

PATIENT INFORMATION

A summary of the key information displayed in the surgery, including posters, screen and leaflets

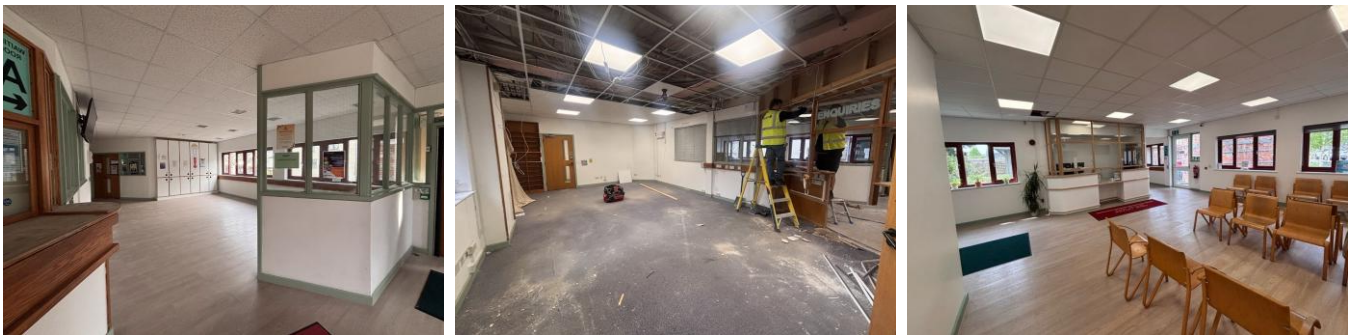
RENOVATION WORK

After three months of renovation work, we're delighted to share that the improvements to our practice are now complete.

We have a welcoming new reception area, along with a dedicated, fit for purpose admin room where our reception team can handle calls and carry out administrative work more efficiently. Our waiting areas have also been updated. We have a new Waiting Area A and what was previously Waiting Room B has been converted into a clinical room. As a result, Waiting Room C has been renamed Waiting Room B.

In addition, we've introduced a brand new, purpose built minor operations/clinical room. Our treatment area has been significantly enhanced and now consists of five fully compliant, functional clinical rooms. We have also added a new consulting room, which will support our ongoing commitment to education and provide space for medical students and registrars.

We would like to sincerely thank all our patients and staff for their patience and understanding throughout the renovation period. It has been a significant project, and we truly believe the results have made it worthwhile. For more photos please click [here](#).



CONTACTING THE SURGERY

The Right Care, First time.

Brannams updated its GP appointment process in October 2024 to help patients see the right clinician on the first attempt. Now, every medical request is checked by a GP within 24 hours. Patients (or carers) are then contacted to book the right appointment. This means faster care, fairer bookings, and no more rushing to get a slot.

How It's Going

From October 2024:

- **81,333** medical requests (about **143 per day**)
- **11,113** admin requests (about **19 per day**)
- **60%** via the website, **17%** through the NHS app, **23%** by Reception

Patients now get seen within **two weeks**, much faster than before! Fewer people miss appointments, and GPs find online forms help patients explain their issues better.

If you need help using the system, our friendly reception team is always here to assist. You can call us on: **01271 329004** or review the [FAQ](#) here or on our [website](#).

KEEP YOURSELF PROTECTED

From April 2026, the **respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** vaccine will be available for free on the NHS to all adults who are aged 75 or over and adults who are living in a care home for older adults. To book your RSV appointment please call reception on **01271 329004**.

KEEP YOURSELF PROTECTED

Free **COVID-19** vaccinations are now available to protect you this spring for those at increased risk from severe illness. Please check your eligibility [here](#). To book your COVID vaccine please use the [National Booking System](#) or the [NHS App](#).

We will **NOT** be booking or offering any COVID-19 vaccinations at the surgery.

GOODBYES TO NURSE DESRI



We are very, very sad to see our truly wonderful Nurse Desri begin her retirement.

Desri has been an invaluable member of Brannam Medical Centre for over 35 years. Quite simply, what she doesn't know about nursing isn't worth knowing.

Desri has been an inspiration, supporter and fantastic role model for many staff who have walked through the doors of Brannams. She will be greatly missed, not only for her endless clinical knowledge, but also as a wonderful friend to us all.

It was fantastic to see so many familiar faces from Brannam past come together to give Desri a send-off she won't forget.

We wish Desri an amazing and well-deserved retirement... and we hope she doesn't miss us too much!

CHARITY EVENTS

This year, we are proud to be supporting two wonderful local charities, [ChemoHero](#) and [Little Willow's Wish](#).

Our aim is to raise at least £2,500 through a range of activities, including cake sales, a book table, a photography competition, and staff monthly dress-down days.

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed—every donation truly makes a difference. Please keep an eye out for upcoming charity events at the surgery.

NHS APP

Want to use the NHS App but not sure how?

If signing up for or using the [NHS App](#) feels confusing to you, you're not alone. Lots of people find it tricky, for a variety of reasons and we would like to help.

We're asking patients if they would like some help learning how to use the NHS App — things like ordering prescriptions, checking test results, or managing appointments.

If you think support like this would be useful, please let us know. If enough people are interested, we may offer free, friendly drop-in sessions.

Just call reception **01271 329004** to register your interest or pop in to leave your details. We'd love to know if this would help you.

TRAVELLING ABROAD SOON?

Remember to check which vaccinations are recommended and book them **6 weeks** in advance.

If travelling sooner we may not be able to offer an appointment in time and you may need to use a private clinic.

Call reception on 01271 329004 to arrange a pre-travel questionnaire (one per traveller). A nurse will review and send a booking link if vaccines are needed.

CALLING ALL MEN AGED 65+

A simple scan can tell you if you have an abdominal aortic aneurysm. This is an enlargement of the main blood vessel in the abdomen and if left untreated it can be fatal.

Men aged 65+ are most at risk. NHS screening invitations will be sent to men aged 65 this year and those over 65 can request a scan.

For more information call **01823 344567** or email SaNDAAA@somersetft.nhs.uk

MY ^{Ages 11-17}
Way

Wellbeing Wednesdays
3:30-4:30pm every Wednesday
Starting April 22nd
Barnstaple Museum

Come along for a chat,
support, signposting, or just to relax

REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED

You can reach us and see
upcoming events at
myway@encompass-sw.org.uk,
or by scanning the QR code.

ENCOMPASS kooth YOUNG DEVON

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR CARE

If you find it hard to speak on the phone, read letters or texts, or access the building due to disability, please tell us.

Under the [NHS Accessible Information Standard](#), we can record your needs using the [NHS Digital Reasonable Adjustment Flag](#), which is used across all NHS services, including hospitals.

Examples include: an induction loop at the front desk for hearing needs; speaking with a nominated carer; ground-floor rooms for mobility issues; large-print letters or phone calls for visual or literacy needs.

Let our reception team know if you would like specific assistance making access to care easier for you on **01271 329004** or visit reception.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME WITH THE GP

We know that appointments can sometimes feel a bit rushed. That's why we're using a new tool called Heidi - a secure AI assistant that helps us take notes during your consultation.

How does Heidi work? Heidi quietly listens during your appointment and writes a record of the consultation. This allows your GP to focus fully on you and the conversation - not the keyboard. After your appointment, your doctor carefully reviews the transcript to ensure its accurate and complete.

Your privacy is our priority. No recordings are stored after the consultation.

Heidi doesn't make any decisions - your GP remains fully in control. If you'd prefer not to use this tool, that's absolutely fine. Just let your GP or nurse know at the start, and we'll switch it off.

For more information please visit our [website](#).

Think Pharmacy First

If needed, your pharmacist can now provide some prescription medicine, without seeing a GP. Seven common conditions now treated by your pharmacist.



Insect Bite • Sinusitis • UTI • Shingles
Impetigo • Earache • Sore Throat



Your health matters
Help us help you

nhs.uk/thinkpharmacyfirst

LUCY'S CHARITY RUN

Hi, I'm Lucy and I work as a practice nurse at Brannam Medical Centre. I have enjoyed running for about 8 years and completed a few marathons in that time. In September last year I thought I could use my hobby to help those less fortunate than myself. I knew it needed to be something really challenging so I entered a [Westcountry Ultra 100 miler](#). This would give me 8 months to get in shape.

Putting in the miles through the winter was tough, especially while juggling work and family commitments. But I got through, completing a 40 mile night run and just recently completing my longest training run of 50 miles. This training schedule and the event itself, I'm sure, are the hardest thing I've physically or mentally been faced with. However this pales into insignificance compared to the struggle of people going through Chemotherapy or the heartache for families with critically ill children.

This is why I decided I would like to raise some money for the two incredible local charities that Brannam's have decided to support this year [ChemoHero](#) and [Little Willow's Wish](#). If you are able to sponsor me, no matter how small I would be incredibly grateful. It will be hugely appreciated by the charities and may just spur me on to keep putting one foot in front of the other when the going gets tough. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

[Donate to Lucy's incredible challenge.](#)



SOBER SPRING

Ever feel like alcohol is your default setting – something you reach for without thinking?

Sober Spring is your chance to hit reset and see what happens when you switch things up. It's your opportunity to explore new ways to relax, unwind, enjoy social occasions and so much more – without relying on alcohol.

Sounds good right? Then join [Alcohol Change UK](#) from 20 March to 20 June, and receive regular insights, advice and science-backed techniques to help you reset your relationship with alcohol this spring.

Sign up for Sober Spring weekly emails [here](#).

Sober Spring is better with a friend, send this to someone you think should take on a 3-month reset with you!

FREE YOGA IS BACK!

Put Sunday 3rd May in your diary as FREE Yoga makes a return to Rock Park 🧘

The [Community Yoga Project](#) is a not-for-profit organisation which makes yoga and its many benefits accessible to everyone in our community in North Devon. They know yoga has the power to improve mental health, boost mobility, and bring people together—yet it's often out of reach to those who need it most. They are passionate about making it free and open to all, with no fees, no pressure, just healthy opportunities for our communities.

No need to book, just bring a mat or towel and start your day in the best way! Every Sunday, May-September at 9.30am in Rock Park by the flag pole.

RECYCLING YOUR OLD MEDICATIONS

Recycling has become a normal part of daily life in the UK, but there's still progress to be made. Over half of people (54%) admit they throw recyclable items into general waste. Recycling more is important because it keeps valuable materials in use, reduces the need for new raw resources, saves energy, and lowers greenhouse gas emissions—helping to fight climate change.

Although recycling rules vary by local council, people can check what's accepted in their area using a Recycling Locator. Every small effort counts, and even items like blister packs and inhalers can be recycled, helping to reduce overall waste. Find your nearest recycling centre [here](#).

KNOW YOUR SH*T

Diarrhoea, abdominal pain, or blood in your poo?

If you or a member of your family are experiencing these symptoms, request a free testing kit to check for inflammatory bowel disease. Open to anyone aged 16-49 and living in the EX postcode area. Learn more about the study led by Royal Devon and the University of Exeter [here](#).

NORTH DEVON PARKINSON'S GROUP

If you have Parkinson's, or you know someone who does, [Parkinson's UK](#) will help you find the support and activities you need.

From Parkinson's advisers, to local group meetings and exercise classes, there is plenty happening in and around Barnstaple. Find out more [here](#).

ACCESSING DENTAL SERVICES

If you need urgent dental treatment, contact your usual dentist. If you cannot contact your dentist or don't have one, use [NHS 111](#) online or call 111 for information about your local out of hours service.



FREE BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

Find a pharmacy that offers free blood pressure checks. If you are aged 40 or over, you can get your blood pressure checked at a pharmacy for FREE without seeing a GP.

You cannot get a free blood pressure check if you: already have high blood pressure OR have had your blood pressure checked by a healthcare professional in the past 6 months.

If you're registered with a GP surgery, your blood pressure reading will be added to your GP health record. It will not be shared with anyone unless your blood pressure is very high or very low and you need urgent medical help.

To find your nearest pharmacy click [here](#).

NEED HELP GETTING AROUND BARNSTAPLE?

[Age Concern North Devon](#) offers Shopmobility scooter and wheelchair hire. Helping you stay mobile, independent and confident. Please book in advance to ensure availability.

leon@ageconcernnorthdevon.org.uk
or call **01271 445130**

CONTRACEPTION SERVICES

Contraception services are free and confidential on the NHS – including for people under the age of 16.

- You do not need a prescription to get contraception.
- You can get condoms from pharmacies, supermarkets, sexual health clinics, your GP or online.
- Some pharmacists now offer the combined pill (the pill) for free without a prescription.
- You can get the progesterone-only pill (mini pill) from some pharmacies.
- You can get the emergency contraceptive pill (morning after pill) from your GP, pharmacies or sexual health clinics.

See where you can find different forms of contraception available to you [here](#).

CALLING ALL CARERS

Did you know that you can access the [Carers UK](#) Digital Resource platform which is packed with e-learning, guides and tools to help you manage your caring responsibilities alongside work and family responsibilities?

Funded by Devon County Council it includes lots of different resources including financial planning and well-being, to technology and more!

Set up a FREE account by clicking the link below and enter code **DGTL8827** when requested
<https://carersdigital.org/login/>

MELANOMA AWARENESS

As we look forward to seeing the sun make a return, it's important to know your skin.

More people die of melanoma per year in the UK than in Australia. Yet **86%** of cases of melanoma are preventable and increasing numbers of people are being diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer. There are now more than **17,500** new cases each year in the UK.

If you notice changes in your moles or lesions contact your GP. Many of these moles or lesions do NOT end up being anything serious, however, it is always important to be diagnosed early as early stage melanomas are generally curable. Find out more about sunscreens and skin safety [here](#).

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS CLASSES

Don't forget the special [South West MS Centre](#) exercise class at Tarka Leisure Centre, Barnstaple.

Mondays at 1pm in the Studio with instructor Jackie
£5 per class, to be booked in 6-week blocks.

This class is designed to help people living with MS stay active, improve mobility, and connect with others in a supportive environment.

Booking is essential! Please call **01392 447411** or email northdevon@mssociety.org.uk

HAYFEVER SYMPTOMS?

You do not need to see a doctor or have a prescription for hayfever medicines. Your community pharmacist can offer advice on how to avoid triggers and how to treat your hayfever. Many treatments are inexpensive and can be bought from a community pharmacy or supermarket.

PRESCRIPTIONS

For repeat **prescription** requests or enquiries please use [NHSApp](#) or drop your prescription counterfoil into the box at the surgery entrance or email d-icb.PrescriptionBrannam@nhs.net

If you are out of medicine and it's an emergency. You can call or visit **NHS111** for help with repeat prescriptions.

FEELING OVERWHELMED?

Take a mindful moment to ground yourself within the present moment using your 5 senses.

Focus on your breathing and identify:

- 5** things you can see 👁️
- 4** things you can touch 🖐️
- 3** things you can hear 🎧
- 2** things you can smell 🌸
- 1** thing you can taste 🍷

www.devonmind.com

LOVE YOUR CERVIX

Cervical screening, often known as a smear test, is a simple yet vital health check for women.

Been invited for cervical screening? Put your health at the top of your to-do list and book your appointment as soon as you can. Cervical screening saves around 5000 lives in the UK every year.

Please call reception on **01271 329004** to book an appointment. If you have any questions or concerns, we can make you an appointment to discuss these with the Nurse beforehand. We can provide early morning and early evening appointments.

THINK HOME FIRST

It's much better for a patient's physical and mental wellbeing to leave hospital as soon as they are medically fit for discharge.

You can support your loved ones to get home as soon as they're ready by doing a few simple things;

- Bring clean, comfortable clothes for them
- Arrange transport to take them home
- Make sure their home is warm enough
- Stock up on essentials – eg. food, drink and medicines

Find out more about being discharged from North Devon District Hospital [here](#).

HANDI APP

The [HANDi Paediatric app](#) provides quick, up-to-date advice on common childhood illnesses and how to manage them.

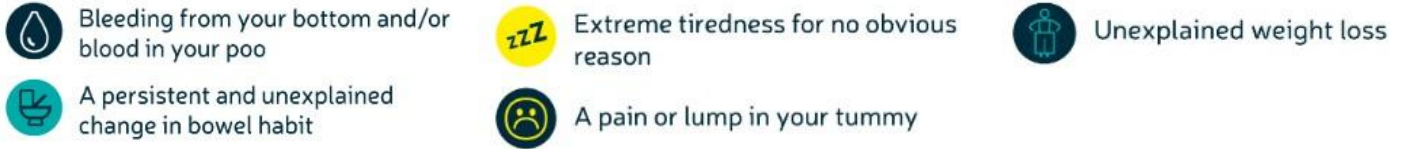
Developed by NHS teams in Devon, it's free to download on [Apple](#) and [Android](#) devices.



BOWEL CANCER

Cancer that affects the large bowel is typically called bowel cancer. You may also hear it being called colorectal cancer, colon cancer or rectum cancer, depending on where it is found. Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK. Almost 44,000 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer every year in the UK. Bowel cancer can affect anyone of any age.

The earlier bowel cancer is spotted, the more treatable it's likely to be. Take charge of your health, know the signs, and get checked if something doesn't feel right. Learn more and stay informed [here](#). If you have any concerns or if things just don't feel right, go and see your GP.



YOUR CHOICES IN THE NHS

The NHS gives you the freedom to choose your healthcare options, from choosing your GP or specialist to deciding where and when you receive treatment. Empowering you to make informed decisions about your health ensures you get the care that's right for you.

Whether it's selecting a hospital or choosing the best treatment plan, your choice matters. The NHS is here to support you every step of the way!

Learn more about your rights and options [here](#).

REGISTER WITH BRANNAM MEDICAL CENTRE

We have launched a new automated registration service. This will be an easy process for all those new patients wanting to join our practice. You don't need proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number to fill out the form. You will be registered within 48 hours. This service is part of the NHS, so your personal information will be kept safe.

Please scan the QR code to register. More information is available on our website [here](#).



DEVON Connect
CONNECTING TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Looking to feel more connected?
Discover local groups, events and volunteer opportunities on Devon Connect – your local online community platform.

REGISTER TODAY
www.devonconnect.org

Managed locally by North Devon Voluntary Services
Email: admin@ndvs.org.uk
Tel: 01271 866500

NDVS Devon Voluntary Action

BARNSTAPLE MACULAR SOCIETY SUPPORT GROUP

The Barnstaple Macular Society Support Group meet every fourth Tuesday each month 10.30am – 12pm at Christ Church, Bear Street. The meetings are open to all with central vision loss.

Call **01264 560 259** email help@macularsociety.org or visit www.macularsociety.org

We are always seeking to enhance our service and welcome suggestions for improvement of the practice. We offer a variety of different methods to provide feedback to us here:

- By telephone: **01271 329004**
- By post: **Brannam Medical Centre, Kiln Lane, Barnstaple, EX32 8GP**
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/brannammedicalcentre
- X: [@BrannamMedCtr](https://twitter.com/BrannamMedCtr)
- Instagram: [brannammedicalcentre](https://www.instagram.com/brannammedicalcentre)
- Website: www.brannammedicalcentre.co.uk
- NHS Home: www.nhs.uk

Additional evening and weekend GP appointments now available
Speak to the practice to find out more
Your NHS, here for you

