

## FAQs for Ivel Medical Centre

<b>FAQ's – GP Practice Contract Procurement</b>	
<b>What are general practices?</b>	<p>General practices are the small to medium-sized businesses whose services are contracted by NHS commissioners to provide generalist medical services in a geographical or population area. Most general practices in England are run by a GP partnership. This involves two or more GPs, sometimes with nurses, practice managers and others (with at least one partner as a GP), working together as business partners, pooling resources, such as buildings and staff, and together owning a stake in the practice business. GP partners are jointly responsible for meeting the requirements set out in the contract for their practice and share the income it provides, and these contracts have no fixed end date.</p> <p>Some general practice contracts are also held by corporate bodies, who do not have to be GPs but must employ GPs and other qualified staff to provide services. This type of contract is time limited and has to be reprocedured every few years.</p>
<b>What does it mean when my GPs resign their contract?</b>	<p>GP partners who hold a contract can choose to terminate (resign) the contract with the ICB giving the required amount of notice as required by their contract.</p>
<b>What does NHSE /the ICB do when they receive a contract resignation?</b>	<p>When a partnership resigns their contract, it is the ICB's responsibility to ensure all patients have access to general medical services from the date the contract will end. It will review the practice and in the case of Ivel Medical Centre decided initially to procure a local practice or organisation from within the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes ICB area to provide caretaking services to the patients for 18-24 months. This will be from the same site with the same admin and clinical staff who will be eligible to transfer their employment to the new provider. This caretaking contract will allow time to stabilise the practice and talk to the patients to understand what services have been like and what they would like to see work differently. A full procurement process will then take place for a more permanent provider for a longer-term period – which can be up to 9 years. The regulations do not allow ICBs to offer any new contracts in perpetuity.</p>
<b>When were patients informed about this?</b>	<p>The ICB wrote to all patients registered at Ivel Medical Centre on Monday 16 January. The ICB is also providing updates on its website: <a href="https://blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/your-health-and-care/your-primary-care/ivel-medical-centre-biggleswade/">https://blmkhealthandcarepartnership.org/your-health-and-care/your-primary-care/ivel-medical-centre-biggleswade/</a></p>
<b>What does this mean for patients?</b>	<p>Patients will not be adversely affected and <b>do not need to do anything</b>. It is important that patients stay with their existing practice so that the ICB can make the necessary arrangements for patients when the contract ends. If a large number of patients register with another</p>

	practice before the ICB confirms the arrangements, it may impact on the practice's ability to deliver care safely.
<b>What does this mean for the staff?</b>	The practice will transfer over to a new provider on the 1 June 2023. All staff employed by the practice will be offered the opportunity to transfer over to the employment of the new caretaker provider.
<b>How will this affect GP primary care services in Biggleswade? How will this affect access to GP appointments in Biggleswade?</b>	<p>We have been working to find a temporary provider to take over the running of Ivel Medical Centre. We will be working with the new provider to support the delivery of quality general practice services. We will be asking them to review the systems and the processes of how the practice works, including how appointments are accessed. We will be working closely with the practice's patient participation group (PPG) to understand what the current frustrations and issues are from a patient perspective and will expect the new provider to continue to work with the PPG as changes are made.</p> <p>We would ask patients to please bear with us and not to try to re-register with the other practice in Biggleswade. We need the patient list to be fairly stable to know what to procure for the future, and we do not want to risk the other practice in Biggleswade becoming overwhelmed with new registrations.</p>
<b>Can I do anything to help?</b>	<p>General advice for anyone thinking about making an appointment with the practice would be to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do I need to see a doctor, or could I request a different member of the healthcare team (e.g. a practice nurse or paramedic)?</li> <li>• Could I visit a pharmacy instead of the practice?</li> <li>• Could I attend an evening or weekend appointment? These are now available to all registered patients of Ivel Medical Centre. Please ask the receptionist about availability when booking if this is an option for you.</li> <li>• Am I registered for online services? To register follow this link: <a href="https://www.ivelmedicalcentre.co.uk/navigator/register-for-online-services/">https://www.ivelmedicalcentre.co.uk/navigator/register-for-online-services/</a>. You will need to visit the surgery with ID before you can start to use the online services.</li> </ul>
<b><i>FAQ's Dispensary Service</i></b>	
<b>I have heard that the surgery is losing its dispensary. What is a dispensary and why is the dispensary closing at Ivel Medical Centre?</b>	<p>Ivel Medical Centre is currently able to dispense medication to some of their patients who do not live very close to a pharmacy.</p> <p>The dispensary is closing because the current GP partners have given notice on their contract. This means a new contract will be in place from 1 June 2023. The new contract will no longer qualify to include a dispensary. This is due to changes in the national pharmaceutical regulations introduced in 2013.</p>

	<p>This affects a very small proportion of patients registered at the practice (just over 200) who currently regularly collect their medication from the dispensary at the practice instead of from a pharmacy.</p>
<p><b>Why won't the practice be allowed to include a dispensary from 1 June 2023?</b></p>	<p>This is because there are now a number of pharmacies local to the practice which patients can go to for their prescribed medication. National pharmaceutical regulations for GP practices state that new contracts cannot include dispensing services when there is a pharmacy nearby.</p>
<p><b>I don't have a pharmacy where I live, how will I get my medication now that I can't get it from the surgery?</b></p>	<p>There are a number of pharmacies very close to the surgery and all patients who have been regularly collecting their medication from the practice have been written to with details of these. These pharmacies are all open for longer hours than the surgery dispensary currently is, and some also offer deliveries for elderly or housebound patients.</p> <p>You do not have to use the pharmacies on the list we have sent. If you have one which is more convenient for you, for example close to where you work, then you can use whichever one you want. To find a pharmacy, go to: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy">https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy</a></p> <p>Alternatively, you may prefer to get your medication in the post and can sign up with an online pharmacy if you wish.</p>
<p><b>What about my elderly relative who is used to getting their medication from the practice and is going to struggle with getting used to a pharmacy?</b></p>	<p>Your relative should speak to the dispensary staff at the practice next time they collect their medication. The staff are fully aware of all the options and will help your relative to find the best one for them and support them to put the right arrangements in place.</p>
<p><b>What other services will the surgery be losing?</b></p>	<p>The surgery will continue to offer full general practice services from 1 June. The only change will be to dispensary services as detailed above. All patients who will be affected by the change have received a letter with full details of how to access pharmacy services.</p>
<p><b>What would the practice need to do to remain a dispensing practice for residents of Biggleswade?</b></p>	<p>Unfortunately, the practice cannot remain a dispensing practice due to national regulations which state that new GP contracts cannot include dispensing services when there is a pharmacy nearby. We are confident that patients will receive an excellent service from whichever pharmacy they choose. Pharmacy opening hours are longer than the practice dispensary, and many also offer delivery services to elderly or housebound patients.</p>

<p><b>It's unfair you're making people travel further.</b></p>	<p>We do not believe people will have to travel further to a pharmacy than they have already been doing to get to the practice. We are committed to supporting our population to reduce costs wherever possible and there are several options for patients, including online NHS pharmacies which deliver free of charge, avoiding the need to travel to collect medication at all.</p>
<p><b>Biggleswade is in desperate need of more healthcare services, why is it taking so long for the ICB to sort out.</b></p>	<p>We have heard loud and clear from residents of Biggleswade that they need some stability in the healthcare provided locally – that is why we have been working so hard to find a suitable solution for Ivel Medical Centre. The new providers will need some time to bed in, which the ICB will support them to do. We will continue to work with system partners to look at the potential feasibility of providing additional services in Biggleswade, but new services take time to develop. We are working hard with other partners to progress this.</p>
<p><b><i>FAQ's – New Provider</i></b></p>	
<p><b>Who is the new provider?</b></p>	<p>Malzeard Road Medical Centre (a practice already providing services in Luton) has been awarded a temporary contract of 18-24 months and will provide GP services at Ivel Medical Centre from Thursday 1 June 2023. The ICB is working closely with the new provider to prioritise improving access and to continue with recruitment.</p>
<p><b>Who will be working at Ivel Medical Centre from 1 June?</b></p>	<p>Dr Kirti Singh is the lead GP at Malzeard Road Medical Centre. She is a full-time GP and will split her time between the surgeries that she works in.</p> <p>Dr Singh will be supported by a team of both clinical and non-clinical staff at Ivel Medical Centre.</p> <p>In terms of GPs, one of the current doctors at Ivel Medical Centre is directly employed by the partners and will continue to be employed once the new contract starts. In addition, a number of regular long term sessional GPs who already work at IMC may choose to continue working there, and new doctors will be recruited as needed. This staffing model is designed to provide good continuity of care for the residents of Biggleswade and help to resolve some of the ongoing issues around access.</p> <p>All other staff currently employed at Ivel Medical Centre are eligible to Transfer Under Protected Employment (TUPE) rights. There have been some changes to staffing recently which has left the practice short of nurses, and we are working with both the current and new providers to resolve this.</p>

<b>What do I need to do as a patient?</b>	If you and other members of your family are registered and currently receive GP services at Ivel Medical Centre, you do not need to do anything. All registered patients will continue to receive services from the practice as usual from Thursday 1 June 2023.
<b>What do I do if I have an appointment booked?</b>	Appointments that are already booked will continue as planned. You may find that your appointment is with a different GP or healthcare professional.
<b>I need to book an appointment to be seen after 1 June, what should I do?</b>	You can contact the practice and book your appointment in your usual way.