



Boultham Park Medical Practice

Winter Edition 2021

Editorial

Welcome to this Winter edition of the Boultham Park Medical Practice newsletter which contains lots of useful information. You are welcome to take a copy home with you, however, an electronic copy is also available on the Boultham Park Medical Centre webpage for you to download.

What another year 2021 has been for us all! Now we are being assaulted by another variant of COVID-19 – OMICRON. At the time of writing there have been over 568 reported cases of Omicron variant infection and the warnings are that this could rise to 1 million by the end of December. This does not include the 51,342 cases of COVID and a further 161 deaths! We are back to working from home and the consideration of introducing COVID vaccine passports, plus, the mandatory wearing of face coverings in public places. So, for those of us who thought this was going away – we thought wrong. COVID is very much a health threat nationally including LINCOLN. So please take note of the warnings and wear your face coverings, especially when visiting the Boultham Park Medical Practice where it is paramount that we protect our medical staff so they can continue to provide us with medical care. **Although most patients do wear their face coverings, there have been too many incidents of involving patients attending the Practice refusing to wear face coverings citing they are exempt.** This has led to unnecessary confrontation with staff who are trying to protect themselves as well as the other patients. Remember that the Doctors have the records to confirm this.....

It is with sadness that I have to say that the Practice staff are struggling to meet the demands put on them by politicians and the media. Whilst most patients are polite, there has been an increasing number of patients who are abusive towards the staff. **We should be supporting the staff** as best we can at all times but even more so at the moment. Please recognise the added strains put on the Practice in that they are now responsible for delivering more of the COVID vaccination. The Practice has not been given additional staff to do this but have to fit this in with delivering the annual flu vaccination and other routine medical requirements. Believe it or not – there are patients who then don't even bother turning up for their vaccination appointments without a legitimate excuse despite the additional hours the staff put in to deliver them! **We need to give our support the Boultham Park Medical Practice please – not disrupt it!**

One way the Practice is trying relieve the pressures and to save appointment times with the doctors (so that they are available for those who really need them) is to triage the calls received by the receptionists. They are not being nosy but doing their job even though the abuse they receive has also increased. Remember – if they give you an appointment to see a Practice Nurse, the Nurse will refer you to one of the doctors if they assess that you need to see one – sometimes this can mean you see a doctor quicker!

On a lighter note, your Patient Participation Group wish you all warm, festive greetings for the season.

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Also – look out for our PPG Facebook page which contains useful information.





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Message from the Practice Manager

Dear Patients.

First of all, on behalf of all the Doctors and Staff and Boultham Park Medical Practice, may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Health New Year. I'm sure most people will acknowledge that 2021 has been another difficult year for many people and hopefully the long Christmas weekend will give everyone a chance to rest and recharge and, Covid permitting, spend much needed time with family and friends. Let's not though, forget the lessons learned from the sad losses to Covid many have faced throughout the year. Please don't compromise the safety of yourselves, your families and friends and make sure you can have a safe and healthy Christmas and New Year.

For the surgery, and most of primary care across the region, 2021 has been extraordinarily busy. We have seen and continue to see demand for appointments and service beyond a sustainable level. Covid pressures have been immense and while we have never closed our doors, nor stopped seeing patients face 2 face (despite what the media report) there has been an inevitable backlog of care needs carried forward from 2020. The hospital system has significant backlogs which means even when we have referred patients for treatment, they are not being seen as quickly as we would like. Inevitably, this causes further demand upon our services as we continue to try to help patients awaiting their treatments. We are doing our best.





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It will come as no surprise that Covid and the Covid vaccination campaign has caused huge pressures across the health system, and that with today's announcement by the Government to bring forward all booster vaccination invitation prior to the end of this year, this pressure is even more magnified.

The constant use of GPs and GP Surgeries as an easy political football for the politicians to kick around, and an unsympathetic media whose only purpose seems to be to find the next negative and sensationist GP headline to publish without understanding the truth behind headlines is depressing and having a hugely negative effect on morale within Primary Care. The truth is we are tired of (physically and emotionally) and depressed by the political and media representation that is both inaccurate and at times downright offensive. We suffer from policy been made on the hoof and often the first we know of a policy change is via the media. This then stokes expectations and frustrations in patients that cannot possibly be met and for which we are not able to respond. Unfortunately, all too often this frustration results in boundaries of acceptable behaviour towards staff being breached. The good thing about the Christmas break is that hopefully our reception team in particular can have a few days respite from those who think they are at liberty to be abusive. Difficult as it is sometimes when staff are upset, we do try to remember that those who behave like this are the minority and we are reassured and very grateful for the support and thanks we get from the vast majority of our patients – I cannot possibly tell you how much this support means.

While we fully understand the frustrations of patients trying to get a service from an overloaded system, please think very carefully before overstepping the mark, for which there may be a reason but never an excuse. Please consider:

1. The reception team are not responsible for the appointment availability. If there are appointments available, they will be offered.
2. If no appointments are available, they cannot make them magically appear and no amount of pressure will change that. It is not a gift they have to give.
3. We are working at a maximum rate of effort and there is a lot of work done by GP and staff long before and after clinics finish.
4. The stress induced in staff by abusive patients is significant and will only service to make the service even more stretched as staff take out recovery time. If necessary, and as a last resort, we will remove patients from our list who are abusive.
5. Please use our service properly. Many patients try to bypass the system by claiming an urgency that doesn't exist or for admin purposes such as additional sicknotes. Doing this just creates further problems and means this with truly urgent medical needs find it more difficult to be seen- please be considerate
6. Use other services such as self-referrals (see our website) or local pharmacies etc. Not everything needs a GP!
7.and finally, please wear a face mask in the surgery. We don't like having to remind people to do so, nor the arguments that some people insist on having to claim their right not to wear one. There are very few genuine reasons to be exempt from wearing a face covering and we hear all sorts of reasons not to wear a mask but please consider:
 - a. We have staff who are both in clinical at-risk groups and also anxious about catching covid from patients and we have a right, indeed a duty, to protect them.





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In our opinion, patients also have a duty to help protect and respect our staff concerns too while you are on our premises.

- b. You are normally only in the surgery for a very short period of time, so any discomfort in wearing a mask will be short-lived; we have to wear them all day every day.
- c. A face visor can be worn in place of a mask and breathing isn't restricted.
- d. If the staff go sick with Covid (or anything else) contracted from non-compliant patients then expect the service we provide to reduce. Wearing a face mask helps us to help you by keeping our staff safe and healthy so that we can be here for you when you need us.

I know this can all sound very negative, especially at this time of year, but we do need your support. Despite the media or the politician's verbiage, our promise to you, our patients, is that we are doing everything we can to maintain the high quality of care that we have become known for. The truth however is that frontline GP surgeries are working flat out and demand exceeds supply. To deliver this care at our surgery, I am immensely grateful to the Boultham Park Medical Practice staff who regularly go over and above for patients and who continue to give up their own time to provide all the extras expected of us.

In return for our staff effort, my one big ask of you our patients though is, if you book an appointment, please keep it. In our recent weekend flu and Covid clinics, (when staff give up their own time) we have been running at anything up to 8-9% of patients booked into some clinics not turning up. Obviously if you are ill and cannot attend then that is one thing but the excuses, we hear are sometimes just extraordinary. Not attending without reason or attempt to contact us wastes appointments, denies access to others and is discourteous to those who put in the effort to open up the access for you. Please help us and make sure you turn up for your appointment. As always, we are grateful for those that do turn up as planned – it really does make a difference.

As a training practice, we continue to provide a high commitment to training activity too. Dr Coffey leads the Practice's training effort which in the last year has seen us train, multiple GP Registrars, Medical Students, Pharmacist Students, Student Nurses, work experience candidates and more. We do this as training helps keep our skills high, but also because the workforce of tomorrow needs high quality training now. We know that many patients in their appointment see this array of trainees and we are grateful for your support in helping them through their training.

I am very proud of the effort of the whole surgery team over the last 12 months during which we have faced some very significant challenges. Beyond Covid and all the other clinical demands, we have also faced significant staffing challenges, losing 2 GPs and a number of admin staff. On the plus side, we are hopefully now seeing signs of recovery with the recent recruitment of Dr Anaebgu and Dr Ahmad and we have further GP recruitment in the New Year – this is against the backdrop of a county that struggles to recruit GPs. So even while morale across Primary Care is fragile and needs work at national level to ensure doctors and nurses are retained rather than being pushed away and to ensure that Primary Care is seen as an attractive career option that helps recruitment, as a Practice we still have reasons to be positive.





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As always, I'd also thank you to our Patient Participation Group for their support. They are the voice of our patients. Please do contact them if you have things you would like to raise (although they are not there, however, to deal with complaints which should be addressed in writing to the Practice Manager).

Thanks also go to again to Colin (PPG Sec) who produces this newsletter for us. This newsletter contains some useful advice on self-help and self-care. With the increasing pressure on the health system, we all have a moral obligation to ourselves, our families and to reduce avoidable health issues and protect the wider NHS by looking after ourselves.

The NHS cannot solve every problem and much of what we deal with on a day to day basis is lifestyle driven. As we approach Christmas, many of us will over-indulge a little, which is OK. But if overindulgence starts to become a regular occurrence and weight or alcohol or smoking increases, then this starts to impact on health and increases risk of diabetes, heart, cancer and respiratory conditions much of which can be avoided we were all to be a little more conscious of our lifestyle. Please take the time to read the information provided and don't be afraid to seek help or support if you would like to try and improve your lifestyle and have a healthier future.

Merry Christmas everyone.

Neil Hewson
Practice Manager

Repeat Medication and Opening Times Over Christmas and New Year



Christmas is coming – so please plan ahead and make sure that you order your repeat prescriptions in good time. We give us at least 48 hrs to process your prescription requests. Remember that these are now created electronically and sent to your nominated pharmacy. Please also remember that we cannot accept the third party ordering prescriptions. This means that patients cannot use pharmacies or other organisations to send us requests for their medication. Prescription Requests must be submitted either from your online account, in writing or by using your repeat medication list on the right hand side of your prescription / token. By far the easiest, quickest and most secure way of ordering repeat medication is via our online service. Details on how to register for online services are available at reception.

As well as the surgery being closed for specific periods over the Christmas, so will the local pharmacies. So please give some thought to ensure you order your medications so that you are able to collect them from your nominated pharmacy.





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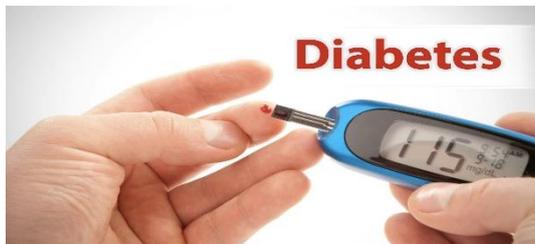
We will be open over the Christmas and New Year periods as follows:

Friday	24 th December 2021	0800-1830
Saturday	25 th December 2021	Closed
Sunday	26 th December 2021	Closed
Monday	27 th December 2021	Closed
Tuesday	28 th December 2021	Closed
Wednesday	29 th December 2021	0800-1830
Thursday	30 th December 2021	0800 -1830
Friday	31 st December 2021	0800 -1830
Saturday	1 st January 2022	Closed
Sunday	2 nd January 2022	Closed
Monday	3 rd January 2022	Closed
Tuesday	4 th January 2022	0800 -1830

When the surgery is closed, please only use the hospital accident and emergency department for genuine accidents and emergencies ensuring you observe national guidance which is being updated regularly by Public Health England. Coughs, colds and minor ailments **are not** normally emergencies and should not ordinarily be taken to A&E.

The NHS 111 service provides advice and guidance and can direct you to appropriate services when we are closed. Local pharmacies can also provide advice and over the counter medicines.

Diabetes and Obesity



Diabetes

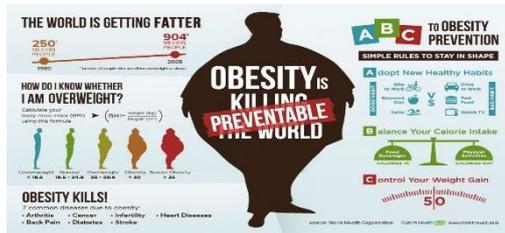
The cost of diabetes to the NHS is over £1.5m an hour or 10% of the NHS budget for England and Wales. This equates to over £25,000 being spent on diabetes every minute. In total, an estimated £14 billion pounds is spent a year on treating

diabetes and its complications, with the cost of treating complications representing the much higher cost. (Source –diabetes.co.uk 2019)



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Obesity

The most widely used method to check if you're a healthy weight is the body mass index (BMI). BMI is a measure of whether you're a healthy weight for your height. You can use the NHS [BMI healthy weight calculator](#) to work out your score.

For most adults, a BMI of:

- 18.5 to 24.9 means you're a healthy weight
- 25 to 29.9 means you're overweight
- 30 to 39.9 means you're obese
- 40 or above means you're severely obese

It's very important to take steps to tackle obesity because, as well as causing obvious physical changes, it can lead to a number of serious and potentially life-threatening conditions.

These include:

- [Type 2 diabetes](#)
- [Coronary heart disease](#)
- Some types of cancer, such as [breast cancer](#) and [bowel cancer](#)
- [Stroke](#)

Obesity can also affect your quality of life and lead to psychological problems, such as [depression](#) and low self-esteem

Treating Obesity:

The best way to treat obesity is to eat a healthy reduced-calorie diet and [exercise regularly](#).

To do this, you should:

- Eat a balanced calorie-controlled diet as recommended by a GP or weight loss management health professional (such as a dietitian)
- Join a local weight loss group
- Take up activities such as fast [walking](#), [jogging](#), [swimming](#) or tennis for 150 to 300 minutes (2.5 to 5 hours) a week
- Eat slowly and avoid situations where you know you could be tempted to overeat

You may also benefit from receiving psychological support from a trained healthcare professional to help change the way you think about food and eating.





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Smoking



Smoking is one of the biggest causes of death and illness in the UK.

Every year around 78,000 people in the UK die from smoking, with many more living with debilitating smoking-related illnesses.

Smoking increases your risk of developing more than 50 serious health conditions.

Some may be fatal and others can cause irreversible long-term damage to your health. You can become ill:

- if you smoke yourself
- if people around you smoke (passive smoking)

Smoking health risks

Smoking causes around 7 out of every 10 cases of [lung cancer](#) (70%). It also causes [cancer](#) in many other parts of the body, including the:

- mouth/throat/voice box (larynx)
- oesophagus (the tube between your mouth and stomach)
- bladder
- bowel
- cervix
- kidney
- liver
- stomach
- pancreas

Smoking damages your heart and your blood circulation, increasing your risk of developing conditions such as:

- [Coronary heart disease](#) and [Heart attack](#)
- [Stroke](#)
- [Peripheral vascular disease \(damaged blood vessels\)](#)
- [Cerebrovascular disease \(damaged arteries that supply blood to your brain\)](#)

Smoking also damages your lungs, leading to conditions such as:

- [Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease \(COPD\)](#), which incorporates [bronchitis](#) and [emphysema](#)
- [Pneumonia](#)

Smoking can also worsen or prolong the symptoms of respiratory conditions such as [asthma](#), or [respiratory tract infections](#) such as the [common cold](#).

In men, smoking can cause [impotence](#) because it limits the blood supply to the penis and it can also reduce the fertility of both men and women.





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Health Risks of Passive Smoking

Definition: Second-hand smoke comes from the tip of a lit cigarette and the smoke that the smoker breathes out.

Breathing in second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases your risk of getting the same health conditions as smokers.

For example: If you have never smoked but you have a spouse who smokes, your risk of developing lung cancer increases by about a quarter.

Babies and children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of second-hand smoke. A child who's exposed to passive smoke is at increased risk of developing chest infections, [meningitis](#), a persistent [cough](#) and, if they have [asthma](#), their symptoms will get worse.

They're also at increased risk of [cot death](#) and an ear infection called [glue ear](#).

Read more about [Passive smoking](#).

Health Risks of Smoking during Pregnancy

If you smoke when you're pregnant, you put your unborn baby's health at risk, as well as your own.

Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of complications such as:

- [Miscarriage](#)
- [Premature \(early\) birth](#)
- A low birth weight baby
- [Stillbirth](#)

Alcohol Misuse

Alcohol misuse is when you drink in a way that's harmful, or when you're dependent on alcohol. To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level, both men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week

A unit of alcohol is 8g or 10ml of pure alcohol, which is about:

- Half a pint of lower to normal-strength lager/beer/cider (ABV 3.6%)
- A single small shot measure (25ml) of spirits (25ml, ABV 40%)
- A small glass (125ml, ABV 12%) of wine contains about 1.5 units of alcohol.

[Find out more about alcohol units](#)





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Low-Risk Drinking Advice

To keep your risk of alcohol-related harm low:

- Men and women are advised not to drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week on a regular basis
- If you drink as much as 14 units a week, it's best to spread this evenly over 3 or more days
- If you're trying to reduce the amount of alcohol you drink, it's a good idea to have several alcohol-free days each week
- If you're pregnant or trying to become pregnant, the safest approach is to not drink alcohol at all to keep risks to your baby to a minimum

Regular or frequent drinking means drinking alcohol most days and weeks. The risk to your health is increased by drinking any amount of alcohol on a regular basis.

Risks of Alcohol Misuse

Short Term

The short-term risks of alcohol misuse include:

- Accidents and injuries requiring hospital treatment, such as a [head injury](#)
- Violent behaviour and being a victim of violence
- Unprotected sex that could potentially lead to unplanned pregnancy or [sexually transmitted infections \(STIs\)](#)
- Loss of personal possessions, such as wallets, keys or mobile phones
- [Alcohol poisoning](#) – this may lead to vomiting, fits (seizures) and falling unconscious

People who [binge drink](#) (drink heavily over a short period of time) are more likely to behave recklessly and are at greater risk of being in an accident.

Long Term

Persistent alcohol misuse increases your risk of serious health conditions, including:

- [Heart disease](#)
- [Stroke](#)
- [Liver disease](#)
- [Liver cancer](#)
- [Bowel cancer](#)
- [Mouth cancer](#)
- [Breast cancer](#)
- [Pancreatitis](#)

As well as causing serious health problems, long-term alcohol misuse can lead to social problems for some people, such as unemployment, divorce, [domestic abuse](#) and homelessness.

If someone loses control over their drinking and has an excessive desire to drink, it's known as dependent drinking (alcoholism). Dependent drinking usually affects a person's quality of life and relationships, but they may not always find it easy to see or accept this.





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Severely dependent drinkers are often able to tolerate very high levels of alcohol in amounts that would dangerously affect or even kill some people.

A dependent drinker usually experiences physical and psychological withdrawal symptoms if they suddenly cut down or stop drinking, including:

- Hand tremors – "the shakes"
- Sweating
- Seeing things that are not real (visual [Hallucinations](#))
- [Depression](#)
- [Anxiety](#)
- Difficulty sleeping ([insomnia](#))

This often leads to "relief drinking" to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

[Find out more about the risks of alcohol misuse](#)

Am I drinking too much alcohol?

You could be misusing alcohol if:

- You feel you should cut down on your drinking
- Other people have been criticising your drinking
- You feel guilty or bad about your drinking
- You need a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a [hangover](#)

Someone you know may be misusing alcohol if:

- They regularly drink more than 14 units of alcohol a week
- They're sometimes unable to remember what happened the night before because of their drinking
- They fail to do what was expected of them as a result of their drinking (For example: Missing an appointment or work because they're drunk or hungover)

Where do I get help?

We all know giving up the things we think we enjoy is not easy and very often help and support is needed. **This is where you can get help and support (details are also on our practice Website under self-help/referrals)**





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One You Lincolnshire



Stop smoking

You're up to four times more likely to quit smoking with the support of [One You Lincolnshire](#)

Their team of specialist stop smoking advisors offer face to face and telephone support alongside Nicotine Replacement Therapies to give you the best possible chance of going smoke free for good.

Lose weight

Their weight loss programmes are open to Lincolnshire residents with a long term condition and a BMI over 30. (Check your BMI [here](#))

They know what works for one person to lose weight doesn't always work for the next person so their team of health care professionals have carefully developed a range of programme options to ensure you have the best possible chance of success.

Get Active

Their team of dedicated physical activity coaches are on hand with a range of 1:1 and group sessions designed to get you moving more and achieving the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

In addition to their in-house programmes, they also offer their 'Get Healthy, Get Active' programme which provides a number of links with community based activity programmes such as Pilates, aqua aerobics and walking football. **SIGN UP NOW!**

LOCKDOWN WORKOUT

They have designed a 10 minute, low impact, body weight workout that you can try. You don't need any fancy equipment to participate in this other than yourself and a small space that is free from any slip or trip hazard.

Drink Less

Their Drink Less programme is for anyone drinking over 14 units per week and looking to reduce their alcohol intake to within the recommended levels or abstain for good.

In addition to 1:1 and group sessions, they also offer digital and remote support through various programmes





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Lincolnshire CCG Consultation

HAVE YOUR SAY

NHS Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are currently running a public consultation exercise on the future of four NHS services as part of their ongoing work to develop and improve the services they can offer to our local population.

The services being consulted on are:

- Orthopaedic surgery across Lincolnshire
- Urgent and emergency care at Grantham and District Hospital
- Acute medical beds at Grantham and District Hospital
- Stroke services across Lincolnshire

You can complete the questionnaire here: <https://www.lincolnshire.nhs.uk/get-involved/our-campaigns/changes-to-nhs-services/complete-consultation-questionnaire>

If you, or someone you represent, has a question or would like to request supporting documents (also available in a different language), please contact lccg.asr-enquiries@nhs.net or 01522 421860 Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm.

This consultation is running for 12 weeks from 30 September 2021 until 23 December 2021

The following four pages are extracts from the CCG which outline what is happening including the opportunity to attend a consultation meeting. Please take time to read them or go to their webpage.





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Home Fire Safety

During the winter season we spend a lot more time indoors and it's easy to forget to be careful when doing things on a regular basis. It's when we forget to be careful when it may result in a home fire.

Kitchen Safety

Kitchens and cooking are the main causes of house fires.



To keep your kitchen safe:

- consider fitting a heat alarm in your kitchen
- do not cook if you have been drinking alcohol, or taking drugs or medication
- keep the grill clean to avoid a build-up of fat or food
- check that your toaster is clean and away from curtains or cupboards
- avoid leaving oven gloves or tea towels on, or near, your hob and oven

While you are cooking:

- avoid being distracted. If you need to leave the hob, take the pans off the heat
- turn saucepan handles so they do not stick out or are over another ring
- take care if you are wearing loose clothing as it could catch fire
- do not put metal in the microwave
- always double check the hob is turned off when finished

Deep fat fryers

It is safer to use a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer to cook chips or use the oven. If you choose to deep fat fry:

- never fill a chip pan more than a third full of oil
- turn off the heat and leave the oil to cool if it starts to smoke

In the case of a chip pan fire, turn off the heat (if it is safe), get out and call 999.

Never use water on a chip pan fire, as it will explode.





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Heaters and Electric Blankets



Central heating, portable heaters and electric blankets can cause fires. To reduce your risk, you must maintain and use them correctly.

For all heating, you must also get an audible carbon monoxide alarm.

You should know the [symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and what to do](#). See Below

For central heating:

- have your boiler serviced annually
- check for warning signs that your appliances are not working properly

For portable heaters:

- do not sit too close (keep them at least 1m away)
- keep them away from curtains and furniture
- do not buy them second hand
- do not dry washing near or on them
- make sure they are on a flat surface and cannot fall over easily

For electric blankets:

- read the instructions and warnings provided by the manufacturer
- replace them every 10 years
- replace them if you notice any damage, such as frays or burns
- do not fold them as it can damage the wiring
- do not get them wet

Carbon Monoxide

The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are not always obvious especially with low-level exposure. A tension type headache is the most common symptom of mild carbon monoxide poisoning. Other symptoms include:

- dizziness
- feeling sick
- tiredness and confusion
- stomach pain
- shortness of breath and difficulty breathing

The symptoms of exposure to low levels of carbon monoxide can be similar to those of food poisoning and flu. But unlike flu, carbon monoxide poisoning does not cause a high temperature.





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The symptoms can gradually get worse with prolonged exposure to carbon monoxide, leading to a delay in diagnosis. However, your symptoms may be less severe when you're away from the source of carbon monoxide. If this is the case, you should investigate the possibility of a carbon monoxide leak and ask a suitably qualified professional to check any appliances you think may be faulty and leaking gas.

The longer you inhale the gas, the worse your symptoms will be. You may lose balance, vision and memory and, eventually, you may lose consciousness.

This can happen within 2 hours if there is a lot of carbon monoxide in the air.

Treating Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Seek medical advice from your GP if you think you have been exposed to low levels of carbon monoxide.

Go to your local A&E straight away if you think you have been exposed to high levels

Your symptoms will often indicate whether you have carbon monoxide poisoning, but a blood test will confirm the amount of carboxyhaemoglobin in your blood. A level of 30% indicates severe exposure.

People who smoke can often have higher than normal levels of carboxyhaemoglobin in their blood which can sometimes make it difficult to interpret results.

Mild carbon monoxide poisoning does not usually need hospital treatment, but it's still important that you seek medical advice.

Your house will also need to be checked for safety before anyone returns.

For more information take a look at the following:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/carbon-monoxide-poisoning/>

You can always install a Carbon Monoxide alarm





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Electrical Safety



Electricity can kill or injure people and cause damage to property. There are steps you can take to reduce the risk of electrical accidents in your home.

For cables and plugs:

- do not overload sockets with too many appliances
- keep an eye out for fraying power leads
- switch off and unplug appliances when not in use, unless designed to stay on
- never charge or place electrical equipment under pillows or blankets

To avoid house fires due to electrical appliances:

- register your appliances at <https://www.registermyappliance.org.uk/> This will let you know of any safety repairs or recalls
- make sure your electrical appliances are not near water
- have them serviced once a year
- do not leave washing machines, tumble dryers or dishwashers on when you are out or asleep
- beware of fake products as they may not meet safety requirements

For more electrical home safety advice, visit the following webpage:

<https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/safety-around-the-home/>

Smoking and Vaping

More people die in fires caused by smoking than any other causes.

If you do smoke in your home:

- do not smoke if you are tired or in bed
- do not leave cigarettes alight
- double check your cigarette is stubbed out
- use a proper ash tray which has water in
- do not leave matches or lighters within reach of children
- make sure you have working smoke alarms and test them

To reduce your risk of fire or accident whilst vaping:

- only use the charger supplied with your vaping kit
- read the instructions and warnings provided by the manufacturer
- do not over-tighten the screwed connection to the battery
- do not leave your e-cigarette on charge overnight or unattended
- only buy chargers with the CE mark





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Candle Safety



Candles are often used for birthdays, family occasions and religious festivals.

It is safer to use battery-powered candles. If you do use anything with a naked flame, it should be treated with care. You should:

- never leave a burning candle unattended
- always keep candles away from soft furnishings
- make sure candles are secured in a proper holder, on a heat-resistant surface
- keep candles out of reach of animals and children
- keep candles away from hair and clothing
- check that you extinguish candles after use
- keep lighters and matches are out of the reach of children
- never move a lit candle

Chimney Safety



Chimney fires are usually due to poor maintenance or a blocked flue. The risk of having a chimney fire reduces when chimneys are swept regularly. It also reduces the risk of a build-up of carbon monoxide.

How often you should sweep your chimney depends on the type of fuel you use. The recommendations are:

- smokeless fuels – once a year
- coal – twice a year
- wood – four times a year
- oil – once a year
- gas – once a year

For more safety advice or to find an approved chimney sweep, visit the National Association for Chimney Sweeps. <https://nacs.org.uk/advice>





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Connect to Support

Connect to Support Lincolnshire is an online information and advice library, community directory and marketplace for adults in Lincolnshire. The website is intended for adults who want to find out about local groups, activities and services within the community.



Connect to Support Lincolnshire will provide people with a range of options on how care, support, health and community services can be accessed. Alongside the website, it will offer remote support by telephone, email, and web chat. The site provides an online directory of providers and services, alongside information and advice content pages.

The website can be accessed at: <https://lincolnshire.connecttosupport.org/>



Mental Health

Staying Safe Website

The Staying Safe website is a potentially life-saving resource developed by 4 Mental Health with invaluable input from people who have survived suicidal thoughts and those personally affected by suicide through bereavement. [StayingSafe.net](https://staying-safe.net) offers compassion, kindness and easy ways to help keep people safer from thoughts of harm and suicide, seek support and discover hope of recovery through powerful videos from people with personal experience.

The website provides vital 'Safety Plan' guidance tools with easy to print / online templates and guidance video tutorials purposefully designed to help people through the process of writing their own Safety Plan. A Safety Plan helps to build hope, identify actions and strategies to resist suicidal thoughts and develop positive ways to cope with stress and emotional distress.

Everyone is encouraged to PREPARE for possible difficult times ahead BEFORE they happen, by completing a Safety Plan.

During times of deep distress, Safety Plans become a vital and valuable reminder of:

- What people can do for themselves to get through difficult times
- Practical ways they can make their situation safer
- Who to contact for support
- Where to go or who to contact in an emergency

It is **4 Mental Health's** hope that anyone currently in extreme distress can share our hope that recovery is possible with the right support and that one day keeping a Safety Plan will be common place and regarded an extension of wellbeing and self-care.





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Christmas Quiz Questions

1. What are the names of Father Christmas' eight reindeers (excluding Rudolph!)?
2. Where is Wenceslas square?
3. What are the names of the seven dwarfs in Snow White?
4. What did the three wise men bring to baby Jesus?
5. On Boxing Day of what year was the 'Snowman' first shown on TV?
6. According to the Christmas classic It's a Wonderful Life, what happens every time a bell rings?
7. Which character declares "Merry Christmas, one and all!" in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol?
8. What is Will Ferrell's character's name in Elf
9. What did my true love send to me on the 8th day of Christmas?
10. How many ghosts show up in A Christmas Carol?





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Christmas Quiz Answers

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donder and Blitzen | 8 Points |
| 2. Prague, Czech Republic | 1 Point |
| 3. Doc, Happy, Sneezzy, Sleepy, Bashful, Grumpy, Dopey | 7 Points |
| 4. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh | 3 Points |
| 5. 1982 | 1 Point |
| 6. An angel gets its wings | 1 Point |
| 7. Tiny Tim | 1 Point |
| 8. Buddy | 1 Point |
| 9. Maids a Milking | 1 Point |
| 10. 4 - Jacob Marley, Christmas Past Present and Future | 1 Point |
| Total | 25 Points |





THE CONTRIBUTOR

Say hello to the latest opportunities to have your say and get involved with your local NHS

Be heard, shape your NHS

#LincsTogether 

Final chance to have your say!

HAVE YOUR SAY

We are consulting on four of Lincolnshire's NHS services

- Orthopaedic surgery
- Urgent and emergency care at Grantham and District Hospital
- Acute medical beds at Grantham and District Hospital
- Stroke services

Find out more and complete our questionnaire at www.lincolnshire.nhs.uk



Full details of all the ways to get involved can be found on the Lincolnshire NHS website here: <https://www.lincolnshire.nhs.uk>

Consultation to close on Thursday 23 December





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We want people across Lincolnshire to **get involved and to have their say**. If you live in, or use these services in Lincolnshire, we would really welcome your views on their future because the final decision about these four NHS services may affect you.

You can respond to the consultation by:

Completing the [questionnaire](#) and sending it back to us at Opinion Research Services, FREEPOST SS1018, PO Box 530, Swansea, SA1 1ZL (no stamp required)

OR

Completing the same [questionnaire online](#)

The questionnaire is available in other languages and formats. To request alternative formats or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us on **01522 421860** Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm.

We are returning to Grantham, Lincoln and Boston with an additional event now being held in Louth!

Help us to shape
your health and care services.



Upcoming consultation events.

Click on the link below to book your place at one of our upcoming consultation events

[Attend a consultation event](#)

CCG Listening Clinics – UPDATE



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Due to the recent strengthening of the Plan B COVID-19 restrictions, CCG Staff have been required to revise the below scheduled listening clinic and will be holding this via telephone, virtual meeting and online survey

Old Leake Medical Centre

Tuesday, 14 December 2021

at 9.30 am—11.30 am

To provide your feedback via telephone, e-mail, or arrange a virtual meeting at a convenient time, please contact Nikki Pepper, Engagement Manager

Mobile: 07814 226996

E-mail: lccg.involveus@nhs.net

Alternatively, please leave your feedback via our online survey: https://nhslincolnshire.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ceThxXYGyz71si

Two GP practices in the centre of Lincoln could merge if proposed plans are given the green light

A 6-week engagement exercise on the plans has been launched until 12 noon on Sunday 15 January 2022.

Newark Road Surgery and Portland Medical Practice are encouraging patients registered at the practices to share their views.

Newark Road has over 7,000 patients registered at the surgery, whereas Portland has nearly 22,000 patients registered across its three sites: Portland Street, Newland Health Centre, and the University of Lincoln Health Service.

Patients can do this via a questionnaire available online:

https://nhslincolnshire.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bkpkNB5Pay5bnFk





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Please complete by 12 noon on Sunday 15 January 2022.

A series of events for patients to attend have been planned, where patients can hear more about the proposals, and ask questions or share their views. Patients wishing to attend will need to book in advance.

***Please note due to recent government announcement these events will now be held virtually. To find out more about when these events are, please visit the [Lincolnshire CCG website](#)**

A list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) are also available on the CCG website.

NHS England & NHS Improvement – Midlands Consultation Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery Specialist Dental Service Consultation – 23 November 21 until 21 December 21

The East Midlands Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery contracts are up for renewal in 2023 and we would like to involve the public and key stakeholders in shaping future specialist services. The Intermediate Minor Oral Surgery is a referral service for patients over the age of 16 years that provides complex extractions and treatment under conscious sedation, where required for some minor oral surgery procedures in a community setting. The service is provided by clinicians with enhanced specialist qualifications and experience.

A number of service models have been considered to develop the consultation proposals to enable the specialist NHS dental service to be provided at the right time to meet the needs of patients. We are looking for feedback from the public and key stakeholders.

Email: england.em-dentalengage@nhs.net

feedback needs to be completed by 5.00pm on 21 December 2021. The link to the on-line consultation and QR codes are:





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Lincolnshire:

<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/imos-services-lincolnshire/>

Covid booster and Flu vaccinations available for those who are eligible

Booster Vaccines

If you're eligible, you can pre-book your COVID-19 booster appointment from five months (152 days) after your second dose. Book or manage a booster dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine at <http://ow.ly/LtuE50GLero>

Flu Vaccines

Many adults, most children and all pregnant women are eligible for a free flu vaccine. Find out who is eligible and where you can get the flu vaccine at www.nhs.uk/wintervaccinations

Get involved with surrounding CCGs

If you live on the border of Lincolnshire, you may access some of your healthcare outside the county

If you want to be involved and have your say regarding health and care services outside of Lincolnshire, follow the below link:

[Get Involved with surrounding CCGs – Lincolnshire CCG](#)





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Hot off the press

Keep up to date with the latest news and what's happening across Lincolnshire NHS

[Order your bank holiday prescriptions early – Lincolnshire CCG](#)

[NHS in Lincolnshire getting cranked up for extension of covid booster programme – Lincolnshire CCG](#)

[Lincolnshire health trusts united in tackling NHS fraud :: Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust](#)

Stay connected – follow us on social media!

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 www.lincolnshireccg.nhs.uk

