

Fellview Healthcare

Proposed Closure of Frizington Branch Surgery



Briefing:

Background

Fellview Healthcare (Fellview) has operated on four branch sites in Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Frizington. In common with many other primary care providers across North Cumbria, GP numbers at Fellview have fallen steadily from a high of nine whole time equivalent partners to the current four.

Whilst the practice has made every effort to recruit new GP's and developed new roles to help meet patient demand, many services require the presence of a GP on site. There have been many occasions where services have had to be moved from Frizington because it has not been possible to provide GP cover at all four Fellview sites. This has often been at short notice.

Frizington 'serves' the fewest number of patients of the Fellview sites, 3900 (approx. 2000 households) in March 2022. In the year April 2021 to March 2022 only 3.5% of Fellview total patient contacts were delivered at Frizington.

Fellview has operated an "Open Access" policy, meaning that patients have been seen at any one of the Practice branch sites and are not limited to their "local" surgery. Patients of Fellview have become used to visiting different sites and clinical settings to receive care. This has happened over a number of years and for a number of reasons. In fact only 62% of the patient contacts at Frizington in 2021/22 were from the Frizington population of 2000 household's, meaning 38% of appointments were taken up by patients from outside of the 'historical' Frizington boundary area. During Covid the Frizington site has delivered a very restricted service.

Fellview Healthcare is operated by North Cumbria Primary Care Ltd (NCPC). A 'not for profit' organisation. NCPC hold contracts for seven GP practices in North Cumbria (Copeland, Workington and Carlisle). In Copeland, we work across eight NCPC sites. Patients also have access to Same Day Health Service appointments offered by Copeland PCN at a ninth site.

Reasoning

There is significant fragility within Primary Care in Copeland and particularly Fellview, due to the number of sites that it operates and being able to offer safe and equitable services to all patients, at all four of those sites.

The effective operation of the Frizington site has been brought into sharp focus by the challenges of staffing each of the four site's appropriately. A safe level and the correct mix of staff has been challenging to deliver consistently. The practice continues to address workforce challenges, however there is no immediate solution to the lack of GP availability, this problem, which is being seriously felt across North Cumbria and is an acute issue in West Cumbria. Although NCPC have been

successful in recruiting GP's in the last two years, it is much more difficult to gain long term interest from people who wish to commit to the West of the county.

In order to offer a safe and effective service to the whole Fellview patient population of 24,000 plus, consolidating services on three sites in Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Egremont is key.

Future Service Provision

Fellview Healthcare is a North Cumbria Primary Care practice, the practice works together with Seascale Health Centre, Lowther Medical Centre and Queen Street Medical Practice, as a locality. All of these practices face challenges, but by working collectively and in partnership with Copeland PCN it is believed that we can deliver stable, safe and effective general practice for the c44,000 patients in our care.

In an attempt to address the ongoing challenges in Copeland we have launched the "Copeland Project" which is an improved model of care based around clinical hubs in Cleator Moor, Egremont, Whitehaven and Seascale. The overarching aim is to deliver local practice, with greater flexibility of service delivery and resource allocation, than has been possible in the traditional practice model. Each clinical hub will consist of one or more small multi-disciplinary core teams with "wrap around" general and specialist teams to support the core team in delivering care.

The wider team may work across site and practice boundaries to ensure the best utilisation of staff and physical resources. It will facilitate the delivery of a wider range of services and care to the NCPC patient population in Copeland.

We believe a fully integrated 'clinical hub' model will improve patient experience and service delivery. We know change takes time, so some of the changes will come sooner than others.

Conclusion

Fellview Healthcare and North Cumbria Primary Care, have made the difficult decision to proceed with an application to NHS England to close Frizington Branch site. The application will be submitted after the initial engagement period has concluded. Any further comments regarding the application will be forwarded to NHS England and the commissioner (as of June 22 currently North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group NCCCG).

Engagement Process:

Patient Survey



We welcome patients thoughts, comments and concerns regarding the proposal to close Frizington Branch Surgery and have created a survey to allow patients views and comments to be collated and considered.

The survey is available at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Frizington>

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Paper copies are available at Fellview Healthcare sites.

Drop In Sessions

We will hold drop in sessions at Frizington Branch surgery to allow patients, stakeholders and other interested parties to discuss queries and raise concerns. Fellview Healthcare will ensure senior representation at these sessions.

Dates and Times:

Tuesday 5 July 22	17:00 – 18:30
Thursday 7 July 22	14:00 – 15:30
Wed 13 July 22	10:00 – 11:30
Thursday 21 July 22	17:00 – 18:30

Patient Questions

Along with this briefing document we are envisaging a number of Frequently Asked Questions to emerge and in anticipation of this have created some that we believe will feature. By sharing these earlier we hope that people will be better informed of the situation. The document will be updated during the engagement period.

All documents are available on the Fellview Healthcare website.

<https://www.fellviewhealthcare.nhs.uk/>

Patient and Stakeholder Comments

Patients and stakeholders can also send any comments regarding the proposed closure to:

cuccg.ncpcenquiries@nhs.net

Letters can be left at any Fellview Healthcare surgery for the attention of Anne Thompson.

Comments will be collated and considered as part of the application process.