

Proposed Merger of New Coningsby Surgery, Newmarket Medical Practice and The Wolds Practice (*East Lindsey Medical Group*)

Frequently Asked Questions – Approved by the Practice’s Patient Participation Groups

The Partners of New Coningsby Surgery, Newmarket Medical Practice and The Wolds Practice have submitted an application to NHS England to merge. If this proposed merger is approved, the merged practice would be known as '*East Lindsey Medical Group*'. Listed below are a number of FAQs that are provided to answer any potential queries patients of the surgeries may have. If you have any further questions, please join us at one of our many road show events listed at the end of this document.

Why are you doing this?

After careful consideration, we feel that merging our Practices is the most effective way to ensure a sustainable and resilient future, and will support our vision of General Practice to:

- Deliver sustainable healthcare to the local community of East Lindsey
- Provide continuity of care for patients and continuity of staff in delivering this care
- Protect the provision of a local GP service, one that is known and understood by our patients
- Enable a flexible and adaptable resourcing model to manage the increasing activities within General Practice
- Build an organisation that can respond and manage the continuously changing environment of the NHS; influenced by national, local and patient priorities
- Increase opportunities to provide a wider range of services and access catered towards the needs of our patient community

A common issue shared across General Practice in Lincolnshire is the GP recruitment crisis, which poses a threat to patients and locally run services. We also have GPs that are considering retirement within the next 5 years, which in some localities is being hastened due to the increasing pressure, demand and working hours. This merger will ensure that our service does not suffer because of individual retirement plans, at a time when GPs are extremely hard to recruit. Based on case studies across the country, we feel that we will be able to offer more desirable career opportunities - which will not only attract GPs but also retain them. This is also applicable to other health care professionals and practice supporting staff.

Will any of the surgeries close?

No, you will still have access to Coningsby, Newmarket and The Wolds as you do now.

Will the practice boundary change?

No, we are merging our Practice boundaries which fit together across East Lindsey.

Which surgery will be the main surgery and which will be branch surgeries?

We are creating an overarching organisation; *The East Lindsey Medical Group*. There will be three sites known as Coningsby, Newmarket and The Wolds, which will all be equally accessible. However, for business purposes the main surgery site will be Newmarket.

Will there be any changes to the surgery opening times?

No, you will still be able to access all sites Monday – Friday, 8am – 6.30pm. Those that offer extended hours will still continue to do so.

Will I still be able to see my usual doctor or nurse?

Yes. All of our Doctors and Nurses will continue to be based at their current sites. We hope that by increasing our skill mix across the 3 sites; we will be able to free up time for your usual doctor or nurse – who might currently be doing tasks that can be shared more effectively.

Will I be able to see a doctor or nurse at any of the premises?

Yes. One of the reasons for the merger is to improve patient access so if your problem is relatively urgent you might be offered an appointment at another site, or with a different clinician, so that you are seen quicker. You will be able to see your usual GP for routine appointments.

What is the anticipated timescale for the merger?

Through this process and in consultation with Lincolnshire East CCG (LECCG), NHS England and our patient communities; we will have one contract and merge onto one clinical system by 1st April 2018.

Will I have to go to one of the other sites for particular consultations or treatments?

Working as a larger organisation means that we will be able to develop and invest in specialist areas; meaning that we may hold specific clinics at one of the sites, or offer smaller clinics across all three – this will be dependent on demand as we move forward.

Will there be any changes to the way I book appointments?

To provide a more efficient service we intend to eventually centralise our telephone system and online booking services (e.g. for booking appointments and ordering prescriptions) but we will maintain local management of local issues. We are also interested in researching the opportunities of e-consultations (email, Skype and telephone) – improving access to full-time workers, carers and patients who struggle with the limitations of Lincolnshire transport.

Will it be easier or harder to get an appointment after the merger?

As mentioned above; if there is an appointment available sooner at another site or with a clinician you wouldn't usually see – it will be easier to get an appointment than before the merger if you are happy to travel or see someone different. We also hope that in expanding our clinical teams and expertise across the sites, we will be able to free up routine GP appointments.

Will there be any changes to the primary care services provided to patients?

No, we will continue to provide the services we do now.

Our goal is to enhance current provisions. We want to work with patients and our staff to identify any areas of weakness or shortfall and work on improvements to benefit our whole patient community. As a larger organisation; we also envisage a stronger opportunity to apply for funding and contracts enabling us to offer a wider range of services.

The skill mix within the team across the sites will expand – and clinicians will be able to refer and ask for advice internally – improving the continuity and quality of care for the patient.

Will any new services be introduced?

Some of the GPs and Nurses have specialist interests. Currently these skills and knowledge can only be accessed by their current patients but on merging; this will be accessible for patients across all sites. In the future we hope to offer extended mental health, community and urgent care services through discussions with LECCG and NHS England.

Will there be any changes to how I access the GP out of hours service?

No, you will still have access to the GP out of hours service as you do now.

Will I need to re-register to remain on the practice list?

No, you do not need to do anything. Your health record will remain on the Practice list.

Will this affect any treatment or medication I am currently receiving either at the GP practice or any hospital?

No, none of this will be affected.

I still have questions, what should I do now?

Please join us at one of our road show events where you will be presented with our proposal and have an opportunity for questions and answers:

- Monday 3rd July at 1pm - Trinity Centre, Louth
- Tuesday 4th July at 7pm - Hamilton Hall, Tetford
- Monday 24th July at 1pm – Coningsby Community Hall
- Tuesday 25th July at 7pm - Coningsby Community Hall
- Monday 31st July at 7pm - Trinity Centre, Louth
- Tuesday 1st August at 1pm - Hamilton Hall, Tetford
- Monday 7th August at 7pm- Tattershall Village Hall

I would like to give feedback, how do I do this?

As well as collecting feedback at the road show events, there is also a survey. You can collect one from the Practice and put it in the box once completed. Or, there is also the option to fill it in online by going to: www.surveymonkey.com/r/proposedmergerEastL or visiting our website.