



**Kensington Medical Practice**

15A DONEGALL ROAD BELFAST

# *Christmas Newsletter*

17TH DECEMBER, 2025

**Please note we will be closed for Christmas and Boxing day on Thursday 25th and Friday 26th December, and also New Years Day on Thursday 1st January.**

**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.**



## ***Please ensure you have ordered your regular medicines in good time before the Bank Holiday closures.***

A significant number of calls are received by GP out of hours are to manage ongoing prescriptions - as many as one in five contacts - this then limits access to others who more urgently require their support.

If your repeat prescription is due for reordering over the holiday period, please ensure you order your repeat prescription in good time, and allow time for your pharmacy to process it, to ensure you do not run out of your medicines when the surgery and your local pharmacy is closed. Remember some medicines may need ordered in by your pharmacy, so please don't leave it to the last minute!

## ***Still to get your Flu vaccine, or Covid Autumn Booster?***

We were delighted to see so many eligible patients attend our recent flu and Covid vaccination clinics, and thank everyone who helped them run smoothly.

We still have flu vaccine appointments available for eligible patients and encourage you to book as soon as possible, as flu cases are rising locally. Covid vaccines are no longer offered at the practice.

- Flu vaccinations are available at Donegall Road (bookable online) or Finaghy
- Flu vaccines and Covid autumn boosters are also available via Trust vaccination centres and some community pharmacies (please check locally before attending)

Further information about seasonal vaccinations, including how to access Trust Vaccination Centres (via NiDirect) can be found here:

<https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/seasonal-vaccinations>

## ***Emis, our new computer system***

As previously advised, our systems have moved from Vision to EMIS as part of a wider NI IT modernisation. Thank you for your patience during this significant change.

We are continuing to familiarise ourselves with EMIS and are already seeing efficiencies that will help us deliver better care. As we rebuild our processes, we'd like to highlight three key improvements.

### ***Patient Access – our new online portal***

Many patients previously used Patient Services to book appointments and order prescriptions online. This service is now inactive, and patients need to re-register with our new system, Patient Access (the EMIS replacement). Around 1,000 patients have already done so.

Using online services benefits both patients and the practice by reducing pressure on phone lines and improving efficiency.

- We are continuing to email registration details to recent active users of the old system — please check your spam/junk folders. If you haven't received an email and would like to register, speak to Reception.
- If you experience any issues when re-registering, please visit our Help & Troubleshooting pages first, where you'll find guidance based on common queries, before contacting Reception.



***Patient Access:***  
***An introduction***

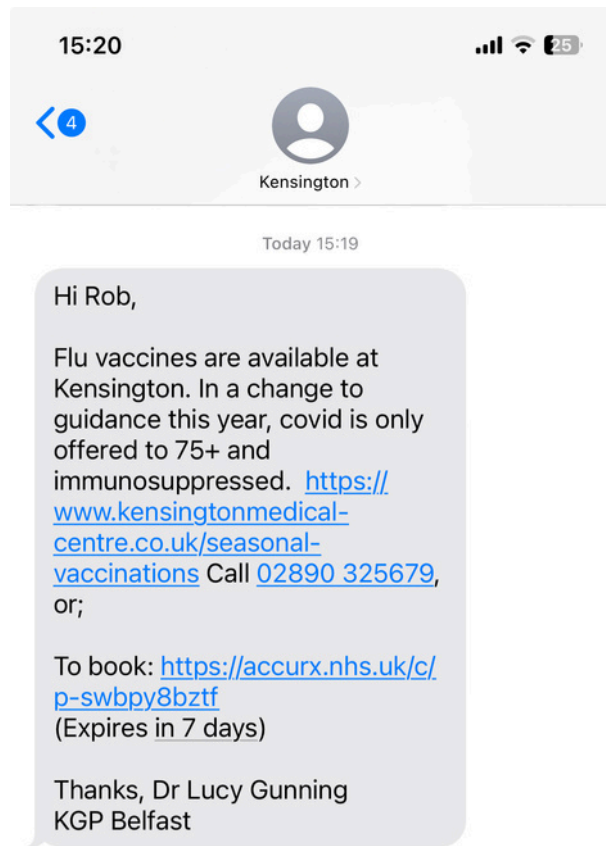


***Help and***  
***troubleshooting***

Is there a simple workaround for ordering my prescription online if I can't manage this? Yes there is; you can send a secure request to reception through our website.

<https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/request-repeat-prescription-form>

## *Accurx – a powerful tool to improve accessibility.*



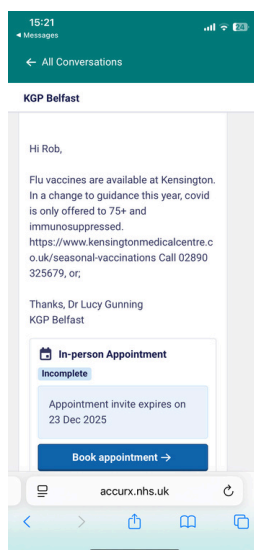
*If you've received a text invitation, or reminder, that looks like this...  
... yes, it is us.*

**Please be reassured that this is sent directly by our surgery. Accurx is a safe and convenient service, widely used throughout the NHS, that helps you manage appointments, receive reminders, easily from your phone. Using it can save you time and make keeping up with your healthcare simpler, so we encourage you to take advantage of it with confidence.**

**Sometimes we will use these to send invitations to clinics; if you have a smartphone, you can easily book through the link, without having to be registered with Patient Access - it's a separate process to that. All booking link clinics are at Donegall Road - unless clearly stated otherwise. It is only possible to book the specific type of slot, that the invitation relates to.**

**Received a message, but no smartphone? Or any other concerns? Call us on 02890 325679 and book in the usual way.**

# *A brief guide how to book your appointment, through an Accurx Text – simply follow the steps.*



## Confirm your identity

Confirm your identity to access this conversation

### Enter your date of birth

For example 26 2 1956

Day	Month	Year
<input type="text" value="01"/>	<input type="text" value="01"/>	<input type="text" value="2000"/>

> Why do we need this?

[Confirm date of birth](#)

This service is provided by Accurx.

accurx.nhs.uk

In-person appointment

## Select your appointment time

KGP Belfast  
Mr 1 FLU Clinic

Next week

Monday 22 December, 2025

In 3 weeks

Friday 9 January, 2026

In 4 weeks

Monday 12 January, 2026

Friday 16 January, 2026

[Next](#)

accurx.nhs.uk

KGP Belfast

In-person appointment

## Select your appointment time

KGP Belfast  
Mr 1 FLU Clinic

Next week

Monday 22 December, 2025

AFTERNOON

☐ 2:05pm

☐ 2:09pm

☐ 2:13pm

☐ 2:21pm

☐ 2:25pm

☐ 2:29pm

☐ 2:33pm

☐ 2:37pm

☐ 2:41pm

accurx.nhs.uk

KGP Belfast

In-person appointment

## Review your details

**Date and time**  
Monday 22 December, 2025  
2:21pm

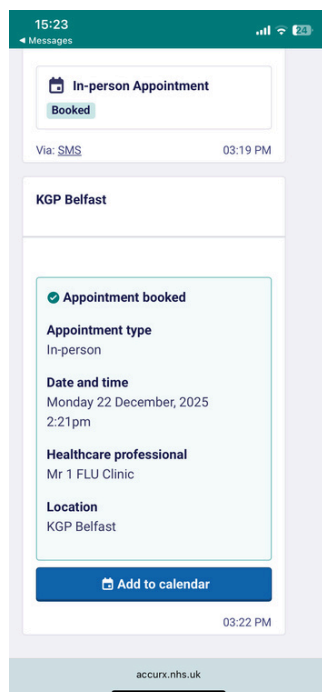
**Appointment type**  
In-person

**Healthcare professional**  
Mr 1 FLU Clinic

**Location**  
KGP Belfast

[Back](#)

[Confirm](#)



Hi Rob,

Your appointment has been booked for 2:21pm Mon 22 Dec at KGP Belfast.

Thanks,  
KGP Belfast

## *An upgrade to our phone systems*

Like most GP practices, our phone lines can be very busy, and we appreciate your patience. We have limited staff answering phones alongside many other duties.

We have recently invested in a new telephone system to improve access and adapt as needs evolve.

While we encourage the use of online services for booking appointments and ordering prescriptions, patients who prefer to order prescriptions by phone can now use our prescription voicemail service, helping keep lines free for other callers.

This service is available 24/7, including bank holidays. Select option 1 and leave a clear message with your name, date of birth, and required medications. Messages left outside normal hours will be processed on the next working day.

Please allow sufficient time for processing, and for your pharmacy to collect and dispense your prescription if applicable.

## *Pharmacy First*

Pharmacy First is available at participating community pharmacies across Northern Ireland. It allows you to get advice and treatment for everyday health conditions directly from a pharmacist, without needing a GP appointment. Local pharmacies are easily accessible, often open evenings, weekends and holidays, and usually offer private consultations without an appointment.

Pharmacy First services include:

- [Everyday Health Conditions](#)
- [Emergency Hormonal Contraception](#)
- [Urinary Tract Infection \(UTI\)](#)
- [Sore Throat](#)
- [Shingles \(selected pharmacies\)](#)



## *Spotlight on Asthma – latest guidance*

In recent times, the guidance on how we can treat asthma, for many of our asthmatic patients, has changed. This guidance is based on evidence, research and an expert consensus, and has been shown to deliver better outcomes than historic ways of treating asthma. So we're in the process of trying to align our treatment with this new guidance, where possible and appropriate to do so.

If you've only been using a "blue" reliever inhaler for occasional symptoms of asthma, "AIR" (anti-inflammatory reliever) means we can relieve symptoms and deal with inflammation causing symptoms at the same time, reducing symptoms and risk. More info:

<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/symptoms-tests-treatments/treatments/air>

"MART" (Maintenance and Reliever Therapy) is an asthma treatment plan where you use one combination inhaler instead of two separate preventer and reliever inhalers, and as such may be helpful for those who use a regular "preventer" inhaler, then occasional "blue" inhalers when symptoms occur. More info:

<https://www.asthmaandlung.org.uk/symptoms-tests-treatments/treatments/mart>

Please contact the surgery to book your asthma review, or book online, if you are due or have been invited to your asthma review, or if you would like to explore these new, evidence-based ways of treating asthma.

### *Did you know about the environmental impact of some inhalers?*

Many inhalers we use every day have an impact on the environment. Most MDIs release propellants that contribute to greenhouse gases, while dry powder inhalers (DPIs) don't—and are much greener. If your asthma or COPD treatment allows, switching to a DPI can help you breathe easier and help the planet. Discuss at your next review.

### *Use inhalers? Check your technique today!*



Research has shown that using inhalers with optimal technique, is linked to better outcomes for asthma (and also COPD). As such, it is useful to check your technique, to make you are using your inhalers the correct way! If struggling with technique, there may be alternative devices that may suit you better. Click on the pictures to view some helpful videos.

## ***Are you a carer?***

**A carer is someone who provides unpaid care and support to a family member, friend, or neighbour who could not manage without their help due to illness, disability, mental health needs, learning disability, addiction, or age-related frailty.**

**Or in plain English, a carer is anyone who looks after someone who couldn't cope without their support.**



**If you're a registered carer, a patient who may soon become a carer, or a family member providing regular support, you may be entitled to help from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.**

**One of the best ways to get the support you deserve is by applying for a Carer's Assessment. Click the picture for more information.**



**Advice for carers.**



**Let us know if you are carer. This means we can let you know of support available; for example eligibility for the flu vaccine.**

**Equally, if you have previously acted as a carer, but no longer do so - please let reception know.**

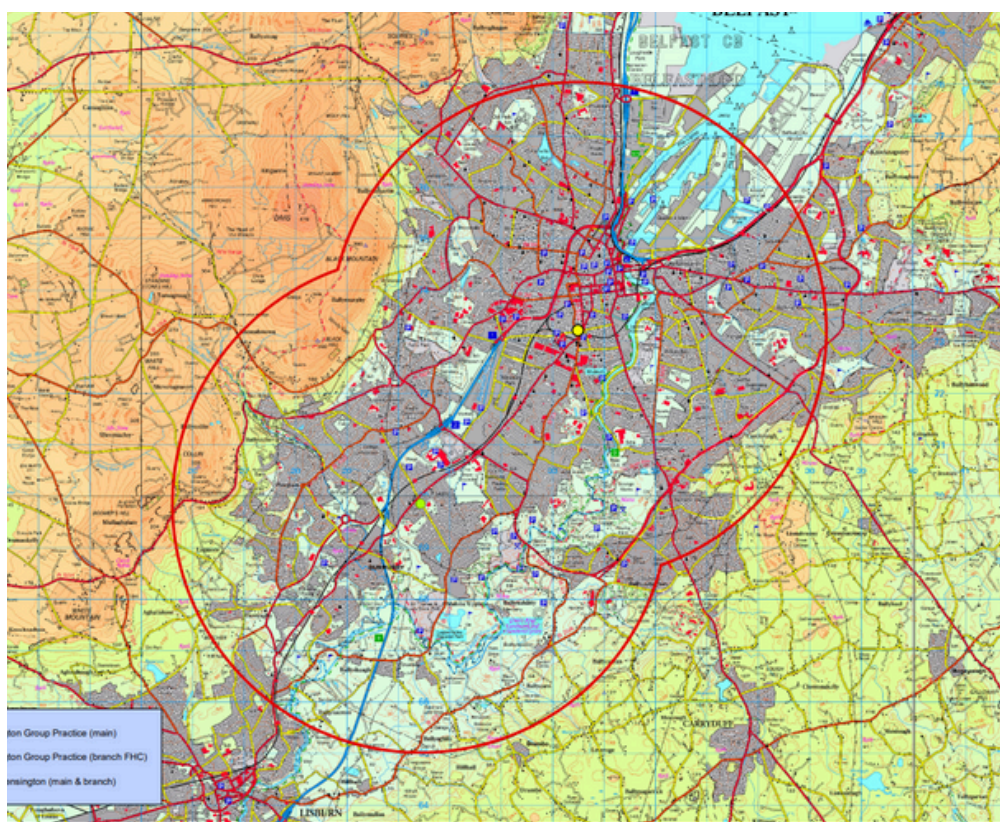
## *Keep us up to date if your personal details have changed*

If your personal details have changed, such as your phonenumber, address, or email, it's really important to let us know, so we can update the details that we hold for you. You can do this by completing this form online:

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

Or you can advise us verbally, or in person if you prefer.

Please note however, that if you have moved house, and your **new** address is further than 3 miles - as the crow flies - from either our Donegall Road, or Finaghy site - as noted on the map below - you will need to seek registration with another GP surgery closer to your new home.



*All the staff at the practice would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year.*