

Your Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The PPG is a group of registered patients who work with Millview Medical Centre to help improve services, communication, and patient experience.

PPGs give patients a direct voice in how the practice runs – sharing feedback, highlighting issues, suggesting improvements, and helping ensure information is clear and accessible.

They also help shape patient surveys, support health campaigns, and act as a link between the practice and the wider community.

About Millview Medical Centre

Millview Medical Centre is a two-site practice (main site in Heckington with a branch site in Sleaford). Some services run at the main site due to space and staffing, but you can contact the practice through the same routes.

Tel: 01529 460213

Web:

www.millviewmedicalcentre.co.uk



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COVID Vaccination: Get summer protection

This spring, the NHS is offering a **free COVID-19 vaccination** to people who are at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell if they catch the virus.

Even if you have had COVID-19 before, or had the vaccine last year, **protection fades over time**. A spring booster helps top up your immunity and reduces the risk of severe illness, hospital admission and health complications.

Who can have a spring COVID-19 vaccination

You are eligible if you are:

- Aged 75 or over (or turning 75 by 30th June)
- A resident of a care home for older adults
- Aged 6 months or over with a weakened immune system.

The offer is based on national expert advice and is the same across England.

Don't wait for an invite

There are several ways to get vaccinated:

- Book using the NHS App
- Book online via the National Booking Service
- Call 119 (free of charge)

Ask a member of staff at the practice for help and advice.

Help spread the message

If you know of someone who is eligible, please remind them to get their vaccination before the end of June.

Getting vaccinated helps protect you and those around you.



Staying well in hot weather

Warm weather can be enjoyable, but when it gets very hot there are real health risks – especially for older adults and people with long-term conditions.

The main risks are **dehydration**, **overheating**, **heat exhaustion** and **heatstroke**.

Simple ways to protect yourself

NHS advice includes:

- Drink plenty of fluids – don't wait until you feel thirsty
- Keep out of the sun during the hottest part of the day – often 11am to 3pm. Seek shade if you go out.
- Keep your home cool. Close curtains in sun facing rooms and open windows later when it is cooler outside.
- Cool down - take a cool shower; place a damp cloth, or a sprinkling of water on skin or clothes.

Get medical help if someone becomes unwell with a high temperature in hot weather.



Hay Fever Misery & How to Cope

Quick relief and when to ask for help

Hay fever can make you feel miserable – sneezing, itchy eyes, a runny or blocked nose, and tiredness are all common. Many people can manage symptoms with simple self-care.

What you can do

- Try an **antihistamine** if symptoms are mild to moderate
- Consider practical steps such as keeping windows closed on high-pollen days and showering/changing clothes after being outdoors (to reduce pollen exposure).

If you have asthma, keep using your inhalers as prescribed and do not ignore symptoms that are getting worse.

- Put nasal balm or petroleum jelly around your nostrils to trap pollen
- Vacuuming and dusting your home regularly.

- Wearing sunglasses, a mask or a brimmed sun hat.
- Trying out a pollen filter in the air vents of your car.

Also try to avoid:

- Walking on grass
- Keeping fresh flowers in your house
- Smoking or being around smokers
- Drying clothes outside.

When to ask for help

- Your symptoms are affecting sleep or daily activities
- Your symptoms are not improving with over-the-counter treatments
- You have a wheeze, shortness of breath, chest tightness, or asthma symptoms worsening.

Health professionals can help you choose safe options and can also support with many other minor health concerns.

Sun Safety

You do not need to be abroad to get sunburnt – UV can be high in the UK too. Sunburn increases your risk of skin damage and longer-term problems, so it is worth taking simple steps whenever you are outside.

Sun-safe habits

- Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest
- Wear light, loose clothing and a hat when it's hot
- Use sunscreen when outdoors
- Keep babies and young children cool and out of direct sunlight.

Remember: drink fluids, avoid overheating, and look out for signs of heat illness.



Fast help for common conditions

Did you know you can now get assessment and treatment for some common health conditions from a community pharmacist – **without needing a GP appointment?**

The NHS **Pharmacy First** service enables pharmacies to complete an episode of care for **7 common conditions**, following defined clinical pathways, (see below).

Conditions Pharmacy First can help with

Pharmacists can assess and treat (age ranges apply):

- Earache: ages 1-17
- Impetigo: age 1+
- Infected insect bites: age 1+
- Shingles: age 18+
- Sinusitis: age 12+
- Sore throat: age 5+
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections (UTIs): women aged 16 to 64.

How to access Pharmacy First

For the 7 conditions above, you can **contact or visit participating pharmacies directly** or be referred by services such as general practice or NHS 111.

Using Pharmacy First can help you get care faster and keep GP appointments available for people who need them most.

Are you a carer? Support is available

Many carers do not think of themselves as carers – they are ‘just helping’ a partner, parent, child, or friend. But caring responsibilities can affect your own health and wellbeing.

Why tell the practice you are a carer?

If the practice knows you are a carer, it can help staff understand your circumstances and support you with practical issues, such as:

- Communicating in a way that works for you
- Helping you keep on top of your own health needs

You matter too

Carers often put their own health needs last. If you are supporting someone else, look after your mental wellbeing:

- Keep a regular routine
- Stay connected with others
- Get enough rest
- Make time for activities you enjoy.

If you are struggling, it is important to remember that you do not have to cope alone. **Asking for support is a positive step, contact Lincolnshire Carers: 01522 782224**

Reducing missed appointments – a small action can help everyone

Missed appointments do not just affect the person who misses them – they reduce availability for everyone. If you cannot attend an appointment, cancelling early allows the slot to be offered to someone else.

If you cannot attend:

- Contact the practice by phone or the website as soon as you know you cannot make your appointment
- Rebook if you still need to be seen
- If you are unsure what to do, contact the practice.
- Appointments can be managed through the NHS App. You can now reschedule or cancel your GP appointments via the app.

Small actions like cancelling early help the practice run more smoothly and improve access for all patients.



Medicines & self-care

Many common illnesses and minor injuries can be managed safely at home with **self-care and medicines bought from a pharmacy**. Knowing when and how to look after yourself – and when to seek help – can make you feel better sooner.

Self-care is often the best first step for minor health problems such as coughs, colds, sore throats, headaches, aches and pains, mild stomach upsets, and insect bites. These usually improve within a few days with rest, fluids and over-the-counter medicines such as:

- Pain relief - ibuprofen or paracetamol
- Treatments for allergies such as antihistamines
- Remedies for indigestion or diarrhoea
- Thermometer to check for fever.

Always follow the packet instructions and ask a pharmacist if you are unsure.

May: Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental health is an important part of our overall wellbeing, affecting how we think, feel, and cope with everyday life.

Mental health awareness month, held every May, is a chance to talk openly about mental health, challenge stigma, and remind people that support is available.

Mental health problems can affect anyone, at any stage of life – just like physical health conditions. Talking about mental health and taking small steps to care for ourselves and each other, can make a real difference.

Looking after your mental wellbeing

Everyone's mental health needs are different, but things that many people find helpful include:

- Keep a regular routine
- Stay connected with others
- Get enough rest
- Make time for activities you enjoy.

If you are struggling, it is important to remember that you do not have to cope alone. Asking for support is a positive step, not a sign of weakness.

Support is available

If you are worried about your mental health, your GP practice can help you find the right support. There is also NHS self-referral talking therapies available for many people, and urgent help is available if someone is in crisis.

If you are concerned about a friend, family member or neighbour, listening without judgement and encouraging them to seek help can make a big difference.

Let's keep the conversation going

Mental health awareness month is a reminder that mental health matters every day, not just in May. By being open, kind and supportive, we can help create a community where people feel able to talk about how they are feeling and get help when they need it.

If you would like to learn more, the Mental Health Foundation provides trusted information and practical tips on looking after mental wellbeing, email: info@mentalhealth.org.uk or call 020 7803 1100.