

Victoria Park Medical Centre: practice closure

Patient Q&A

Why is the surgery closing?

Due to ongoing clinical staffing shortages at Victoria Park Medical Centre, the very difficult decision has been taken to close the Practice effective Wednesday 11 August 2021.

Over the past few weeks, practice staff, Somerset CCG and neighbouring GP practices have worked closely together to try to find a solution to continue to provide safe patient services at the practice. All possible alternative options have been explored, but it has not been possible to find a way to provide a permanent, adequate safe service at the practice.

This is not a decision that has been taken lightly, and our priority continues to be the safety of our patients and to ensure that you can continue to access local healthcare services when needed.

I am a patient at Victoria Park Medical Centre, what do I need to do?

You do not need to take any action. You have been allocated another local GP practice and your patient record will be securely sent to this practice. The details of your new GP practice are included within the letter accompanying this document.

You can of course choose to register with another practice with an open list after this.

Practice staff are working with NHS Somerset CCG to manage the safe transfer of patients to other neighbouring practices.

Will I have to complete a new patient registration form with another practice?

No, you will not have to complete any forms, your records and patient information will be transferred to your new practice in a secure way.

How has the CCG decided which practice I will be transferred to?

The other local practices in Bridgwater are aware that Victoria Park Medical Centre is closing. They have been working with the CCG and are preparing to take on new patients within their catchment area, so you will be allocated to your local practice who is able to carry on supporting your healthcare needs.

What if I don't want to be registered at the GP Practice I have been allocated to, what can I do?

Once you have received your letter, you can choose to register at a practice of your choice but at present our priority is to ensure the safety of our patients and would ask that Victoria Park patients wait three weeks before registering with another practice. This will enable practices to focus on ensuring Victoria Park patients have ongoing access to care. This will also allow time for your patient record to be

allocated to your new practice and so it can then be securely transferred to another practice.

We are sorry that this will take longer than we would like. We are focusing on making sure patients with immediate care needs are dealt with first. Thank you for your patience

You always have a choice about which GP practice you are registered with. If you are unhappy with the practice you have been allocated to, you can choose to register with a GP practice of your choice. Details of how to register with a GP practice can be found on the [NHS Choices website](#).

Have you tried to get new GPs in to keep the surgery open?

Somerset CCG and neighbouring GP practices have worked closely together to try to find a solution to continue to provide safe patient services at the practice. We have been working hard exploring a number of options to keep the surgery open.

There is a national shortage of GPs and to keep the surgery open we would have to find someone willing to not just work as a GP but also to take over the business responsibilities of the practice. This has not been possible so far.

How will my new practice know about my individual care needs?

Your patient records from Victoria Park Medical Centre will be securely transferred to your new practice.

Will I get the same services in my new practice?

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

How do I book an appointment at my new practice?

The opening times of your new surgery will be the same as Victoria Park Medical Centre; 08.00 – 18.30 Monday to Friday. The contact details for your new surgery are noted within the letter that accompanies this document. More information on accessing services will also be available on your new GP practice website.

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.

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 directly about your appointment. When you next go to hospital you should let them know who your new GP practice is.

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

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. Your new GP surgery will contact you to arrange if this is necessary. You do not need to take any action.

I have questions about my individual care, who can I contact?

Once you have received your letter with details of your new practice you can contact your new surgery. If you have not received this letter please contact Victoria Park Medical Centre directly.

Will I still be able to access Home visits if needed?

Yes, home visits will continue to be undertaken by your new surgery dependent on patient need.

What will happen to the practice premises?

Discussions will take place about future use of the premises and we will engage with patients, the local community and other interested parties.

Will patients be consulted on the changes and the future provision of services?

Yes, Somerset CCG will engage with Bridgwater residents to gather comments regarding the provision of services in the local area. This feedback will be used to inform any proposals for future services in the area.

I have questions about the future provision of services, who can I contact?

If you have any questions regarding the process or about the future provision of services please contact the CCG's advice line on 0300 1245612 or email somccg.primarycarereview@nhs.net. They will not be able to provide any information on individual care needs. If you have questions relating to your care please contact your practice direct.