**Why Are Some GP Services Changing in North Cumbria?**
*A message to our patients from your GP practice*

**What’s happening?**

From 1st September 2025, GP practices in North Cumbria may no longer be able to offer some services that were previously available, including:

* Certain blood tests
* Medication monitoring that would usually take place in hospitals
* Injections not included in standard NHS GP care

These changes are part of a wider situation affecting general practice across the NHS. We want to explain why this is happening, and what it means for you.

**Why is this happening?**

Over the years, GP practices have taken on more and more work that was once done in hospitals. While we’ve continued to care for patients as best we can, we’re now at a point where many practices are stretched beyond what is safe or sustainable.

Recently, the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) — the organisation responsible for planning and funding local health services — asked GP practices to continue providing a large amount of hospital-related care. Unfortunately, there was no agreed funding or long-term plan to support this work in North Cumbria.

As a result, GP practices — supported by the Local Medical Committee (LMC), which represents and advises GPs — have made the difficult decision to begin stepping back from some of this non-core work from September.

**Is this about funding?**

Not entirely. This is about protecting safe, quality care for patients. But funding is part of the picture. Practices are being asked to do more with fewer staff, limited time, and increasing demand. Without proper support, continuing to deliver these extra services puts core patient care — like appointments, medication reviews, and managing long-term conditions — at risk.

Practices have worked hard to care for their communities, and will continue to do so. But something has to give. This is about prioritising essential NHS services and ensuring practices can continue to operate safely.

**What is the ICB doing?**

The ICB has told us that it is exploring alternative ways to provide these services, such as moving them back into hospitals or community teams. This will take time, but it is an important step forward. In the meantime, GP practices have agreed to a temporary 3-month agreement (until 31st July 2025) to ensure patients are not left without support during the transition.

**What does this mean for me?**

If a service you previously received at your GP practice is changing or stopping, your practice team will let you know. They will also guide you on where and how to access the care you need.

We understand this may be worrying or frustrating. Your practice is still here to support you, and these changes are about protecting your care in the long run.

**How can I help?**

You can:

* Talk to us if you’re worried — we’ll do our best to help
* Write to your local MP to share your experience and call for sustainable support for general practice
* Be kind to your practice team — we’re navigating this with you

**We want to keep providing excellent NHS care in your community.**
These changes are being made to protect that mission — not to walk away from it.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

— Your GP Practice & North Cumbria LMC