



# A Guide to Primary Care

## Primary Care

**Primary Care** is the first point of contact for healthcare, acting as the 'front door' of the NHS.

Services are based in Health Centres, Practices, Community Clinics and outwith hospital settings. This includes:

- General Practitioners (GP/Doctor)
- Community Pharmacists (Chemist)
- Dentists (Mouth/Teeth Care)
- Community Opticians (Eye Care)

There are other professionals and services that work alongside your GP.

This guide will explain some of the changes that you may see and how to access these services, to ensure you get the right care in the right place.

## GP Receptionist

The **GP Receptionist** role is to support and guide patients through Primary Care services.

Receptionists as first point of contact are trained to support patients by signposting.

They may refer or appoint patients to the most appropriate professional or service to best suit their health and social care needs.

The GP has requested that Receptionists ask important questions to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place.

All information shared remains confidential and is used only to guide the patient to the right health professional.

## Pharmacy

**Primary Care Pharmacists** work alongside GP Practices helping patients use medicines safely. The team support clinics, medication reviews and prescription requests.

Pharmacy Technicians and Pharmacy Support Workers process medicine changes from discharge and outpatient letters.

**Pharmacy First Scotland** is a service provided by **Community Pharmacy**, offering advice, guidance and treatment including:

- Sore throat and cough
- Mouth ulcers, earache and head lice
- Cold sores, warts and verrucas
- Indigestion, constipation and diarrhoea
- Allergies, hay fever and impetigo

Visit a local Pharmacy for advice or go to [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

## Community Treatment & Care

**Community Treatment and Care (CTAC)** is a long-standing nurse-led service formally known as Treatment Rooms.

Working alongside GPs, the CTAC team provide specialist care in Health Centres and GP Practices including:

- Ear care
- Catheter care
- Blood pressure, blood glucose and blood samples
- Pulse and body temperature
- Wound, leg ulcer and dressing care
- Removal of stitches & staples
- Medication administration i.e injections

Should patients require to visit one of our centres at Gourock, Greenock or Port Glasgow; the GP Practice will make a referral to Community Treatment & Care.



Primary Care is changing and there are other skilled professionals, services and support available to complement GP care.

Scan the QR code for further information about the Primary Care Transformation journey in Inverclyde.



## General Practitioner

**General Practitioners (GPs)** treat common medical conditions and play an important role in looking after patients in the community.

The GP Practice is traditionally the first point of contact for patients accessing Primary Care.

There are a wide range of skilled and experienced services and professionals that work alongside GP Practices to complement GP Care.

GP Receptionists will ask some important questions when patients contact the GP Practice. This is to ensure patients are directed to the right care at the right place.

General advice on minor conditions can be accessed at [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot)

## Advanced Nurse Practitioner

Community **Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs)** offer specialised services in partnership with GPs.

ANPs are highly skilled Senior Nurses with advanced clinical skills, allowing them to:

- Take a full medical history
- Carry out physical assessments and examinations
- Make a diagnosis and carry out treatment
- Prescribe medicines
- Plan any follow up treatment
- Refer patients for investigations

Advanced Nurse Practitioners enhance the care available to patients and can be found in various settings including care homes, GP Practices and home visits by GP referral.

## Mental Health & Wellbeing

GPs can have a role to support and manage **Mental Health & Wellbeing**.

Patients can access many resources on identifying, treating and managing mental health problems. Find self-help guides for sleep, anxiety, depression and self-esteem at: [www.nhsinform.scot/mental-health](http://www.nhsinform.scot/mental-health)

Further support is accessible by phoning:

- 111 NHS 24 Mental Health Hub. Trained Practitioners offer advice and support.

- 01475 558000 for self-referral to the Inverclyde Primary Care Mental Health Team who provide support, mental health assessments and short term treatment to adults over 18. Support is available via phone, NHS near me or in person.
- For severe Mental Health problems, please discuss with your GP for referral to the Community Mental Health Team.

## Physiotherapy

Conditions affecting patients joints, bones and muscles, known as **Musculoskeletal** conditions, can often be self managed.

Information, videos and leaflets that you may find helpful can be found at:



Should patients require further support, **Physiotherapists** can provide expert advice and assessment to help patients with:

- Improving movement and strength
- Returning to sport after an injury
- Rehabilitation after an operation

Appointments are available face to face, by telephone or video.

Referral forms can be completed online at:



## Vaccinations

NHS Scotland provides a number of **Vaccination** programmes to protect local populations against disease.

Vaccinations are no longer carried out in GP Practices and are now offered in a variety of locations including maternity settings, schools, community clinics and care homes.

Health information, travel vaccination requirements and advice on staying healthy when travelling abroad can be accessed at [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

Vaccinations information for Pregnancy and birth, childhood through to adulthood can be found by scanning the following QR code:



## Community Link Workers

**Community Link Workers (CLW)** support patients with non-medical issues affecting overall physical and emotional wellbeing. This is known as social prescribing and includes:

- Financial worries
- Mental health concerns
- Physical activity (exercise)
- Emotional support
- Housing matters

Maintaining confidentiality at all times, Community Link Workers are highly skilled and trained to deliver a professional service similar to the GP Practice team.

A GP appointment is not necessary for a referral to the Community Link Worker team. Receptionists, Nurses, Pharmacists and Physiotherapists can make this referral.