



Lunchtime hours

From 6th August, we plan to trial a short lunchtime closure at our Donegall Road site, from 1pm to 1.45pm.

Why?

As a responsible employer, we have a duty of care to ensure our staff have an adequate break. However, this means that over a period several hours, from around 12 midday until half two, we have reduced staff coverage, as the breaks are staggered. This is a quieter period of time in terms of patients walking through the doors, but it is a very busy time for incoming phone calls. Our patients have told us this can be a difficult time of day to get through on the phones.

By closing between 1pm and 1.45pm, means we will have full coverage of staff both before and after these times, so we can provide a better service, and we feel will cause only limited disruption. Please note in the Belfast area it is not unusual for GP surgeries to close at lunchtime.

What if I have an emergency?

An emergency mobile number will be available, should a genuinely urgent need arise when we are closed. This number will only be active between 1pm and 1.45pm, and if urgent, your query will be handled appropriately. If your query is not urgent, you will be asked to phone back after 1.45pm and your query will not be dealt with until after that time.

New "when we are closed" posters in Finaghy will have this emergency number on them, should a patient present at Finaghy after reception closes at 1pm, and has an urgent query.

At our main site, the inner door will be closed, but the outer door will remain open, should you attend when we are closed and wish to wait, you will be able to sit in the lobby.

I'm not quite sure how this benefits me?

Our intention here is to try to provide a better service, and make it easier to get through on the phone. This will maximise availability of staff both before and after the closing times, which was previously not the case. Patients will also benefit from being dealt with by rested, refreshed staff in the afternoon.

This is a trial to see if this helps us improve service, so we welcome your feedback once up and running, and we will keep under review.

The lunchtime emergency mobile number is 07340 175761.

This number does not accept voicemails or texts; please do not try to send a text, as your message cannot be read.