



XX April 2026

NHS number:

Dear Patient/Guardian

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR REGISTRATION AS A PATIENT AT REETH MEDICAL CENTRE

As you may now be aware, Reeth Medical Centre – where you are currently registered as a patient – will be **closing permanently on 31st May 2026**.

The practice partners have made a personal decision to 'hand back' their General Medical Services (GMS) contract and NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) has reluctantly agreed to proceed with the contract termination.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognise the many years of outstanding service provided to people and communities in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale by Dr Mike Brookes and Mrs Marie Brookes.

Unfortunately, despite extensive work by the ICB – including direct engagement with neighbouring practices, the Primary Care Network, the GP Federation, and a wide Expression of Interest process – no alternative provider has been able to put forward a sustainable staffing or premises model that would keep the practice open.

We know this outcome will be upsetting to many people. The ICB are exploring a proposal whereby a local practice will run a branch surgery from Reeth and will inform patients on the progress of this option.

So that you can continue to see a GP and other practice professionals after the end of May, we will automatically transfer your registration to another neighbouring practice and you will not have to take any action.

Until then, you can continue to attend Reeth Medical Centre as normal and we will write to you again in May 2026.

In the meantime, please find attached the answers to some questions that you might find helpful; we'll also do our best to keep this web page up to date, for patients who can access information digitally: www.humberandnorthyorkshire.org.uk/reeth-medical-centre-closure-questions-and-answers/

if you have any further questions, please speak to staff at Reeth Medical Centre.

Finally, your household may have received duplicate copies of this letter. This is because letters are sent to every patient registered with the practice, irrespective of their living circumstances.

Reeth Medical Centre - Questions You Might Have

QUESTION	ANSWER
<p>Why has the decision been taken to close the Practice?</p>	<p>Reeth Medical Centre is closing because the GP practice partners have made the decision to hand back their General Medical Services (GMS) contract. This follows the GP's planned retirement and longstanding difficulties recruiting clinicians to very rural practices. The decision to end the contract was taken by the practice partners, not by NHS Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). Despite the efforts of the ICB, no alternative provider has come forward to take over the practice, therefore there is no alternative but to close the practice. For this reason, Reeth Medical Centre will permanently close on 31st May 2026</p>
<p>Did the ICB decide to close or remove the GP service?</p>	<p>No. The ICB did not decide to take a service away from the community. GP practices operate as independent contractors to the NHS. In this case, the practice partners chose to bring their contractual arrangement to an end. The ICB does not have the legal power to require a practice to remain open, nor can it compel another provider to take over the contract.</p>
<p>What role did the ICB play once the practice partners made their decision?</p>	<p>Once the practice partners confirmed their intention to hand back the contract, the ICB's role was to 'test the market' and explore whether there was any interest from other providers in taking over the practice contract or providing services locally. This included gauging interest from existing practices and other potential primary care providers within Humber and North Yorkshire and beyond. When this did not result in a viable alternative provider being identified, the ICB's focus shifted to making arrangements to ensure continuity of care for patients.</p>
<p>What efforts were made to find another provider?</p>	<p>The ICB explored many options to secure another provider to take on the Reeth Medical Centre contract or deliver services locally. But as is the case nationally, recruiting to small, remote rural practices is incredibly challenging and no provider came forward able to safely and sustainably take on the contract.</p> <p>Key issues relating specifically to the Reeth practice include its small 'list' size (c1,600 patients), with high fixed running costs, no available GP workforce once Dr and Mrs Brookes have stepped away, and professional isolation that comes with running a very rural practice.</p> <p>More generally in England, GP recruitment remains difficult, with increasing numbers of GP partners handing back</p>

	contracts, others choosing salaried or portfolio roles, and many reducing hours or working part-time due to workload, financial risk and workforce pressures. The ICB will continue to remain alert to any opportunities that may arise in the future, but this is the current reality of recruiting to a very rural practice.
Was the ICB required to consult the public on the closure?	No. There is no statutory duty on the ICB to consult where a GP practice closes as a result of the practice partners handing back their contract. The legal duty to consult applies where an ICB is proposing or deciding to make a change to services. In this case, the change arises from a provider-led contractual decision rather than an ICB commissioning decision, so the statutory consultation duty is not triggered.
Is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	An Equality Impact Assessment is required where an organisation is making a policy or service change decision that it controls. As the ICB did not decide to close the practice or initiate the service change, there is no legal requirement to complete an EIA for the closure itself. However, the ICB recognises the particular challenges faced by older people, disabled people and rural communities in the Dales and is considering these factors as part of its work to support access and continuity of care.
What are the ICB's responsibilities now?	The ICB has a legal duty to secure access to primary medical services for the local population. This means ensuring patients are registered with another GP practice, that capacity pressures are managed as far as possible, and that continuity and safety of care are maintained.
What is being done to support patients affected by the closure?	The ICB is working with neighbouring practices, NHS England and local partners to manage the impact of the closure and to consider mitigation options where possible.
Will I need to register with a new practice?	No. We will allocate your care to a new practice by 31st May 2026. Until then, you can continue to use Reeth Medical Centre
Will my new practice provide the same services?	The health services you receive as a registered patient at Reeth Medical Centre will be available from your new practice. However, the opening times, appointment systems and ways the care is delivered may be different.
I am ill now and need to see a doctor, can I still go to Reeth Medical Centre?	Yes. You can continue to use Reeth Medical Centre until you are allocated to your new practice.
Can I still get my prescriptions from Reeth Medical Centre?	Yes. You can continue to use Reeth Medical Centre until you are allocated to your new practice.
I have been to see a specialist at the hospital who was writing to my GP, how will they know who to communicate with?	The specialist will write a letter to the GP who referred you. If you are still receiving treatment after 31 st May 2026, all correspondence will be redirected to your new GP practice.
I am pregnant; will I still have the same midwife?	You may not have the same midwife but you will continue to receive maternity care from a midwife at your new practice.

My Fit Note is due, where will I get this from?	Reeth Medical Centre will continue to issue 'Fit notes' until you are allocated to a new practice. Please contact them as you normally would.
Can I register with another practice now?	You are able to choose another practice to register at if you are in their catchment area or they are accepting out of area patients. You check which practice you are able to register at by checking Find a GP - NHS
What do I do if I don't want to transfer to the practice that you automatically register me to?	You are able to choose another practice to register at if you are in their catchment area or they are accepting out of area patients. You check which practice you are able to register at by checking Find a GP - NHS
What about travel, transport and rural access challenges?	The ICB understands the depth of feeling locally and the genuine concerns about travel distances, winter access and public transport limitations. These issues are being taken into account as part of ongoing discussions with local NHS and local authority partners and system leaders.
Is the ICB speaking to elected representatives?	Yes. The ICB fully recognises the strength of concern within the community and is in contact with the local Member of Parliament and North Yorkshire Council elected members to ensure they are aware of the situation and the steps being taken to support patients.
Will the ICB continue to look for future solutions?	Yes. While experience nationally shows that recruitment to very rural GP practices is extremely difficult, the ICB will continue to keep options under review and will share any developments with patients and stakeholders if opportunities arise.