

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is a CCG?**

CCG stands for Clinical Commissioning Group. The purpose of a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is to meet the health and care needs of our population. They are allocated a budget to achieve this and must use it to plan and pay for (or 'commission') health and care services from a number of service providers (such as hospital, mental health and community trusts and GPs). CCGs are responsible for making sure that local people get the high quality health services they need. Since 2015, CCGs have also had joint responsibility with NHS England for ensuring access to GP services for local patients.

### **What is The Living Well Partnership?**

The Living Well Partnership is a partnership of local GPs delivering GP services for St. Luke's and Botley Surgeries, and the surgeries at Ladies Walk, Weston Lane, Harefield, Midanbury and Bitterne Park in Southampton.

### **Will this mean my surgery will shut?**

This proposal is only about merging two NHS contracts held with the CCG and not about closing or opening sites.

We are committed to working with our patients and partners before making a decision on our sites.

### **Is the contract merger happening because we don't have enough GPs?**

No. However, the benefits of reducing the administrative burden means we can free up more time for our clinicians to treat our patients and for our business team to promote our work to potential new GPs. There are now more GPs working at St. Luke's and Botley Surgeries since The Living Well Partnership took on that GP contract.

### **How far am I going to have to travel for services in future?**

This is only a proposal to merge our two contracts together and not to close or open buildings. Therefore, travelling distances will remain the same as now.

### **Will these changes affect other health and care services which I currently receive or may need to access?**

We do not anticipate that there will be any changes to the services you currently receive or may need to access in future.

Patients of The Living Well Partnership will continue to be eligible for a full range of appropriate NHS services to meet their health and care needs irrespective of their resident address or which of the practices they were previously registered with before the merger.

There are some differences in the NHS providers available to patients currently registered at St. Luke's and Botley Surgeries and those currently registered at The Living Well

Partnership Southampton, e.g. district nursing services in Southampton are delivered by Solent NHS Trust and in Hedge End by Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust. If you are already receiving care from another NHS organisation this will continue unchanged and will not be affected by the merger.

If you need to access care in future for another health and care need, you will be referred to the most appropriate organisation to meet your needs. The service you are referred to may depend on what area you live in.

If the merger is approved, The Living Well Partnership will work closely with the CCG and other partner organisations in both East Southampton and the Southern Parishes of Eastleigh to ensure your care is joined up.

The Living Well Partnership will work with other services to monitor the impact of the merger, if approved, and any unforeseen issues that might arise associated with access to services will be resolved.

### **Will there be more appointments at the practice as a result of the merger?**

The merger will allow for reduced administrative tasks for staff and that means freeing up time for the clinical team to see and speak to patients.

### **Is this a done deal already?**

We are committed to listening to the feedback of our patients, partners and local people. The decision to merge must be approved by the CCG and that decision will take your feedback into account.

### **Will I be able to choose which site I go to?**

We are committed to serving our communities across the east of Southampton and Eastleigh Southern Parishes. Where possible we want to reduce the travel time for our patients to access our services, and at the same time provide the highest quality service.

We also want to provide a service which is as convenient for you as possible. Sometimes it may be quicker and easier to handle an issue over the phone rather than a face-to-face appointment. On some occasions, a face to face appointment will be needed and we try our best to make appointments available at a number of sites.

### **Will the receptionist staff be trained to signpost patients to correct services? For instance, will reception staff know I am resident in Southampton and therefore do not access Hampshire County Council services?**

Yes, reception staff are already trained to recognise this. There will be no change to this.

### **Will our social care services change?**

No. Social care services are run by local authorities, not the NHS. This means if you live in the Hampshire County Council area, these services will continue to be run by Hampshire

County Council. If you live in the Southampton City Council area, these services will continue to be run by Southampton City Council.

**Will our maternity services change?**

There will be no change.

**What are the timescales of this merger proposal?**

A decision on this proposal will be made by the CCG at a meeting in September 2021.

**Will you end up merging again with another GP practice in a few years' time?**

We have no plans at the moment and are committed to serving our existing patients. This proposal is only about merging the two contracts we have into one.

**Will I still be able to see the GP or Nurse I am used to?**

Yes - you can continue to see the same doctors and nurses that you see at the moment. Your registration with your current doctor will not change and you will continue to see your doctor as you do now.

**Will we be expected to travel to other surgeries?**

You will still be able to be seen at your local surgery as you currently are. After the contracts merge we may be able to offer you a wider choice of appointments across all our sites to see a doctor or nurse if you are able and willing to travel to another site.

**How will the practice provide enough appointments with an increase in patients?**

Although our patient list size will increase, the merge will mean that there is a corresponding increase in the number of GPs and nurses, as we bring all the teams together.

We are also continuing our recruitment activities for both GPs and our Nursing Team. The practice team will regularly review the number of appointments available to ensure that we are able to accommodate patients.

**Will the practice still offer the same services?**

Yes – we plan to continue all current services.

**Will I need to change my pharmacist?**

No – there will be no need to change.

**How will I make an appointment at the practice?**

There will be no changes to the way you currently make appointments.

**What will the practice boundary be?**

The new boundary will include all existing boundaries.

**Do I have to stay with the merged practice?**

Patients are can choose to register at another practice, but of course The Living Well Partnership hope patients will wish to stay.

**What is the impact of merging with St. Luke's & Botley because they not in Southampton?**

There will be no impact on patients or on the other health services you receive

**Does the practice have to seek approval to merge contracts?**

Yes, it has to have the approval of the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

**What about the practice staff?**

There will be no impact on staffing. All staff already work for The Living Well Partnership, and so there is no impact.

**How will we be kept informed of the merger and changes?**

We will add new questions to this sheet and keep an updated copy on each of the practice websites.