nurse / ward sister / Matron to nurse to ancillary, each playing their part in the treatment of the patient, with the ultimate responsibility being the patients consultant.

GP services were in the main allowed to carry on in their traditional ways, quite often working out of converted houses or shops. The demand for this “Free Service” increased and in the 60s/70s/80s purpose built health centres started to appear with multi partnered practices. But demand is still more than the number of GPs available

In line with national developments in General Practice the practices in Darwen have embraced initiatives to expand our clinical teams to include new and advanced roles which will significantly increase our ability to offer timely high quality clinical care for our patients to meet their needs

The new roles contributing to patient care include:-

- **Advanced Clinical Nurse Practitioner**
- **Advanced Nurse Practitioner**
- **Physician Associate**
- **Paramedic Practitioner**
- **Clinical Pharmacist**

All of these clinicians have each qualified in their own areas of expertise followed by intensive and up to date training in their individual specialisms and clinical competencies. Similar to medical teams in hospitals, their work is closely supervised and monitored by senior doctors, who retain overall responsibility for clinical care. Individual cases are referred and supervised only in line with strict referral protocols approved by the practices to ensure patients receive skilled care from appropriate members of the clinical team to treat their needs in a timely manner. To ensure the clinical protocols are applied correctly from referral, at first contact patients may be asked initial questions, by trained receptionists, about the symptoms and reasons for seeking help to ensure they see the right person in line with their needs.

