



Darwen Healthcare

Where your health Matters

Dr Ninan & Partners

Tel: 01254 964640

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**NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2025**



**Care Quality
Commission**

Outstanding
★

Inspected & rated Outstanding

Darwen Healthcare

Dr M Ninan and partners



www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk



Dr Ninan & Partners
Darwen Healthcare

Message from Dr Ninan, Senior GP Partner



Spring is finally here, and I hope everyone is enjoying the early sunshine and blossoms all around us. At Darwen Healthcare, we are working ceaselessly to ensure we plan delivery of quality health care. Our management team ably led by Mrs Ann Neville is constantly looking at our performance, learning, and adapting constantly. I am always humbled by their dedication and commitment to improving the health of our local population and ensuring all our team are looked after.

I am delighted to advise Dr Oluremi Ige will be joining us as a GP Partner, he has been a salaried GP with us since his GP training, I am confident he will bring dynamism and quality improvements to our team, he will be leading on research activities within the practice alongside Katie Smith our Practice and Research Nurse.

We now have 12 GPs in our team alongside Julia Mullaney our Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Simon Holden, our Paramedic Practitioner and Faiz Majjid our experienced Physician Associate, PCN Pharmacist, Pharmacy Technician and Mental Health Practitioner and a PCN Trainee Advanced Clinical Practitioner forming an excellent clinical team. As a well-established Training Practice we have a number of Trainee Doctors in their final years of training to be a GP.

In addition to routine and emergency appointments, Darwen Health Care also offers musculoskeletal assessments and joint injections, minor surgery including removal of small cysts and skin lesions, general contraceptive advice including subcutaneous implants and intrauterine coil insertions and removals. Our women's health clinics 2 per week are headed by Dr Jill Davies, GP Partner who is completing her Advanced training in Menopause Medicine and will be a regional expert in women's health matters on completion of this. The practice has been hosting the Community Cardiology clinic which I run since 2005, enabling patients across Blackburn with Darwen quicker access to specialist care for a range of heart related issues.

We have a large and experienced nursing team comprising of 6 practice nurses and 3 Assistant Practitioners who manage long term medical conditions, including preventive advice on a range of lifestyle issues including weight management as well as cervical smears and vaccinations, along with travel vaccinations. Our reception team is equally excellent having been shortlisted for reception team of the year in the national awards in 2023. Notably, our staff turnover is quite low, with some of our staff being with us for more than 20 years which demonstrate our organisational culture of 'work family' and ensuring that at Darwen Health Care, your health and the wellbeing of all our team matters !

The new financial year will see some changes to how we deliver certain aspects of health care, which are currently being finalised. These are changes which are brought about within the region, aiming to improve access to health care and the whole patient journey. Please keep reading our newsletters to ensure you are up to date on any such changes.

Wishing you all the very best..

Dr Mammen Ninan

Welcome

Ann Neville Practice Business



Welcome to our first PPG Newsletter of 2025.

Darwen Healthcare is so much more than just a Doctor's Surgery, I consider my work colleagues as my extended work family, and we are fortunate to have a range of health professionals available to help you get the right care, at the right time and at the right place just when you need it.

Our health professionals work within our practice and within the local community. They are all highly trained and we will direct you to the most appropriate person or service to help you when you need us.

Our Medical and Nursing Teams are supported by a large Management and Administrative Team led by myself but all working together as a team to ensure that the services we provide continue to be of high quality care.

I hope that you will find the updates and resources within this newsletter beneficial to support your health and well-being.

Regards

Ann Neville

We are delighted to have been placed in the top 100 (10% of 6,300+) GP practices nationally in the Healthsay report. Thank you to all our patients who gave their views and helped us achieve this.

To find out more visit

<https://www.healthsay.co.uk/find-nhs-gp>



Darwen Healthcare

100/100

Top
10%

HealthSay Score

Our independent overall score

✓ 90.5%

Overall Experience Score

✓ 89.6%

Ease of Contact Score

📄 1466

Patients per GP

Outstanding

Care Quality Rating



Darwen Health Centre, James Street West,
Darwen, Lancashire, BB3 1PY

Making contact with the Surgery

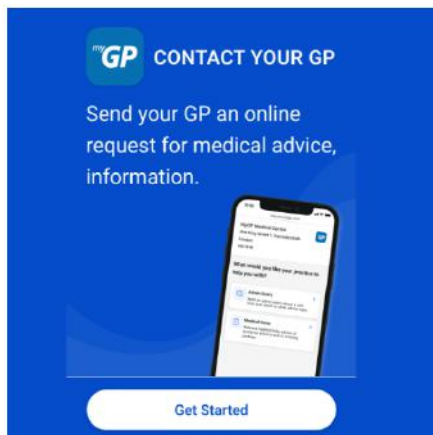
It is not unusual for there to be 20 or more people in the telephone queue at 8am each morning. Our call logs shows that during 2024 the practice received 112,970 telephone calls with the average queue time being just over 4 minutes. Utilising telephone data allows us to use practice resources more effectively i.e. having more staff to answer telephone calls during the busiest periods. If your call is not urgent please contact us later in the day when your waiting time should be shorter.

What else is being done to help?

The practice moved to a cloud based telephony service back in 2023 and has been set up to recognise when there are 8 people in the queue it will offer a "call back" facility, this does not mean you will go to the back of the queue, but when it would have been your turn in the queue the system will call you back if you select this option.

We also encourage the booking of Nursing Team appointments online using the myGP app. You can also use this to request a consultation, get medical advice or ask non-medical question. This will be reviewed by our triage team and will respond within 48 hours. Please do not use this for Urgent Medical Issues. Utilising this way of contacting the practice is starting to reduce the number of telephone calls received by the practice.

We ask as many patients as possible to use the online system, as this makes it easier for those who are not computer literate or those that do not have access to a computer get quicker access to speak to staff by telephone,



[Don't forget if you just want some general advice the NHS 111 service is available online or by phone](#)



Delivering services to Patients in 2024

Post Covid the demand on GP services as increased nationally by 9% and this does not include the additional work of delivering Covid Vaccinations ([NHS England](#))

Darwen Healthcare's registered patient list size increased during 2024 and currently stands at 14,365. It is likely to increase further during 2025 as the new housing estates currently being built are finished and more individuals move into Darwen.

The number of Consultations offered in 2024

Type of Appt	Number of Appts offered	Number of Appts attended	Number of failed to attend Appts	%
GP/Clinician	48,295	46,741	1554	3.2%
Nurse	23,085	21,911	1144	5.0%
Total	71,380	68,652	2698	4.1%

Firstly, a **huge thank you** to all patients who booked and attended their appointments. If you didn't attend your appointment the practice has re-introduced a Failed to Attend Appointment Policy as from 24 February 25 please do not risk being removed from the patient list here at Darwen Healthcare.

Failing to cancel when you cannot attend affects everyone

How many additional GP/Clinicians Clinics could we have offered during 2024 if patients cancelled their appointment when not needed: 1554 patients missed appointments equivalent to 129 clinics i.e.2.5 clinics every week

How many additional Nurse Clinics could we have offered during 2024 if patients cancelled their appointment when not needed: 1144 failed to attend appointments equivalent to 163 clinics i.e. 3.0 clinics every week

In terms of cost to the practice of wasted clinical and nursing time:

The cost of the failed GP/Clinical Appointments	=	£42,735.00
The cost of the failed Nurse appointments	=	£ 9,512.00
Total amount of lost resources	=	£52,247.00

Aged between 21 and 40?

Can you spare a few hours every 2 months?

If so we would welcome you to join our Patient Participation Group



Darwen Healthcare has an active Patient Participation Group who are interested in learning and reviewing how services are delivered by the practice.

Many of the group have been members for over 10 years and are in the later stages of life's journey and we need younger members to give their viewpoint and make suggestions for how services can be delivered to suit every age group.

We meet every two months at 5:30pm, mainly online, with occasional meetings at the Health Centre, they usually last about 90minutes.

We especially welcome young parents and whilst it is not always easy to attend meetings with young children to care for, your participation as a virtual member, reviewing leaflets and offering feedback at a time to suit you would be welcome.

PLEASE ASK AT RECEPTION FOR MORE INFORMATION



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Patient Participation Group

Darwen Healthcare Patient Participation Group has been in existence since the first groups of this type were created. Meetings were held regular during Covid online and the group helped promote the uptake of vaccine and the delivery as Covid Volunteers.



So what does the Group do?

The group meets every two months, usually on a Monday evening and discusses with the practice management any up coming proposals on changes that may be happening to the way services are delivered, this can be either by innovation of the practice or changes that are mandated by the NHS.

We can offer our insight on those changes both prior to the event or in reflection on any experience we have had of the services that have been changed.

So is it just a “talking shop” to let off steam?

The terms of reference explicitly state that it is not a meeting to air any personal problems you may have around any part of the service, these should always be directed to the Business Manager or any senior member of the management team.

Our members come from a variety of “walks of life” and some with special interest in such aspects of care as Breast Screening, Addiction, being a family carer, early years, learning disabilities etc. and actively take part in promoting the welfare of these to the local communities.

The members help the surgery carry out a survey each year of how the service is delivered and can often be seen at the surgery helping patients complete the survey.



Looking to the future

Most of the group would be described as being in the latter part of life's journey and we need younger patients to join us, to ensure that the voice of the patient is always heard. We especially need young parents to join so we can get their views on services and suggest anything they feel will help them in their parenthood. We know it is not always easy for younger parents or even single young people to get to meetings so we carry out online meetings as often as we can. We would also like to hear from those wishing to be a virtual member, reviewing services and reading leaflets to make sure they are easy to follow.

So if you are interested just ask at reception or ring the practice.

Regards

Barry Ashbolt Chair

Anne Crook Vice Chair

Alan Pickup Hon Secretary



Women's Health



We are pleased to inform you of our current women's health offer. Due to increased requests for women's health support and information, we wanted to provide more training for clinicians and more appointments for patients.

We were pleased to support Dr Alo in completing a fellowship in women's health, where she undertook training in this area and she successfully completed this at the end of 2024.

We are able to offer coil fittings for both HRT and contraception as well as contraceptive implant fittings here at the practice. Dr Davies, Dr Alo and Dr Okoya all provide coil clinics and Dr Ninan, Julia Mullaney Advanced Nurse Practitioner, and Dr Okoya all provide implant insertion and removal clinics. Patients registered at other practices can also be referred to us for these services. We offer cervical screening appointments including some in the evenings and at weekends. We do testing for some sexually transmitted infections too.

We piloted some webinars about menopause with Dr Davies and Libby Grimshaw, dietician, and these were well received. We would welcome your suggestions on other women's health topics you might like to attend a webinar for, or other ways to support your needs.

We are in discussions about how else we can support women's health and what other services we could offer from the practice as we are keen to enable women to access women's health care, that is relevant to them, at their own local GP surgery,

Dr Jill Davies

New Parent & Baby Page

Did you know we have a dedicated New Parent and Baby page on our website, this contains links and information for new parents to help them give their child the right start in life.

Please visit and you will also find the link to Dr Davies Youtube video around the benefits of breast feeding

<https://www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk/new-parent--child-advice>





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Your GP says Don't Pooh Pooh the Poo test - it could save your life

BOWEL CANCER KILLS



"This little piece of kit could save your life, as it has done for countless others who have completed this simple procedure"

If you are between the ages of 50 to 74 you will have been sent a Bowel Cancer screening kit every two years, many people who took up the test are thankful, it saved their life. Darwen Healthcare do not want to see any of our patients miss out on this life saving opportunity. If you have not taken advantage it's not too late as we can arrange for a kit to be sent out. If you would like us to arrange for a bowel screening kit to be sent to you please contact us on 01254 964640 option 1 or email to Darwen.healthcare@nhs.net or send a message via the myGP app or NHS app.

**Screening
saves
lives**

**Help us
help you**



<https://www.darwenhealthcare.co.uk/screening>



spark

A pint won't hurt; I've had a tough day

Sound like you? You're not alone.

Many of us find ourselves enjoying a drink to deal with the stress of the day. But if you're finding yourself pouring a pint most evenings, we can help you cut down your daily drinking.

We're here to help.
If you'd like to cut down your drinking, we're offering alcohol intervention sessions at your doctor's surgery. These sessions will be appointment based and delivered by alcohol specialists, with the aim of helping you reduce your alcohol consumption.

Speak to us today to arrange an appointment.

BWD@calico.org.uk 01254 495014 sparkbwd.org.uk

Drinking alcohol brings pleasure to many people, however many problems are associated with its use including increased sickness and shortened life expectancy. We are excited to announce that Darwen Health Care have linked with Spark, the local alcohol and other drugs service to provide a service for those patients who feel that they may be drinking a little more than they should. Samantha Campbell from Spark, and previously the Alcohol Care Team at The Royal Blackburn Hospital will be at our surgery every Friday to help with tips and support for those of you thinking about making some changes to your drinking.

Contact your GP practice or call the surgery on 01254 964640 to book an appointment with Samantha.



Services that support prevention

Blackburn with Darwen Council have a range of services that help support people to improve and take charge of their own wellbeing.

Some of the services provided include:

- Wellbeing service
- Community safety team
- Social Prescribing Link Workers

and much more. Visit their [website](#) to find out more



The DWP PATIENT ADVISORY SERVICE

Do you need help in improving your health and wellbeing?

Our aim is to improve health, wellbeing & employment outcomes for disabled people and those with health conditions & complex barriers. By collaborating & working in partnership with local organisations we will ensure the right support is in place at the right time.

We understand barriers to moving, staying and returning to work are different for everyone, therefore we aim to create bespoke solutions:

- Access to Work
- Jobs – Disability Confident Employers
- Help to navigate the benefits system
- Mentoring Circles
- Volunteering & work experience opportunities
- Access to funding to purchase bespoke provision in a much more flexible and responsive way to help claimants move into or closer to work
- Work Trials
- Training courses to upskill or refresh skills.
- Flexible Support Fund aims to help with extra costs associated with finding a job
- Specialist support for 50 Plus claimants
- Disability Employment Advisers and Employer Advisers
- In work benefit calculations
- Benefits
- Fit Notes

To arrange an appointment please contact:

Carol at Ground Floor, Darwen Health Centre BB3 1PY

Wednesdays 08:30-16:30 or

Email: dea.blackburn@dpw.gov.uk

The DWP PATIENT ADVISORY SERVICE

@ Darwen Health Centre

People's health can be affected by lots of things

We can help in many ways

Ask at your GP practice to be referred for support



What is Social Prescribing?



Social prescribing is a way to connect people to services that can support them with what matters to them. This might include groups to help reduce loneliness and isolation, green projects which can help us feel closer to nature or services which can help address problems relating to housing or debt.



Learning Disability

What is the difference between a Learning Disability and Autism

The difference between a Learning Disability and a Learning difficulty often confuses parents and carers. The best explanation found is on the Sheffield Children's Hospital Website <https://library.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/what-is-the-difference-between-a-learning-disability-and-autism/>

Learning Disability

A learning disability is a lifelong condition that affects a person's ability to learn new information, develop new skills, and live an independent life.

- Children with a learning disability:
- Struggle with school learning and independence skills such as self-care and managing money
- Learn far more slowly than their peers
- Have the lowest scores on assessments of both thinking skills and daily living skills
- May be less likely to have GCSEs or equivalent qualifications
- May need some support in adulthood

The severity of a learning disability can be different for each person. Most people with a learning disability have a mild learning disability. Children with a mild learning disability will be able to communicate and learn, but at a slower pace than their peers and with support. Some people have a more severe learning disability and have very limited language and skills.

What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how people think and see the world.

Children with autism:

- Can be very intelligent or find academic learning difficult
- Find it difficult to understand others. For example, they may find it hard to read facial expressions and understand other people's feelings and behaviour
- May have a different way of communicating
- Tend to prefer to follow the same routines and may do the same things over and over again
- May focus well on things that interest them, sometimes called special interests
- May be good at following rules and have good attention to detail
- Can be over or under-sensitive to sensory stimuli, such as noise, light, taste

For children with autism, change and unexpected events may always be uncomfortable and they may always prefer routine and repetition. The autism thinking style means that imagination can be hard. Imagination is the skill we use to work out what to do when things do not go to plan. As this is difficult for them, they can find

changes scary. However, it is possible for children with autism to develop strategies to manage anxiety around coping with change as they get older.

Both children with a learning disability and children with autism can live full and happy lives. They can both have friends, be important to others and do things that interest them. They can have their own home or tenancy, get married, and live with independence and choice. Many people with autism will be able to work, but might prefer adaptations in the workplace. People with a learning disability may find it harder to find employment, but can still find activities they enjoy and give them a sense of purpose.

Neurodivergent

This is a term that is being used more and more and describes groups of people whose brain does not think in the way the majority do and covers a wide range of conditions. It is estimated that 1 in 7 people may have a condition that falls in this category.

The importance of Annual Health Checks for those with a learning Disability

Everyone who is on the learning disability register and over 14 is entitled to an annual health check. Attendance at these Annual Health Checks is important as it allows the clinical staff to check for symptoms that may be developing. An Easy Read Version of what happens at an Annual Health Check has been developed by Mencap and can be downloaded [here](#)

There are other benefits that you may not think about, but the clinician will talk with you and suggest changes in your life style called an Health Action Plan, you will be given an Easy Read copy of this after your health has been reviewed and any medication checked that it is still needed or maybe needs changing.

Your GP surgery knowing that you are on the Learning Disability register will mean that it will be on your medical record and if you go to see someone at the hospital they will be aware and able to see your medication and other times you have needed to be in hospital.

In addition you can complete a [Health Passport](#) that will tell other medical people about your preferences, likes and dislikes. It is your responsibility to keep this up to date as you.

Care Network based in the main Library in Blackburn are the main resource in Blackburn with Darwen for people with Learning Disability and/or Autism and they run groups for self advocates (someone with a learning disability who can speak about their needs) and also meet with the NHS Health & Blackburn with Darwen Social Services, so you can tell them what problems you are experiencing. They can also signpost family or friends of someone with a learning disability to resources that will help them to help you.

**care
network** 
[01254 507255](tel:01254507255) (option 2)



Do you have a learning disability?

Don't miss out: get better healthcare now.

Tell your doctor you have a learning disability and they can check if you are on their learning disability register.

When you are on the register, you will be offered the support you need to make things easier, like:

- extra time and support during your appointment
- easy read/accessible information
- help to make an appointment

You can also be offered a full health check every year.

To find out more speak to your doctor, or visit:
www.mencap.org.uk/dontmissout

Be happy. Be healthy. **Don't miss out.**



Treatment Room Services at Darwen Health Centre

The Treatment Room on the first floor at Darwen Health Centre provides a range of treatments for Non-Serious Injury.

These include

- **Minor Wounds/ Lacerations**
- **Soft Tissue finger injuries**
- **Minor burns & scolds (not chemical burns)**
- **Bites & Stings, only if the skin is broken, If infected (redness/tracking marks) should consult a GP or Pharmacy**
- **Minor Head Injuries with no loss of consciousness (there are exceptions to this so it is better to ring first before attending)**
- **Removal of superficial foreign bodies from Nose or ear (ring before attending)**

The service can be contacted on:

01254 283000 - Opening times are 8.50am to 5.20pm

This service is provided by East Lancashire Hospitals Trust

Men of Lancashire and South Cumbria

Can you spare 10 minutes? It could save your life

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

Who?

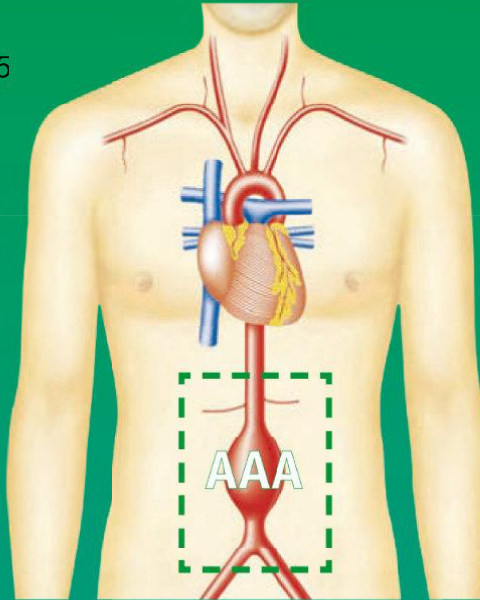
All men aged 65

Why?

1 in 92 men
will have an
AAA

When?

Automatic
in your
65th year



What?

Weakening
of the
artery wall

Where?

NHS sites
near you!

How?

Ultrasound
scan. It's
safe, quick
and pain
free

For further information visit <http://aaa.screening.nhs.uk/>

Men over 65 or if you have missed your appointment contact
your local screening programme on 01914458747



*Information for trans and non binary people is available on the link below:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-population-screening-information-for-transgender-people/nhs-population-screening-information-for-trans-people>



Useful Information

**Darwen Healthcare
Tel 01254 964640
Darwen Health Centre
James Street West
Darwen BB3 1PY**

Treatment Room Services Tel 01254 283000

Local Chemists

Geloos	Tel 01254 705849
Market St	Tel 01254 873977
Cohens	Tel 01254 772106
Boots	Tel 01254 703120
Everest	Tel 01254 777230
Church St	Tel 01254 702435

East Lancashire Hospitals Switchboards Royal	
Blackburn Hospital	Tel 01254 263555
Burnley General Hospital	Tel 01282 425071

**Not sure of where to go for Treatment?
Ring 111 the NHS helpline or visit www.111.nhs.uk**