

PRACTICE PROFILE

WHO ARE WE?

As a team, we provide GMS and community hospital cover for our list of 7,900 patients in Lochgilphead, Inveraray and Furnace practices and surrounding areas.

We are...

- 6.75 GPs (as of January 2018; all partners)
 - Includes the clinical director of MACHICC, the cluster lead for Mid Argyll and the assistant medical director of NHS Highland.
- 1 team lead nurse (is an advanced nurse practitioner)
- 3 additional practice nurses
- 2 additional advanced nurse practitioners
- 2 health care assistants
- 1 practice manager
- 1 pharmacist (with additional support from area pharmacists)
- 1 part time phlebotomist
- 10 reception staff, including and 3 senior receptionists

In Lochgilphead we work in a unique purpose built Integrated care Centre which opened in 2006 (Mid Argyll Community Hospital and Integrated Care Centre, or MACHICC). It provides us with great opportunities to provide seamless patient care with the help of our colleagues in social work, nursing and many of the allied health professions.

We work closely with our colleagues on-site. This includes a full community nursing team and two health visitors. There is also a MacMillan nurse, A&E emergency nurse practitioners, ward nurses, a cardiac liaison nurse, midwifery team, community psychiatric team, physiotherapy team, occupational therapy team, podiatry team, speech and language therapist, dietetics and radiography. We also have visiting specialist consultants. This unusual environment has enabled us to work on providing care for our patients as locally as possible, both in primary care and for patients requiring hospital admission. We have superb facilities including meeting rooms, library and the capacity to video conference. Inveraray and Furnace are smaller, more traditional practices.

MACHICC has a 24-hour blue-light receiving A&E department with a team of highly skilled Emergency Practitioner nurses. The GP partners are involved in management of acute cases in the A&E. There is a 15-bed acute / rehab ward for which the GPs have medical responsibility. There is also a Midwife led Maternity Ward with 20-25 deliveries in the hospital annually (managed by the midwives with occasional input from the GPs). The hospital also has a weekly day unit for Chemotherapy patients to try and reduce the travel burden for this vulnerable group.

There is a wide range of outpatient clinics held by visiting consultants at Lochgilphead. These include paediatrics, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, dermatology, ENT, general medicine, surgery, and obstetrics and gynaecology.

WHAT DO WE DO?

Clinical

We provide all the usual general medical services to our practice population of 7,900 (this increases substantially in the summer months) to the standard expected of a teaching and training practice. With the health visitors, we undertake child health surveillance. The nurses and GPs provide a full range of minor surgery and contraceptive and sexual health services. Our nurses have advanced skills in contraceptive and sexual health and independent prescribing.

We have an active programme of long term conditions management and a well-established secondary prevention clinic. Hypertension clinics are run by a practice nurse with input from GPs as required. Diabetes clinics are managed by the nurses and supported by GPs. Palliative care meetings are held fortnightly for all the palliative care team, allowing multidisciplinary discussion. Every other meeting is the Gold Standards Framework meeting, attended by all the GPs.

We operate a paperless Practice, with access but very little requirement for the old paper notes. We run Vision with Docman. As well as our own consulting rooms, we have a new purpose-designed ‘hub’ room (six workstations, sit-stand desks, coffee facilities), which we use for telephone triage and staff queries in the mornings. Laboratory records can be accessed online and teleradiology software allows us to view our local X rays.

In terms of medical geography, Lochgilphead, our largest practice lies 40 miles south of Oban via a poor road (1 hour’s drive). Oban hospital has general medicine and surgery only. Our larger secondary and tertiary acute units are Glasgow and Paisley 85 miles south-east by better roads (2 hours’ drive). Helicopter air ambulance is based in Glasgow and military “search and rescue” helicopter in Prestwick. Both are about a 25-minute flight from Lochgilphead, where we have our own helipad. There is a psychiatric hospital in Lochgilphead. Furnace surgery is 16 miles north-east of Lochgilphead and Inveraray 24 miles north-east of Lochgilphead surgery. The practice covers an area of approximately 500 square miles broadly in line with the area covered by the hospital. Our neighbouring practices are Tarbert (13 miles south) and Easdale/Oban (40 miles north).

Teaching/Training

As a practice, we have been heavily involved in starting training programmes for a range of disciplines in intermediate care enabling new nurses, radiographers and doctors to extend their roles. The Practice have a strong training ethos and are keen to allow staff to develop their skills. We have GPs who are ATLS, ALS and BASICS instructors.

We enjoy the opportunity to share ideas and experiences informally from day to day. We have monthly clinical meetings and quarterly PLT afternoons.

Organisation

We have weekly lunchtime practice business meetings except during school holidays. Some of the partners meet regularly with other members of the primary care team, local management and hospital and locality heads of department

WHERE ARE WE?

Our Practices are in a beautiful part of the west coast of Scotland. Lochgilphead itself has a good range of small local shops, 2 small supermarkets, and community facilities including gym, community centre and swimming pool. Furnace is a small village, and Inveraray is a popular tourist destination with those travelling from Glasgow to explore Inveraray Castle and Jail.

There are plenty of beautiful walks, world class sailing, fishing, riding, field sports and cycling for all abilities from serious mountain bike routes to gentle family cycling along the Crinan canal. Further down the Kintyre peninsula there are some fantastic beaches with surfing, and ferries to Cowal, Arran, Islay, Jura and Gigha.

Children are particularly well catered for with a good range of after school activities including various dance classes, football, shinty, athletics, Guides etc, sailing, family ceilidhs etc. A new joint Primary and Secondary building opened in 2007.

Lochgilphead has an annual Music Festival in the spring with lots of local input, and a triathlon in the autumn. There is also an impressive firework display every November. Argyll College run regular evening classes and Kilmartin museum also run a programme of craft workshops. The Forestry Commission also host events locally, and we have occasional visiting dance companies, puppet performances and regular visits from the mobile cinema – the Screen machine!

Further afield, Glasgow is easily accessible for day trip or weekend.