

Proposed closure of Woodlands Park Health Centre's branch site at Dinnington Health Centre

Frequently Asked Questions as at 06/03/17

This document will be updated as questions are raised by patients and stakeholders

1) Why is Woodlands Park Health Centre looking to close their branch site at Dinnington Health Centre.

The number of patients registered as patients of Woodlands Park Health Centre at Dinnington Health Centre has declined over recent years; the current number is 466 patients, the vast majority of whom choose to be seen at our main Wideopen surgery when they require a GP appointment and new patients do not generally utilize the dispensing service provided by the practice.

The number of patients using the dispensary service has been falling over the past few years, bringing into question the financial viability of the Dinnington branch surgery going forward.

The branch site offers limited access to GP appointments; GP clinics are held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 2pm - 3pm, with the reception area manned from 1.30pm – 3pm.

Dinnington Health Centre provides limited options for the provision of other services; as there is only one consulting room, we are not able to provide nurse clinics for those patients who require this care locally from our Practice Nursing Team.

2) Will I still be able to be registered as a patient at Woodlands Park Health Centre, if the Dinnington Branch Closes?

Yes, existing patients who live in Dinnington who are currently registered at Woodlands Park Health Centre can remain on the practice list. Patients will need to be seen for their consultations at the main Surgery on Canterbury Way in Wideopen.

3) I am housebound will I still have access to Home Visits, if the Dinnington branch surgery closes.

Yes, for existing patients who are recorded as being housebound, then home visits will be provided. If a current patient becomes housebound, then we would recommend that they register at another Practice which covers the Dinnington catchment area.

4) I currently collect my medication / prescription from the Dinnington Health Centre, how will I collect it, if the branch closes

Your medication and prescriptions will be available for collection at the Main Surgery on Canterbury Way in Wideopen. The Main Surgery is open from 8.30am – 6pm, Monday – Friday, excluding bank holidays.

Please note that Dispensing services are to cease with effect from 31st March 2017, you will therefore request your medication from the Practice's directly and either collect your prescription or request that your prescription if fulfilled by a chemist.

5) Will the Dinnington Health Centre be permanently closed if Woodlands Park Health Centre closes their branch site at Dinnington Health Centre.

No, Ponteland Medical Group will continue to provide their GP services from the Dinnington Health Centre as a branch site as they do now.

6) There are new housing developments in progress in Dinnington, which will increase the number of people living in the area, will this not increase the number of patients registered at the practice

The housing developments will take some years to reach completion and there is no guarantee that those patients will register with Woodlands Park Health Centre or utilize the limited GP appointments which we are currently able to offer at the Dinnington Health Centre.

7) I currently collect my prescription / medication as a Dispensing patient from the Dinnington Health Centre

Prescriptions and medication will be available to be collected from our main surgery on Canterbury Way, Wideopen. Additionally, any patient can nominate a local or national pharmacy to allow their prescriptions to be sent electronically for dispensing, i.e. Boots Chemists in Kingston Park or Davison's Chemist in Wideopen. Additionally Davison's Chemists attend the Practice on a daily basis to collect paper prescriptions and these can be dispensed and collected from one of their branches or delivered [subject to their criteria for deliveries].

Please note that Dispensing services are to cease with effect from 31st March 2017, you will therefore request your medication from the Practice's directly and either collect your prescription or request that your prescription if fulfilled by a chemist.

8) Is the proposal to close the whole Dinnington Health Centre building permanently?

No, this proposal is just to close the branch surgery of Woodlands Park Health Centre. Ponteland Medical Group who occupies the building when Woodlands Park Health Centre are not in attendance will still be using Dinnington Health Centre as one of their branch surgeries.

9) If GP appointments were available in the morning, then more patients would use Dinnington Health Centre?

Woodlands Park Health Centre is not able to offer GP appointments in the morning at Dinnington Health Centre as the building is used by its other tenant; Ponteland Medical Group, there is no ability for both practices to provide appointments at the same time as there is only one consulting room and reception area.

10) If the building closes, will the land be sold for residential development?

Please see the answer to Q8, Ponteland Medical Group will continue to provide a branch surgery in Dinnington, and there are no current plans to close the building permanently.

11) Is the proposed closure of the branch site connected to the Dispensary / Finance Manager leaving?

No, The Dispensary / Finance Manager will remain in post. **Please note** that Dispensing services are to cease with effect from 31st March 2017, you will therefore request your medication from the Practice's directly and either collect your prescription or request that your prescription if fulfilled by a chemist.

12) Would reducing the number of clinics held at Dinnington Health Centre from 3 to 2 clinics per week help?

No, the number of patients using the dispensary service has been falling over the past few years, bringing into question the financial viability of the Dinnington branch surgery going forward, reducing the number of clinics would not improve the situation.

13) The public transport options from Dinnington to Wideopen can be intermittent and unreliable, if the branch surgery closes then I would struggle to get to Wideopen for GP appointments.

Whilst we understand the potential difficulties in relation to public transport, unfortunately this falls out of the remit of this engagement process. We would advise directing concerns / queries to the relevant public transport operator, so that they are aware of these concerns.

Alternatively, Ponteland Medical Group will continue to provide a branch surgery from Dinnington Health Centre and patients have the option to change GPs at any point in time.