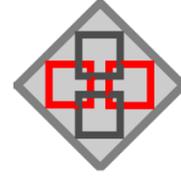




Irnham Lodge  
Surgery



## Merger News Special

News of the planned merger between Irnham Lodge and Harley House Surgeries was announced to our team and the public this week.

Our practices have decided to join forces to create a robust single surgery partnership which helps ensure the sustainability of general practice services in Minehead.

By working together as one, our resilient practice partnership will be more attractive to new recruits, especially GPs, and we will no longer be competing against each other to attract new doctors.

The business merger is expected to take place in April 2019, but we do not anticipate that our patients will notice too much difference in the beginning.

Changes will be rolled out in carefully planned stages and we will keep our patients fully informed and involved in the process.

Patients will remain under the care of their current named GP up until the point of any retirements, and we will continue to use both surgery premises for the foreseeable future.

As we begin to integrate our services and teams, patients will be kept fully informed of developments.

We hope that this news will be welcomed by our patients and seen as an important step in preserving essential primary care services.

Harley House Surgery's senior GP partner Dr John Higgin said: "The loss of one surgery in Minehead would have serious implications for the remaining practice in the town, our surrounding surgeries and other local NHS services.

"The remaining surgeries could not cope with the sudden re-allocation of 7,000 patients or more which would cripple the provision of good quality primary care. We are taking action now to prevent such an event ever occurring and ensure sustainable primary care services for our community."

Irnham Lodge Surgery GP partner Dr Ed Ford said the planned merger would provide an opportunity to improve current service provision for patients in the town.

"Once the practice lists have merged we will be able to combine our skills to offer a greater range of services to patients and combine the services currently offered at one practice but not the other.

"Crucially, a robust single practice partnership in Minehead provides us with an opportunity to join forces to recruit new doctors rather than working against each other. This is vital to ensure we can keep individual GP list sizes manageable and provide access to routine primary care appointments in a more timely fashion."

Our practices will now seek approval from NHS England for the merger to go ahead.

The Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) of both practices have been briefed and will be fully involved in the public consultation process.