

Information for patients at Healthaction GP practices – June 2018

What is happening?

NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) plans health services for people in Liverpool. In April 2017, the CCG awarded contracts for the management of four GP practices to Healthaction, a not-for-profit organisation. These practices are: Healthaction Breeze Hill, Rice Lane, L9; Healthaction Robson Street, Mere Lane Neighbourhood Health Centre, L5; Healthaction Stanley Road, Stanley Road, L5; and Healthaction Childwall, Fiveways Health Centre, Childwall Road, L15.

Healthaction has given notice to the CCG that it will be ending these contracts as problems recruiting doctors on a long-term basis mean that it can no longer offer the service that patients need. The four Healthaction practices will close by 14 September 2018 – the letter you have received with this document will tell you when your practice is closing.

All four Healthaction practices are in the same buildings/health centres as other GP practices – none of the other practices in these buildings are affected.

Why has this happened?

The GP practices managed by Healthaction are run on fixed-term contracts, so a process to agree who will manage them must take place every few years. Healthaction's contracts were for three years, with the option to extend for a further two years. GP practices on fixed-term contracts find it harder to recruit doctors, because many doctors prefer to work at practices who have a permanent contract. Because of this they often have to rely on temporary doctors, known as locums, who are much more expensive than other employees. This creates potential financial issues, and means that patients can potentially have a lack of consistency of care.

Why can't someone else run Healthaction's GP practices?

The CCG thinks it is very unlikely that anyone else would want to manage these GP practices, as they would have the same recruitment problems, especially with only around 18 months left on the contracts. Patients in these practices have had uncertainty about their GP services in recent years, prior to them being managed by Healthaction – we believe that the best way to make sure they receive the highest standard of care in the future is to transfer their registration to other practices.

What happens if I am a patient at one of these practices?

The majority of patients will be automatically transferred to another GP practice in the same building.

Not all GP practices will accept patients who live outside their practice boundary, so in some cases we can't transfer people to a practice in the same building. If so, we will transfer you to

a GP practice nearer to where you live. GP practice boundaries are there to make it easier to organise services such as home visits (if they are needed) and because other health services (for example district nurses) tend to be organised around groups of practices in the same area. It's also better if patients live within the same local authority boundary as their practice, so that practices can link in with the same social services teams.

The letter you received with this document tells you which GP practice you are being transferred to. It also explains how to find a different GP practice, if you aren't happy with this.

Will I have to see a doctor or nurse when I transfer or register?

You might be asked to go for a new patient check-up. This will be to check things like your weight and height, and might include a conversation about any medication you take or treatment you are having.

Will I get the same services in my new practice as I did at my old one?

Yes. However, the practice may operate differently to the one you have been used to.

I am having treatment – how will my new practice know about this?

Your medical records contain details of your previous and current treatment, and this will automatically transfer to your new practice.

I am receiving medication on a repeat prescription – what should I do about this?

Speak to your current Healthaction GP practice to make sure you have enough medication before transferring to your new practice. Your new practice will be able to see which medicines you are taking from your patient record, but you will need to contact them after you transfer to arrange your next prescription – make sure you do this in plenty of time.

I've been to see a hospital specialist who was writing to my GP. Where will this letter go now?

Your current GP will receive any letters while you are still with them. When you move/are moved to another practice, your new doctor will receive any future letters. Previous letters from a hospital specialist will be included in your records, which will transfer automatically

I have been referred to hospital. Will I need to be referred again by my new practice?

No. The hospital will communicate with you direct about your appointment. When you next go to hospital you should let them know who your new GP practice is.

I am waiting for results of my blood tests or X-rays, how will I get them?

Test results will be added to your medical records, so your new practice will be able to see them once you transfer.