

## MORAY COAST MEDICAL PRACTICE

### Proposal to permanently close the Burghead and Hopeman branch surgeries Consultation information document

#### What this document is about

The purpose of this document is to inform patients of the Health & Social Care Moray proposal to **permanently close** the Burghead and Hopeman branch surgeries.

The closure would have an impact on patients who have previously accessed the branch surgeries. The consultation gives all patients the opportunity to comment on the proposed closure. Please read this document and provide your comments by **16 December 2022**.

#### Background

Moray Coast Medical Practice has worked across three sites - Lossiemouth, Hopeman and Burghead - for over 30 years.

The Burghead and Hopeman buildings were secured when the practice team was smaller and regulations around healthcare premises and working practices were less restrictive.

Discussions between Health & Social Care Moray and Moray Coast Medical Practice about the suitability of the branch surgery premises have been ongoing for several years. Both buildings were temporarily closed in March 2020

Health & Social Care Moray is formally proposing to permanently close the branch surgeries. Some of the reasons why are outlined below:

- Inspections shows neither of the buildings in Burghead and Hopeman are fit for the purpose of running a modern medical branch surgery. They fail to meet legislation and standards for the delivery of modern, high quality healthcare, particularly for patients with a disability. This is due to their size, layout and condition (internal and structural).
- Even with significant investment, the failures cannot be resolved due to the limited space to extend and improve the buildings.
- Moray Coast Medical Practice does not support a return to working in the buildings. They have concerns for the safety and welfare of patients and staff.
- The practice is not able to deliver services to patients at Burghead and Hopeman at the same standard as in the Lossiemouth medical centre.

Benefits of the proposal include:

- Lossiemouth is a modern, fit for purpose medical centre. It provides high quality facilities for patients and staff. It is fully wheelchair accessible. There are opportunities to expand and improve the clinical space.

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- Patients attending at Lossiemouth have access to a wider range of services and different members of the practice team. They also have access to the full multi-disciplinary team of health and care professionals who are based together in the Lossiemouth building.
- Concentrating services at Lossiemouth will support Moray Coast Medical Practice to secure a sustainable, effective and equitable model of service provision for the broader Lossiemouth Locality.

### **What could this mean for me?**

Just over half the populations of Burghead and Hopeman have chosen to register with Moray Coast Medical Practice.

Since the branch surgeries closed in March 2020, all patients have had in-person appointments with Moray Coast Medical Practice at the Lossiemouth medical centre, as well as telephone, online and video consultations.

Patients on the housebound register and those who are too ill to attend Lossiemouth medical centre are visited at home.

These arrangements will continue should the branch surgeries not reopen.

It is recognised that patients who have used the Burghead or Hopeman branch surgeries will be affected by the proposed permanent closure as they will continue to have to travel to Lossiemouth medical centre. This involves a car or bus journey and there is no direct Stagecoach bus service to Lossiemouth.

A Dial M for Moray Bus Service is currently in place Monday to Friday between 10.00am and 2.30pm to take patients from the coastal villages and surrounding communities to the Lossiemouth medical centre. Demand for the service is being monitored.

Bookings can be made by calling 0300 1234565 the day before an appointment. The Moray Coast Medical Practice will try to arrange appointments for patients during these times and can also book the service for on the day appointments.

Discussions have been held with Stagecoach about the possibility of introducing a coastal bus service. This service is unlikely to be commercially viable and partners would need to explore potential funding options or alternative ways of providing a service at a lower cost (such as off-peak only or only on certain days of the week).

There have been several meetings with the Hopeman Community Mini Bus Committee. The committee have ambitious plans to develop community led transport provision for the coastal villages.

On the next two pages are answers to some of the questions you may have at this time.

### **About the consultation**

#### **Q: How will a decision be made?**

The responses to this consultation will be analysed and a summary reported to the Moray Integration Joint Board (IJB) meeting on 26 January 2023. Any decision will be taken by the Board members.

The IJB is made up of eight voting members – four councillors appointed by Moray Council and four non-executive directors appointed by Grampian NHS Board. They are supported by non-voting professional and stakeholder representatives.

### **About the earlier community engagement activity**

#### **Q: I filled out a questionnaire last year. Is this just the same thing?**

A: No. The previous questionnaire was part of the engagement process and we are now in a formal consultation process.

#### **Q: What was the result of the engagement activity?**

The engagement generated a vast amount of health and wellbeing information which will inform a Locality Improvement Plan for future health and care provision. It also highlighted the ongoing issues around the temporary closure of the branch surgeries. The key themes included:

Branch surgeries - respondents overwhelmingly stated they wished the branch surgery buildings to remain open. They were happy to use the buildings as they were. Convenience and accessibility were noted as the key benefit of the surgeries being open.

Transport - respondents overwhelmingly felt that transport provision between the Moray coast villages and Lossiemouth town centre was inadequate. They highlighted the impact of travel time on school and work, the environmental, and of having to rely on family and friends to assist with travel.

The findings of the engagement work were reported to the IJB on 26 May 2022 along with survey reports on the branch surgery buildings. The IJB agreed to move to a formal consultation stage. All the reports from the meetings are available online at: <https://hscmoray.co.uk/lossiemouth.html>. Paper copies can be provided on request.

### **About the branch surgeries**

#### **Q: Why can't they reopen as they are?**

A: Surveys of both buildings were undertaken in September 2021 by the Property and Planning Manager, NHS Grampian. The premises do not comply with current building legislation and standards for healthcare settings.

#### **Q: Can the buildings be improved?**

A: Even with significant investment, the failures cannot be resolved due to the limited space to extend and improve the buildings.

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### **Q: Could other buildings be used as the branch surgeries?**

A: This may be possible but concentrating services at Lossiemouth will support Moray Coast Medical Practice to secure a sustainable, effective and equitable model of service provision for the broader Lossiemouth Locality.

### **Q: Could a new surgery be built?**

A: NHS Grampian's Property and Planning team estimates the costs for a 2 clinic surgery at £2.6 million and £4.2 million for a four clinic surgery. A business case could take several years to complete and funding would have to be identified from budgets which are under significant pressure.

### **Q: Will the pharmacy remain open?**

A: The pharmacy which has branches in Burghead and Hopeman is not within the scope of the consultation. They continue to work closely with Moray Coast Medical Practice.

## **About Moray Coast Medical Practice**

### **Q: Why haven't GP services returned to what they were before the pandemic?**

A: Moray Coast Medical Practice has remained open throughout the pandemic to continue delivering services. In order to protect patients and staff, and in line with government guidance, they must maintain safe infection control and minimise unnecessary physical contact.

All appointments are being triaged. Patients will be offered the most appropriate appointment to meet their needs safely and quickly. This may mean being offered advice or a referral over the phone or online, or they may be offered a face-to-face appointment with the most appropriate member of the practice team.

GP reception staff are a vital part of the health care team and ask questions to direct patients to the best support. They are trained and skilled in assisting with triage and treat all information confidentially.

### **Q: Why is there a problem getting through to the practice by phone?**

A: At the start of the pandemic, the practice recognised the addition pressure on its incoming phone lines and doubled its answering capacity from 4 to 8 staff in a morning and from 2 to 4 staff in an afternoon. At peak times, however, patients still experience difficulty in getting their call answered.

NHS Grampian manages the phone system on behalf of Moray Coast and a number of other GP practices. It is looking at contracting for an enhanced system which will improve efficiency for the practice and provide a more positive experience for patients.