**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Thursday 13 January**

**GP Practices are urging patients to understand change, amidst busiest winter on record**

As GP Practices tackle the busiest winter on record, they are calling on patients to work with them.

Prof Mike Holmes, GP partner at [Haxby Group](https://www.haxbygroup.co.uk/), Chair of [Nimbuscare](https://www.nimbuscare.co.uk/) and [Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)](https://www.rcgp.org.uk/about-us/the-college/who-we-are/our-people/council-members.aspx) council member, is asking patients to be understanding, considerate and kind to their GP Practice team, as well as look after their health.

Not only have GP practices stepped up to support the biggest NHS Vaccination Programme in history, they now face unprecedented staffing shortages due to high numbers of Covid-related absence.

Prof Holmes joins GP Practice colleagues across the region, calling for more understanding and explains how people can help them during this challenging time.

GP practices have changed the way they work, he says, by introducing digital technology, telephone appointments and new roles. Prof Holmes wants more people to see why these changes are for the better.

The [#HumansOfGeneralPractice campaign](https://www.nimbuscare.co.uk/humans-of-general-practice-campaign), launched this week, has been created by GP Practices across the region to help people understand why they have had to change and outlines how people can support these changes.

Prof Holmes said:

“We know people have had to adapt and we appreciate change is not easy. Many GP practices have had to change overnight to keep services running and protect both staff and patients. They have worked incredibly hard, introduced some great innovative changes and continued to care for patients. We often forget that they are human too.”

Prof Holmes says criticism and false claims that GPs haven’t been working during the pandemic has demoralised staff working in practices.

“There’s a lot more that people can do to help themselves and we’re asking them to work with us, understand all these changes and be on our side,” he explained.

People are being urged to:

* Think before they ring
	+ Get to know how to go online to request appointments or ask a question
	+ Download the NHS App to order prescriptions & view records etc
* Understand that they don’t always need to see a doctor
	+ Advanced practitioners, nurses, healthcare assistants and pharmacists are also part of the team
* Take personal responsibility for their own health, where possible
	+ Try self-care via nhs.uk
	+ Use a pharmacist
* Be polite and respectful

The #HumansOfGeneralPractice campaign has been created by GP practices across the region who are part of the [BRIDGES Group (Humber, Coast and Vale)](https://www.nimbuscare.co.uk/humans-of-general-practice-campaign/bridges/) which is part of [NHS Collaborate](https://nhscollaborate.org/), a national, supportive community of leaders across Primary Care.

The Group wants to help people understand how general practice has changed for the better.

**Changes include:**

* Fairer systems using innovative new technology
	+ Prioritising patients so most poorly are seen first
* Telephone consultations
	+ Creating more appointments
	+ Helping busy working people
* New roles - You don’t always need to see a doctor, other healthcare professionals can also help, such as:
	+ Clinical pharmacists
	+ Social prescribers
	+ Advanced practitioners
	+ Specialist nurses running clinics offering support for people with long term conditions
* New services
	+ Partnering with hospitals and councils to offer modern tailored services

**ENDS**

Further information about the campaign can be found [**here**](https://www.nimbuscare.co.uk/humans-of-general-practice-campaign)

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More information about [BRIDGES](https://www.nimbuscare.co.uk/humans-of-general-practice-campaign/bridges/)