



Byron Medical Practice

Spring Newsletter 2026

Byron Medical Practice
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Booster Vaccinations

Thank you for your support and commitment to delivering the 2025 autumn COVID-19 and flu vaccination campaigns. Following the governments acceptance of advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), we are now planning the Spring Covid Vaccination. Clinics will begin week commencing 20th April 2026 and the programme will be completed by 30th June 2026

Eligible cohorts in spring 2026

- adults aged 75 years and over.
- residents in care homes for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed

The NHS and Byron Medical Practice will plan to invite and vaccinate those eligible for a spring dose by 30th of June, via a combination of local and national invitations.

You should be offered an appointment between April and June, with those at highest risk being called in first. You will be invited to have your booster around 6 months after your last dose, but you can have it as soon as 3 months.

If you are turning 75 years of age between April and June, you do not have to wait until your birthday, you can attend when you are called for vaccination.

The practice is closed on the following days

4th of May 2026 - Early May Bank Holiday

25th of May 2026- Spring Bank Holiday

31st of August 2026- Summer Bank Holiday



Keep your mobile number up to date

It is important that you keep your mobile number up to date with the practice. This helps us send you any updates or changes that may be happening in the practice.



Did you know you can get help and advice from

Your Pharmacist

Pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and will tell you if you need to see a doctor.



Your GP Online

Contact your GP via a E-consultation, [Consult Online from Home - Byron Medical Practice \(webgp.com\)](http://www.byronmedicalpractice.co.uk/webgp.com). Your query will be reviewed and answered by your GP within 48 hours, often the same day

NHS 111

Go to NHS 111 Website, [Get help for your symptoms - NHS 111](http://www.nhs.uk) or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you are not sure what to do.

The sooner you get advice, the sooner you're likely to get better.

[In an emergency, go to A&E immediately or call 999.](#)



Did Not Attend Appointments

January- 135 DNA

February- 132 DNA

March -183 DNA

Please cancel any appointments you do not need. Repeated DNAs may result in you being removed from the practice list.

ANNUAL REVIEW REMINDERS



If we have invited you for an Annual Review, it's never too late to make an appointment. Annual Reviews and Drug Monitoring are important - we can't keep prescribing some medicines without catching up with you.

RSV Vaccination

The RSV vaccine helps protect against infection with RSV, a common virus that can make babies and older adults seriously ill. It's offered on the NHS if you're pregnant, aged 75 or over, or live in a care home for older adults.

What the RSV vaccine is for

The RSV vaccine helps protect against [respiratory syncytial virus \(RSV\)](#) infections.

RSV is a common cause of coughs and colds. Most people get it several times during their life.

It usually gets better by itself, but in some people (especially babies and older adults) it can cause illnesses, such as:

- [pneumonia](#) (a lung infection)
- [bronchiolitis](#) (a chest infection that affects babies)

These illnesses can cause serious breathing problems. They may need to be treated in hospital and can be life-threatening.

Getting an RSV infection can also make your symptoms worse if you have a lung condition, such as [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#).

The RSV vaccine helps reduce the risk of serious breathing problems like pneumonia and bronchiolitis.

Who should have the RSV vaccine

You can get a free RSV vaccination on the NHS if:

- you're 28 weeks pregnant or more – the vaccine is recommended during every pregnancy to help protect your baby after they're born
- you're aged 75 or over
- you live in a care home for older adults



First Contact Physiotherapist



First contact physiotherapists (FCPs) are advanced practitioners working within primary care with extensive expertise in the clinical assessment, diagnosis and management of musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions.

- FCPs see patients with (suspected or diagnosed) MSK conditions as the first point of contact, instead of a GP, and can be accessed directly by contacting the practice's reception.
- A typical FCP appointment involves assessment, diagnosis and first-line treatment. FCPs can also refer patients for a course of physiotherapy treatment, order investigations or make referrals into secondary care services using the same pathways as GPs.
- As a person-centred service, most appointments include self-management advice, social prescribing, and discussions about physical activity and fitness for work.

To find out more information please see below link. The NHS YouTube channel which gives precise information about the role of FCP. <https://youtu.be/nkfGekREHeE?si=-MKjPbjxcAKaWTzq>

MSK Referrals

From 16th March 2026: Patients can self-refer to MSK through Systemconnect

- System Connect is the ONLY referral route into MSK for self-referrals.
 - Self-referral should be the go-to method of referral into the service.
 - Self-referrals increase (aligned with national care models).
 - Patients complete structured questionnaires/e-consult providing structured clinical information before triage.
 - The new system ensures accurate triage, faster specialist advice, and sustainable service delivery.
- Advanced physiotherapists and Extended scope physiotherapists (ESP) run a “see and treat” clinical triage model.
- Stronger emphasis on self-management where safe and appropriate.
 - Improved communication with patients and allows them to access/book their own appointment.

To self refer click the link below to complete your referral to MSK.

cddft.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy/self-referral

Should you have any further queries please contact MSK/Physio direct, on 01388 455 200.

Service update- Work well referral service

WorkWell County Durham is a free NHS service. A coach can listen to the patients needs and put them in touch with service to help.

They offer support such as: Getting fitter and healthier, Mental health and pain, Money, benefits and housing, Talking to your employer and Counselling

WorkWell will support those who are:

In work or need support returning to work or who have been out of work for up to 6 months. They offer early intervention to those facing health related barriers.

Eligibility Criteria

- Between the ages of 16 & 68 years (Under 18's should only be referred if services are in place to support patients)
- Have a current active FIT Note and have had at least one previous FIT Note in the last 6 months (Prospective)
- Aged 18+ years (there will be some services available for those aged 16 to 18, but not in all places)
- Presenting with a condition where a Fit Note may be required or where a patient is requesting a repeat Fit Note and assess whether the patient is suitable for referral.
- Suitable patients are those who want to address a health condition which is either contributing to their absence from work or likely to lead to long term sick leave in the future.
- Should a patient not want to be referred they should be made aware that a self-referral option is available.

Waiting well will support those who are:

Patients who are waiting for surgery will be offered access to an advisor/coach and the support services that are on offer as part of the WorkWell programme.

Eligibility Criteria

- Patients on an elective waiting list.
- Patients from ALL deciles with comorbidities such as uncontrolled diabetes, atrial fibrillation, obesity, learning difficulties or smokers etc.
- Any patients with a Neurodiverse diagnosis.

We will be contacting all eligible patients. You can obtain further information at [WorkWell Programme | North East and North Cumbria NHS](#)

NHS Pharmacy First – 7 clinical pathways

Urinary tract infection	Shingles*	Impetigo	Infected insect bites	Acute sore throat	Acute sinusitis	Acute otitis media
A UTI is an infection in any part of the urinary system.	Shingles is an infection that causes a painful rash	Impetigo is a common infection of the skin. It is contagious, which means it can be passed on by touching.	Insect bites and stings can become infected or cause a reaction.	Sore throat is a symptom resulting from inflammation of the upper respiratory tract	Sinusitis is swelling of the sinuses, usually caused by an infection. The sinuses are small, empty spaces behind your cheekbones and forehead that connect to the inside of the nose.	An infection of the middle ear.
Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female Aged between 16 - 64 Suspected lower UTI 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 years and over Suspected case of shingles. Rash appeared within the last 72 hours - 7 days 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year and over Signs and symptoms of impetigo Localised (4 or fewer lesions/clusters present) 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 year and over Infection that is present or worsening at least 48 hours after the initial bite(s) or sting(s) 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 years and over Suspected sore throat 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 years and over Suspected signs and symptoms of sinusitis Symptom duration of 10 days or more 	Inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged between 1 – 17 Suspected signs and symptoms of acute otitis media
Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male <16 or >64 Pregnant Breastfeeding Recurrent UTI (2 in last 6 months or 3 in last 12 months) Catheter 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < under age of 18 Pregnant or suspected pregnancy Breastfeeding with shingle sores on the breasts Shingles rash onset over 7 days ago 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < under 1 year of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Breastfeeding with impetigo lesion(s) present on the breast Recurrent impetigo (2 or more episodes in the same year) Widespread lesions/clusters present Systemically unwell 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> < under 1 year of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Systemically unwell Bite or sting occurred while travelling outside the UK 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals under 5 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age age Recurrent sore throat/tonsillitis (7 or more significant episodes in the preceding 12 months or 5+ in each of the preceding 2 years, or 3+ in the preceding three years) Previous tonsillectomy 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals under 12 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 years of age Symptom duration of less than 10 days Recurrent sinusitis ((4 or more annual episodes of sinusitis) 	Exclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals under 1 year of age or over 18 years of age Pregnancy or suspected pregnancy in individuals under 16 Recurrent infection (3+ episodes in preceding 6 months, or 4+ episodes in the preceding 12 months with at least one episode in the past 6 months.)

Part of the plan includes enabling patients to get certain prescription medications directly from a pharmacy, without a GP appointment. This new service is expected to free up GP appointments for patients who need them most and will give people quicker and more convenient access to safe and high quality healthcare. It includes the supply of appropriate medicines for 7 common conditions including earache, sore throat, and urinary tract infections, aiming to address health issues before they get worse.

Family and Friends

Patients used our Friends & Family questions, to tell us about their experiences at the practice. 97% were extremely likely or likely to recommend us to their friends and family which is lovely to read. Of the few respondents who were less happy, a handful gave useful feedback that we will reflect on in coming staff meetings.

Comments included **"Welcoming smile from everyone always kind. They never make me feel I'm wasting their time. That goes for the cleaner too"** and **"Clinicians and staff always polite and friendly. I always feel I will get answers to my questions."**

Join Our Patient Participation Group!



A Patient Participation Group (PPG) Is a group of people who are patients of the surgery and want to help it work as well as it can for patients, doctors, and staff. The NHS requires every practice to have a PPG. PPGs meet on a regular basis to discuss the services on offer, and how improvements can be made for the benefit of patients and the practice.

If you would like to be part of our patient participation group, please contact Tracey Milburn Practice Manager or Ellie Thompson Assistant Practice Manager on 01913009631/01915130883

You can also apply for the PPG via our practice website.

Facebook page update

Follow Byron Medical Practice Facebook page!

The Facebook page displays all practice updates and Seaham/Murton community information.

Please give the page a like or follow, to find out more!



Suggestions



At Byron Medical Practice, we are open to suggestion from patients, on how you think we can improve our service.

If you would like to make a practice suggestion; you can via the suggestion box in the reception area or via the link below.

<https://southdurhamhealth.limesurvey.net/851169?lang=en>

New Patients Welcome!

We welcome new patients at Byron Medical Practice and our patient list is currently open to people living in the practice area.

Our catchment area covers Seaham and Murton (Please be aware, we are unable to do home visits to patients living in Murton). Please use the link below to register at Byron Medical Practice.

<https://gp-registration.nhs.uk/A83075>

