

Notification of intended closure by Eyemouth Medical Practice of the Cockburnspath branch surgery

Eyemouth Medical Practice has this week announced their intention to close the Cockburnspath branch surgery. In a letter to patients the reasons behind the decision have been outlined as follows:

1. The surgery premises at Cockburnspath were originally designed as a residential property. There is no level access or disabled facilities. The options for improvements to comply with modern standards are difficult due to the close proximity of the building to the main road and location within a conservation area.
2. Lone working by GPs from the site is unsatisfactory for both doctor and patient safety.
3. The Information Technology (IT) provision to the Cockburnspath Surgery has been unreliable in recent years and has become more problematic lately despite numerous site visits by NHS Borders IT department. This has previously led to the suspension of the weekly scheduled surgery.
4. There is a national shortage of GPs and it is becoming more difficult to recruit GPs in rural areas. In addition many GPs do not wish to become Partners in practices due to the financial commitment involved. Closing Cockburnspath Surgery may help with the future recruitment of new partners due to reduced financial investment and risk. This will help secure a sustainable future for the practice allowing local GP services to continue in the area.

Commenting on the letter, Administration Partner at the Practice, Dr Kirsty Robinson said: “We wish to reassure patients that the medical practice will continue to provide you with the usual general medical services from our other two premises in Coldingham and the newly refurbished Eyemouth Health Centre. Both locations are accessible via public transport and home visits, where deemed clinically appropriate, will continue to be provided to eligible patients.

“Over recent years, we have established an arrangement with the local shop in Cockburnspath to hand out dispensed prescription medication to patients who have signed up for this service. It is our intention to continue this service on a weekly basis following the closure of the surgery.”

NHS Borders Medical Director Cliff Sharp added: “Patients who are registered with the Cockburnspath branch surgery have received a letter from Eyemouth Medical Practice advising them of the intention to close the surgery in August, for a number of practical, safety and quality of care reasons.

Media Information

“I am supportive of this intention, but appreciate that it may cause some anxiety for patients, who have been invited to discuss any questions or concerns they have regarding this decision with us here at NHS Borders by Friday 21st July.”

Should members of the public wish to submit their own feedback or raise any questions please feel free to do so via our Public Involvement team
publicinvolvement@borders.scot.nhs.uk

Ends

For further information please contact communications@borders.scot.nhs.uk