



Kensington Group Practice

DONEGALL ROAD AND FINAGHY
Medical Centre

Spring Newsletter

17TH APRIL 2025

Please note we will be closed for Easter on Monday 21st and Tuesday 22nd April 2025. Other upcoming bank holidays when we will be closed are Monday 5th May, and Monday 26th May 2024.

If you have an urgent problem that cannot wait until we reopen at 8.30am the following day, you can contact GP Out of hours.

The GP Out Of Hours Service provides care for people in Belfast when their normal GP surgery is closed. It is not intended to replace normal GP services, but deals with urgent problems that cannot wait until your own GP is available. You should therefore only use this service if you are suddenly ill and you cannot wait until your GP's surgery is open.

South and East Belfast - 02890 796220

North and West Belfast - 02890 744447

Lisburn area - 02892 602204

Call 999 in an emergency. Chest pains and/or shortness of breath constitute an emergency.



Spring Covid Booster 2025

The COVID-19 spring vaccination programme is now under way, giving the more vulnerable members of our community the opportunity to top up their protection ahead of any potential waves of COVID-19 over the coming months.

This year's spring vaccine will be offered to:

- adults aged 75 years old or over;
- residents in a care home;
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed, as defined in COVID-19: the green book, chapter 14a.

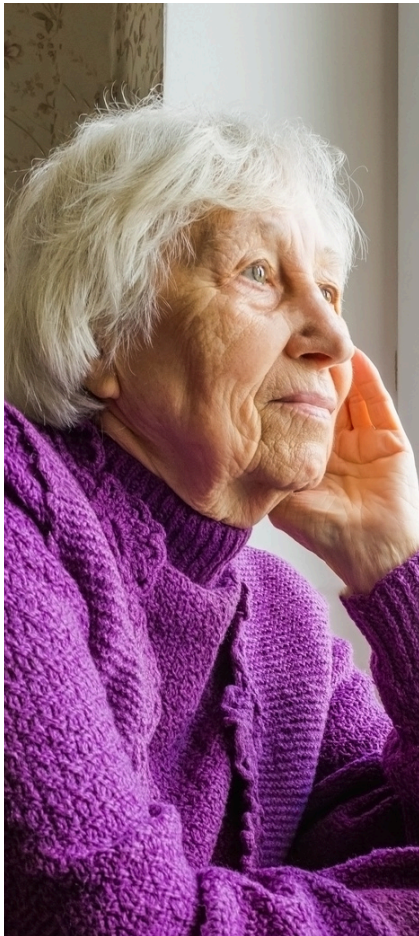
Based on expert advice, this programme aims to protect those considered most vulnerable from severe illness due to COVID-19 infection over the spring and summer, with the eligibility criteria remaining consistent with last year.

The practice does not have discretion to vaccination outside these groups, so please only book if invited or eligible.

Rachel Spiers, Immunisation and Vaccination Programme Manager at the Public Health Agency (PHA), explains:

“Respiratory viruses like COVID-19 are still in circulation and can be life threatening for the most vulnerable people in society. Residents in older adult care homes, adults who are 75 or over and people who are immunosuppressed are particularly vulnerable to complications from COVID-19. It is important to keep up to date with your vaccines, as viruses change and protection fades over time.

“The best way to protect yourself and others is through vaccination. I would urge everyone who falls into an eligible group to take up the offer of free vaccination when available.”



Spring Covid Booster

Chief Medical Officer Professor Sir Michael McBride said: “It is important we remember COVID-19 is just not just a winter illness and even in spring and summer it remains dangerous for those considered most at risk, such as older adults, care home residents and those who are immunosuppressed. “It is crucial we continue to protect the most vulnerable from COVID-19, ensuring they have protection against serious illness. “I urge everyone who is eligible to protect yourself and others and take up the offer of free vaccination when available.”

If invited or eligible, and if you have not yet booked or received your vaccine, we would encourage you to book at your earliest convenience, either by phone or online. To avoid disappointment, or a wasted journey, please do not book if not eligible.

Covid Vaccine appointments are available to book online via Patient Services, or by telephoning 02890 325679.

COVID VACC

Kmc Covid Clinic 1 [\(more\)](#)

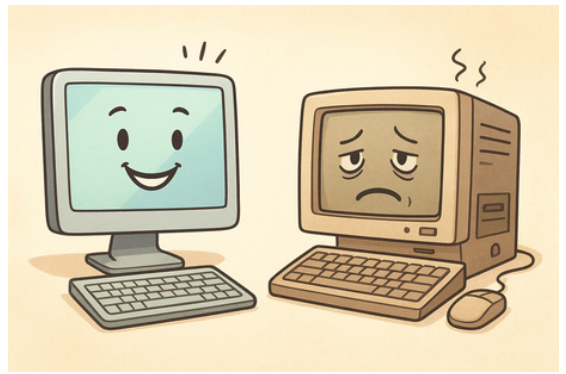
Kensington Group Practice

Housebound? We are currently making arrangements to contact those we understand to be housebound, for whom we have previously arranged for the District Nurse to call, to give you your vaccine. However, if you, or your family member has received an invitation, but cannot attend as you are housebound, contact the surgery to let us know, so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Please click on the picture below for more information.



We will be migrating to a new computer system at the end of September 2024



We would like to give our patients advance notice that our core clinical system, known as Vision, will be changing to another system, called EMIS.

This is a rolling programme going on across Northern Ireland; around two thirds of Northern Ireland practices already using EMIS; those remaining practices that use Vision, are currently migrating over to EMIS, a number of practices already having moved. This may mean some unavoidable disruption to our services, but we hope that with good planning, and by keeping our patients involved and informed, we hope we can mitigate these.

Our planning is at a relatively early stage, but, based off the experiences of other practices, we are working with the following assumptions.

- There will be a short period of a few days, when we have limited access, and at some points, no access, to our computer systems and records. As such, we will not be offering routine appointments or care at that time, although we will retain provision for urgent matters that arise.**
- We won't be processing routine prescriptions around that time. Closer to the time, we will be encouraging our patients to order their prescriptions a little earlier, or possibly provide longer supplies, where appropriate and safe to do so, in the weeks running up to the migration, to minimise the need to reorder routine prescriptions around the time of the migration.**
- Many of you are currently registered with Patient Services, our online portal for organising prescriptions and appointments. Having a high uptake of online services is absolutely vital for the smooth running of the surgery, as it takes considerable pressure off our telephones. We understand you will need to re-register with Patient Access, which is the EMIS equivalent. We'll share further information about how to do that, closer to the time; it is not possible to re-register until after the migration has taken place though, it can't be done ahead of time.**

Keep an eye out for further newsletters, our website, Instagram, and other channels for more information in due course.

Have your contact details changed?

As we prepare for migrating our computer systems, it is a good time for us to make sure the contact details we hold for our patients, remains accurate.

If your contact details have changed, such as your phonenumber, or address, it's really important to let us know. This reduces the possibility of not being able to reach you if we need to contact you about something, or missed post.

You can update your details at the link below, or call and let us know:

<https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/change-of-personal-details>

A reminder of our current practice area can be found here; if a new address is outside our practice boundary, you will need to seek registration with a new surgery closer to your new address.

<https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/practice-area>

If you are planning to leave the United Kingdom permanently, please also let us know, so we can close your registration. This is to avoid sending unnecessary invitations, or other contacts. You can always re-register if you return to live within our practice area at some future point.

Don't use your landline anymore?



Many of us, for various reasons, including the use of mobile phones as a first option, changing services when installing broadband, and other reasons, will no longer maintain a telephone landline.

If you no longer use your landline, it would be really useful to know this, so we can remove it from your records.

Using the same link as above

<https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/change-of-personal-details>

Please select under update contact details, then under "Home line", type in "landline not in use" - or words to that affect.

Smear tests are now available at Finaghy Treatment Room

Our nursing colleagues at the Belfast Trust Finaghy Treatment Room, within Finaghy Health Centre, are now able to provide cervical screening (smear tests) to our patients that require them.

Finaghy Smear clinics take place on a Tuesday afternoon, and can be booked online at Patient Services (under Smear Test Finaghy Treatment Room), or by calling 02890 325679. Click on the picture below for further information about cervical screening.

Tue 29 April 2025 at 3:40 PM

Smear Test Finaghy Treatment Room

Fhc Treatment Room [\(more\)](#)

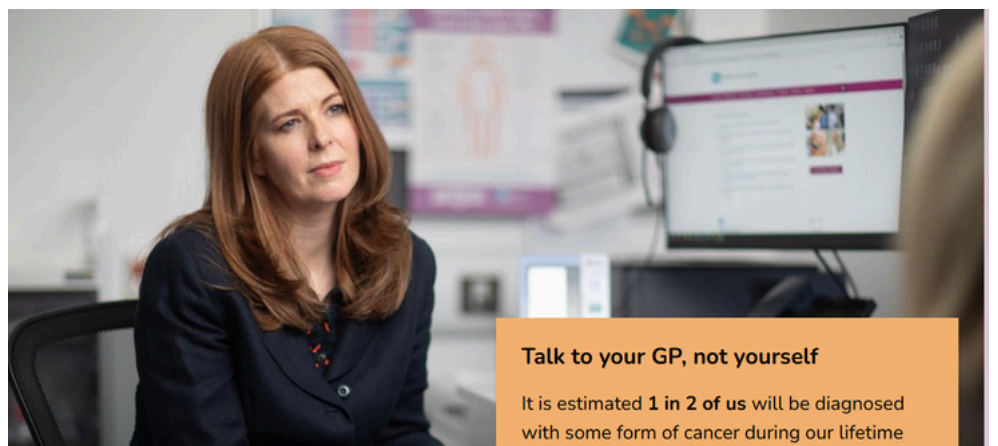
Finaghy Branch Surgery

Book

Cervical screening:
what you should know



 Cervical
Screening



Talk to your GP, not yourself

It is estimated **1 in 2** of us will be diagnosed with some form of cancer during our lifetime

BE CANCER AWARE  GET CHECKED EARLY

Be Cancer Aware

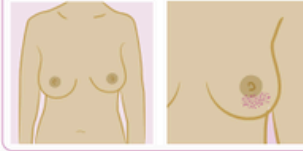
Spotting symptoms and reducing your risk

 Public Health Agency

Breast awareness looking out for changes

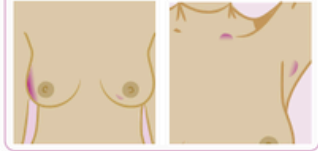
Appearance

A change in size or outline of either breast, especially those caused by arm movement; any puckering, dimpling or redness of the skin; or veins that stand out more than usual.



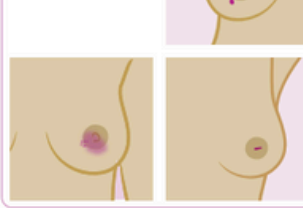
Lumps

Any lumps or thickening in either breast that feels different from the other breast; any swelling or lumps under your armpit or around your collarbone.



Nipple change

A nipple that has become pulled in, changed shape or shows signs of any discharge, bleeding, rash or crusted, flaky skin.



Feelings

Pain on its own is not usually a sign of breast cancer.

The breast awareness 5 point code

1. Know what is normal for you
2. Know what changes to look and feel for
3. Look and feel
4. Report any changes to your GP immediately
5. Attend for breast screening from the age of 50

Illustrations courtesy of Breast Cancer Care

 Public Health Agency

Public Health Agency
12-22 Lower Mall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.
Tel: 02820 905 0114 (local rates)
www.publichealth.ni.gov.uk
http://pho.ni.gov.uk/breastawareness-485
www.lifeline.gov.uk/breast-awareness
www.breastcancerawareness.org.uk/breast-cancer
Find us on:




16/23

Northern Ireland breast screening

Helping you decide



Breast Screening

I'm not OK



Lifeline is a crisis helpline for people in distress

Lifeline

0808 808 8000

A word about appointments... ... specifically, wasted ones

Demand remains very strong for appointments, so it's vital we make the best use out of our clinician time collectively, as it is finite.

We are seeing a fairly high number of "Do not attends", however.

This wastes a considerable amount of appointments, appointments we would far rather have spent addressing the needs of our patients.

In March 2025 alone, we lost the benefit of -

- **157 GP appointments**
- **121 nurse appointments**
- **176 healthcare assistant appointments**
- **25 pharmacist appointments**

due to patients not attending for their arranged appointments.

We understand there are many reasons why patients may not be able to attend, or may overlook their appointments.

We would kindly - *but strongly* - ask you are not able to attend your appointment, or you do not intend to attend your appointment - that you cancel it (and rebook at a future point if appropriate), so you can free this slot up for your fellow patient; someone may be very grateful for it!

157 additional patients could have been seen by their GP, if all those who did not attend, or did not plan to attend, had done this.

Where a patient repeatedly fails to attend arranged appointments, without reasonable explanation - they may place their ongoing registration with the practice at risk.

You can cancel your appointment by replying to the "reminder text", by cancelling it online at Patient Services, or contacting us on 02890 325679.

If you do not receive our reminder texts, please contact the surgery so we can check we have your up-to-date mobile telephone number.