



# The Lighthouse Medical Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG)

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Chair: Liz Walke

[www.lighthousepractice.co.uk](http://www.lighthousepractice.co.uk)

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## In This Edition...

<b>Front</b>	Liz Walke, PPG Chair – Welcome John Glover, Practice Chaplain Retires
<b>Page 2</b>	Clinical Pharmacists in a GP Surgery
<b>Page 3</b>	Prescription Drug Dependency
<b>Page 4</b>	Amanda Sayer, Managing Partner – Profile
<b>Page 5</b>	The Eatwell Guide – Get Started Now!
<b>Page 6</b>	Covid Spring Booster / Sepsis
<b>Page 7</b>	Your Questions Answered...
<b>Page 8</b>	Information and Contacting the Surgery

## Liz Walke – PPG Chair Welcome to our Spring newsletter!

Isn't it nice to have the lighter evenings and the sun shining! In this newsletter we have mentioned the Practice chaplain, the Reverend John Glover, who has willingly provided this service to any patients who request it. We are very grateful to John and wish him blessings, as he steps down from this role and we welcome Mary. There is a section with Q&As that answers questions that patients have raised. The questions come from patients who are in our PPG Virtual Group. They provide feedback on their NHS care from the GP Practice, or related NHS services, such as the hospital. If you would like to join this Virtual Group, please contact me, and also if you would like to join the PPG.



I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and have a great Spring and Summer, not needing to use the GP Practice too much!

## Practice Chaplain Retires

John Glover has recently retired. He has been a Chaplain at Lighthouse for many years. Here are his reflections on his time as a Chaplain.

### Reflections

It is almost sixty years since I took up my first appointment as a chaplain in the Health Service.

Since then, I have served in a number of hospitals up and down the country. Now I am retiring from what has been the most exciting and challenging role as chaplain in the Team at 'The Lighthouse,' under the title, 'Listening and Guidance for Wellbeing.'

Most of you will be familiar with chaplains in hospitals and the Forces, but a chaplain in General Practice is something new, so may I tell you a little of what the work has entailed? That's best done by asking the question, "What do chaplains have to offer?"

It goes without saying that the same strict rules of confidentiality that apply in medicine are also for chaplains. The great thing that they have to offer is "time." When patients came to see me, I was able to give them forty or forty-five minutes. It takes most people that time to tell their story and the problems that are worrying them. This is a time of not simply hearing, but listening in such a way that one could feel the impact and hurt of their problems. This goes way beyond sympathy and offers empathy and understanding. When people have been carrying hurts and pains, even this first step can bring life and hope. But usually it takes three or four sessions to get the full picture, although it is not uncommon for



patients to say that they feel better at the end of the first session.

The guidance part comes in as I tried to work with patients to find a solution to their problems and all that is worrying them. Then working with them to put in place solutions. It was a privilege to come alongside people and help them in this way. The way ahead might or might not involve talking about matters of faith and religious practice, but that is decided by the patient, and the way their story unfolds. For my part, I was always listening to hear what God might say and praying for his healing for patients.

As I retire from the Team, I count it a privilege to have been able to serve 'The Lighthouse' and its patients in some way. There are many hurting people who have been deeply damaged by their experiences of life. Their first step towards recovery might well have been the hours they spent talking to me.

As I retire, there are others who will continue to offer this special service of listening and guidance.

**A huge thank you to John from the Staff and Patients at Lighthouse.**

# Clinical Pharmacists in a GP Surgery

Clinical pharmacists are highly qualified health professionals who train for many years to become specialists in medicines and how they work. They can work directly with you, as part of the general practice team, to make sure your medicines help you get better and stay well. Having a clinical pharmacist in the practice team means you can be treated by the best professional for your needs. All pharmacists are registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council.

## About clinical pharmacists

Clinical pharmacists work as part of the general practice team to improve value and outcomes from medicines and some consult with and treat patients directly. This includes providing extra help to manage long-term conditions, advice for those on multiple medicines and better access to health checks. The role is pivotal to improving the quality of care and ensuring patient safety.

## What can clinical pharmacists potentially help with?

- prescribing
- medication reviews
- queries about medications
- telephone reviews
- treatment of minor illnesses
- managing a patient's condition holistically
- ensuring patients get the most out of their medication
- ensuring there is joined-up care for patients

It is important to note that not all Pharmacists have all the skills listed above. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Pharmacist working in General Practice work under instruction from the GPs and are not directly bookable by patients. So, if you would like a review of your medication, please ask for a referral from your GP. This is especially relevant, if you have been on the same medication for more than a year

## How are GP practices benefiting?

Clinical pharmacists have range of skills, some can prescribe certain medication and they can all conduct medication reviews. They can answer questions about medication and support patients over the course of their treatment.

Having clinical pharmacists in GP practices means that GPs can focus their skills where they are most needed, for example on diagnosing and treating patients with more complex conditions. This helps GPs to manage the demands on their time.



**Examples of how clinical pharmacists can help patients.** *As opposite, please note that not all Pharmacists have all the skills below, and that it is your GP's decision as to what work they delegate to them.*

## Long-term conditions

Long-term conditions include things like asthma, type 2 diabetes, arthritis or high blood pressure. If a patient has a long-term condition, the clinical pharmacist can offer expert advice on their medications. For example, making sure they are on the most appropriate medication and that it is working for the patient and they are getting the most out of their medications.

They may also help by offering advice on how a patient can make lifestyle change to help manage their condition and to help them stay well.

## Dealing with side effects

If medication is making a patient feel unwell, the clinical pharmacist can help by changing the medication, or changing the dosage they are taking. If the patient is on multiple medications, the clinical pharmacist can help to make sure they are all working well together.

## Medication reviews

If a patient is taking medication for a long time, they will need to have a medicine review at least once a year. This is to ensure the medication is still working properly. The clinical pharmacist can check all the patients' medication and, where necessary, talk to them about how their medication is working for them.

If a patient had recently been to hospital, their medication may have changed while they were there. The clinical pharmacist can help to explain any changes to the medication and to make sure they are working well for the patient.

## Community Pharmacy Appointments

Community Pharmacists work in a Pharmacy and not in a GP Practice. They work with the Practices and can offer fast and efficient help for a range of ailments. Community Pharmacy telephone appointments can be booked via our reception.

# Prescription Drug Dependency

## Dr Greg Folwell

Prescribing medication is an important part of a GPs work, but sometimes patients become dependent on medications and this can be detrimental to their health and wellbeing.

Some prescription medicines (medicines only available from the doctor) can become addictive and are therefore associated with dependence and withdrawal symptoms (dependence forming medicines). These can be widely prescribed for a range of conditions such as pain control and problems with sleeping.

There is a range of dependence forming medicines. The more common ones include opioid pain medicines (including morphine) and other pain medication such as gabapentinoids (including pregabalin and gabapentin). In 2017-18 5.6 million adults in England were prescribed Opioid pain medication on 1 or more occasions, and 1.5million adults were prescribed a Gabapentinoid. Most of this prescribing is only for short periods of time, but 3% of patients with, for example, chronic pain can receive ongoing prescriptions for opioids for 3 yrs or more. It is this prolonged prescribing of these types of drugs that is associated with dependence.

Gabapentinoid prescribing has increased 10 fold between 2000 and 2015 and dependence on these drugs is recognised worldwide as an increasing problem. These medications are important, but if you think of it like when you need to repair your house and you use scaffolding: once the house is repaired, the scaffolding comes down, and this is the same with using some medication, it should be short term to support you through a specific situation/illness and not used for the longer term.

As a Practice, we have been aware of this issue for some time and we have been working with our patients to try to address issues of medication dependence. In a recent project we looked to



reduce the opiate dose of patients taking very high amounts of Opioids. This was with a view to reducing dosages and starting a process of stopping altogether, where possible.

We also looked to see where we could reduce the number of new prescriptions of Gabapentinoids issued. To achieve this, we offered patients taking very high Opioid dosages a medication review with a Pharmacist and a consultation with their Doctor, to discuss how to start the process of reducing their Opioid dose. They were also offered the opportunity to be referred to a specialist 'Dependence Forming Medicine' clinic.

Raising patient awareness alongside the project helped us to achieve a reduction in the number of new prescriptions for Gabapentinoids within the Practice. This ongoing work will help to ensure patients don't become dependent on the medications they are prescribed, and in the longer term, will benefit their health and wellbeing. If you are taking an Opioid or Gabapentinoid medication for chronic pain and are concerned about becoming dependent on it, please make an appointment to discuss this with your doctor.

## Shingles vaccination

### Who's eligible?

**Aged  
70-79 years?**

Everyone aged between 70 and 79 years is eligible for the shingles vaccine up to 79 years of age.



Protect yourself from the pain of shingles –  
Speak to your GP  
surgery about having  
your vaccine today!

 **mmunisation**

The safest way to protect children and adults



## Amanda Sayer, *Managing Partner* – Profile

**Amanda Sayer, *Managing Partner*, answers some probing questions...**

**Q. Why did you decide to become a Practice Manager?**

A. I was not sure about working in the public sector, but I was bringing up three children alone and wanted to work closer to home. I was friends with one of the GP Partners, Dr Evason, and he suggested that I apply for the job at the Practice. Initially I said that it was not the job for me, but eventually he persuaded me to come along and the rest is history! I have now been here 18 years and I was made a Partner 15 years ago.

**Q. What are your main responsibilities at work?**

A. I am responsible for all the non-clinical aspects of the business including but not limited to, legal and contractual work, staff and HR, CQC and regulation, finance, health and safety, Primary Care Network (PCN) Board, Strategic Leadership Board, complaints and feedback, Practice projects and the Patient participation group (PPG). The list is endless, but I do delegate aspects of my work. It is my job to have a handle on everything and everyone.

**Q. What are the biggest challenges you face daily basis and how do you overcome them?**

A. Managing patient demand and expectations with a decreasing workforce is a major issue and one that keeps me awake at night.

Lack of physical space is another great challenge, but I suppose it's actually the ever changing demands from the Government, who are so disconnected from the front line. That is the greatest frustration.

**Q. What are your biggest achievements as a Practice Manager?**

A. The team. I have an amazing team and there are so many examples of their fantastic work. Every time they deal with difficult situations, or I see them cope with an emergency with skill and finesse, I believe we are truly achieving our goals.

Setting up the wound care service in Eastbourne, which was rolled out across Sussex, was extremely rewarding. Seeing patients with wounds that they had had for 20 years being healed, was amazing.

I would have said achieving an Outstanding CQC was an achievement, but it's a mixed blessing, as it leads to an increasing list of patients and high public expectations.

**5. How do you prioritize tasks?**

I have lists:

- Must do today
- Must do this week
- Must do by month end
- Would like to do

Of course, this all goes to pot when you have urgent on the day situations to deal with patients and staff, but I still keep written lists for reference.

**6. How do you manage to switch off from work when you leave the office?**

I don't really switch off at the moment, but I try to relax and spend time with my children and friends and my beautiful rescue dog. We rescued her from Raysted and she is an absolute joy. I also have medical issues and in order to manage chronic pain, I swim at least 4 times a week.

**7. What is the hardest task you undertake on a daily basis at the practice?**

Dedicating time and being available for staff, patients and GPs when my job list never stops growing.

**8. How do you motivate staff?**

I believe in listening to ideas from staff and using their ideas to influence what we do. I know that I can only do my job well because the whole team are all doing their jobs well. It doesn't matter how many hours staff work or what their job role is, they are all equally important to our Practice.

**9. If you could improve one thing in practices what would it be?**

I would like to improve our buildings as we are desperate for more consulting rooms, staff and patient space.

**10. What is the key to success in keeping patients happy?**

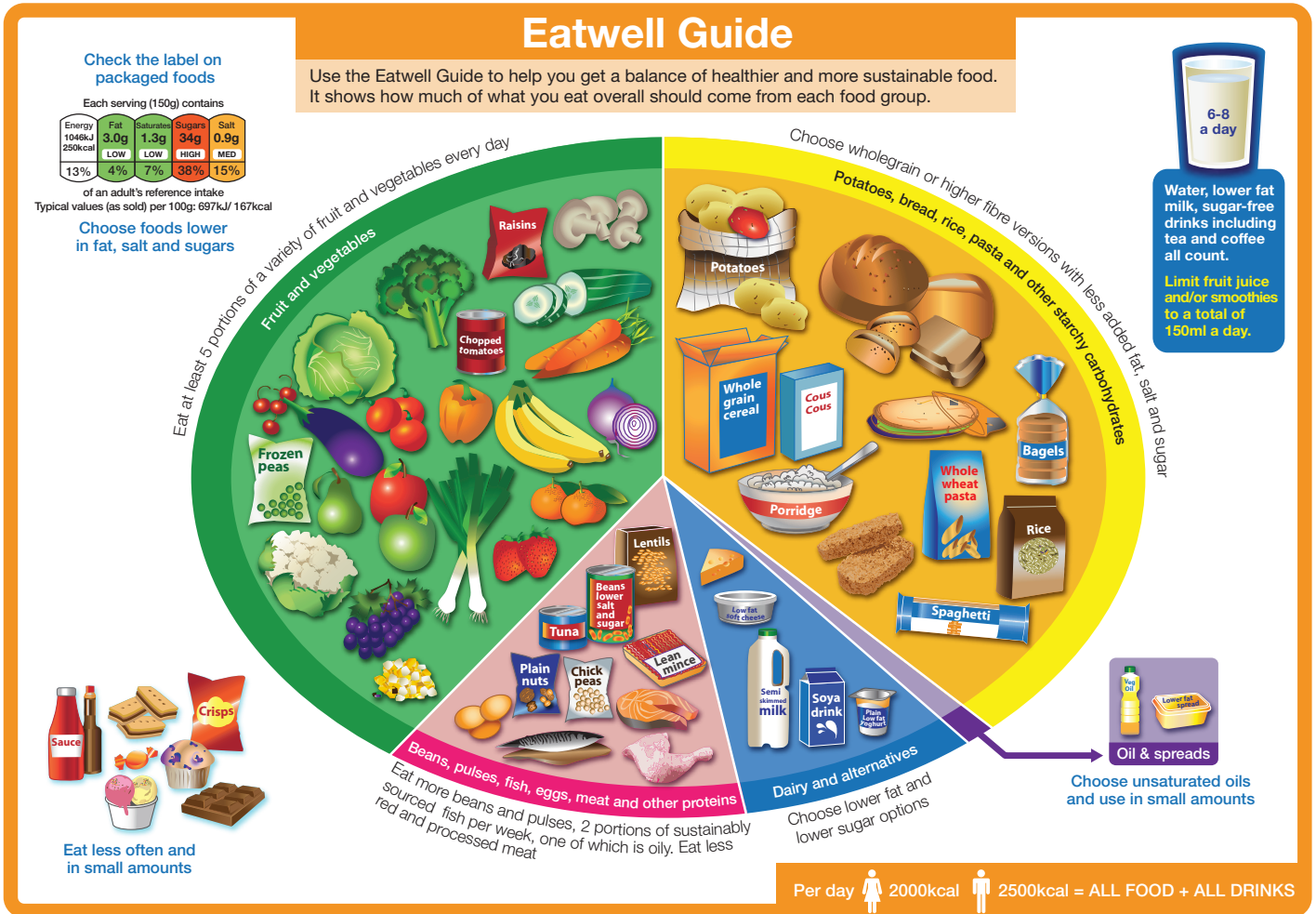
Make sure you listen to their views, opinions and feedback and use this to shape the service that we offer. Mistakes happen, but when they do, apologise and learn from them so they don't happen again.

**11. How have you improved the lives of your patients?**

We listen, we learn but most of all we really care. I can't please everyone all of the time, but we aim to offer everyone a safe and reliable service. I truly hope that we have a positive impact on our patients' lives and health.

# The Eatwell Guide

Helping you eat a healthy, balanced diet



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

## Get started now!

Eating well and having a healthy lifestyle can help us feel our best – and make a big difference to our long-term health.



Public Health  
England

**So why not  
make a  
change today?**

# Covid Spring Booster

**Our GP Federation, SDHC, is offering Covid-19 Spring booster dose to the following groups of patients:**

- adults aged 75 years and over,
- residents in a care home for older adults,
- individuals aged 5 years and over who are immunosuppressed.
- we will also continue to offer first and second dose until June 2023 and
- we will continue to offer vaccination to healthy 5-11 and 12-17 year olds.

## Clinics

Patients can book via the National Booking Site [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/)

You may also receive a text invite, if you have a mobile phone. For any vaccine related queries, please **DO NOT call the Practice** – please email: [sdhc.vaccinations@nhs.net](mailto:sdhc.vaccinations@nhs.net) or call: **01323 402530**.

The Centre does accept walk-ins, but you may have to wait longer to be seen.



## Care Homes and Housebound

SDHC are in process of vaccinating residents in care homes. They have been contacting housebound patients and booking them for visits. Patients can also call our vaccination line to book a housebound visit or if they have any questions. Please email: [sdhc.vaccinations@nhs.net](mailto:sdhc.vaccinations@nhs.net) or call: **01323 402530**

## Venue

**There is a new venue for Covid vaccinations:**

12 Brodrick Close,  
Hampden Park,  
Eastbourne BN22 9NR.

# SEPSIS

## IS A RARE BUT SERIOUS COMPLICATION OF AN INFECTION

**If your child has any of these symptoms you should take immediate action:**

- Looks mottled, bluish or pale
- Is breathing very fast
- Is very lethargic or difficult to wake
- Has a rash that does not fade when you press it
- Feels abnormally cold to touch
- Has a fit or convulsion

**Acting quickly could save your child's life. If your child has any of these symptoms, don't be afraid to go to **A&E immediately** or **call 999**.**

For more information visit [nhs.uk/sepsis](http://nhs.uk/sepsis) or [sepsistrust.org](http://sepsistrust.org)



# Your Questions Answered...

We have a virtual PPG. Each month we ask them for feedback on services. The key themes are then collated, and in each Newsletter we will answer questions on these key themes.



**Q** Have changes been made to the phone system? I used to get an engaged tone and I called back and now I may be 30th in the queue.

**A** All NHS surgeries have been mandated to change to a Cloud Telephony system. One of the features of this is that we can have more lines and a call queuing system. We have also changed the way calls are answered. All calls for both our sites are amalgamated, but instead of having our staff answering the calls, whilst also on the front desk and scanning, we now have a dedicated team answering calls. This means that there may be 30 lines going in, but there will be eight people answering the calls at busy times. We are trying to refine the system to tell patients where they are in the queue and how long they will wait. We monitor the calls every day and our average time to answer is much faster than before. It is, and always will be, extremely busy between the hours of 8-11 am, so if your call is not urgent for that day, we suggest you call back later. Our new system is not perfect, but we are refining it every week to try and make it a better experience for patients.

**Q** Why have changes been made to Engage Consult?

**A** Originally, when we trialled Engage Consult for the CCG, we set it up to receive contacts most of the time. This was changed, well over 2 years ago, to more limited access times. The reasons for this are as follows:

- There was unequal access to patients who don't have the internet.
- Queries were coming in overnight, but particularly at the weekend, that could be serious and were not able to be seen until we were opened at 8 am.
- Queries coming in overnight, but particularly at the weekend, that were identified as minor when we called back, had been resolved.

- Open access means unlimited volume of queries- we don't have unlimited resources to deal with this.
- It was unsafe for work to come in when we are not monitoring it.

**Q** Can you produce a simple list of who we should contact when ill, including out of hours and if we should use other services?

**A** What to do when we are closed:

- If you need assistance between 6-6:30pm on weekdays, please call the out of hours service on 0300 555 5252. At all other times, please call 111.
- You can call 111 when you need medical help fast, but it's not a 999 emergency.
- Can your Pharmacy help when we are open and closed? Pharmacists are trained healthcare professionals, who can easily help with minor illnesses such as coughs and colds, itchy eyes and earache. If symptoms indicate something that may be more serious, they can signpost you to other NHS services, such as a GP or A&E for the help you need.

With no appointment needed, local pharmacy teams offer a fast and convenient service and, if required, can speak to you in the privacy of a consultation room.

So, if you're experiencing a minor health concern, speak to your local pharmacist to get expert advice straight away.

An advertisement for the NHS Quit Smoking app. It features a hand holding a smartphone displaying the app's interface. The app shows a 'Progress' section with a 'Savings' goal of £128. Below this, it lists costs: 'For a pack of 20 you pay £8', 'For a month of tobacco £2', 'For cigarettes, that's £0.40', and 'For 1g of tobacco £14'. The NHS logo is in the top right. Text on the left says 'Quit Smoking Start Saving' and 'Join the thousands of people who are quitting smoking'. At the bottom, it says 'Download the free NHS Smoking app to get started' and provides links to Google Play and the App Store. The Better Health logo is in the bottom left corner.

**Quit Smoking Start Saving**

Join the thousands of people who are quitting smoking

Download the free NHS Smoking app to get started

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Better Health Let's do this

An advertisement for 'Friends and Family Feedback'. It features a hand giving a thumbs up. The text says 'Friends and Family Feedback' in large purple letters. Below it, it says 'If you have had an appointment at the Practice you may be sent a text or email asking for your feedback, this is called "The Friends and Family Test".' At the bottom, it asks 'Please can you respond to this, as your feedback is important to us.'

**Friends and Family Feedback**

If you have had an appointment at the Practice you may be sent a text or email asking for your feedback, this is called "The Friends and Family Test".

Please can you respond to this, as your feedback is important to us.

# Your PPG Needs YOU

If you would like to participate in contributing to the excellent care we receive at the Practice, why not join the Patient Participation Group to help shape the ongoing development.

For more information, please email:  
[Liz.walke@aol.com](mailto:Liz.walke@aol.com)

## Managing Your Appointments

If the Practice has your mobile telephone number, we will text you an appointment reminder of your appointment 24 hours before. You can then cancel by texting back one number. If you know earlier that you cannot make your appointment you can **text CANCEL to 07903 594390** as an alternative to either telephoning or cancelling online via Patient Access.

Before calling an ambulance,  
you can call **111** for advice



## Be Septicaemia AWARE

**Call the Practice immediately, or 111, if you have possible early signs of sepsis, as this requires quick treatment and without this it can lead to multiple organ failure or even death. Sepsis symptoms may include a high fever or low body temperature, chills or shivering, fast heartbeat or fast breathing. Call 999 promptly and ask for an ambulance if more severe symptoms of septic shock develop.**

These symptoms include severe breathlessness, severe muscle pain, feeling dizzy or faint, vomiting, a change in mental state such as disorientation, not urinating or a loss of consciousness.

## Repeat Prescriptions

for patients who are not on Electronic Repeat Dispensing

Our service is three working days from the time that you request your prescription to the time it is sent to the Pharmacy or printed for you to collect from the Practice.

The Practice is not contracted to run an emergency prescription service. If you need your prescription urgently, please ask at your Pharmacy who can issue emergency medications in many instances if there is no health risk.

## Information and Contacting the Surgery

### Surgery Information

#### Opening Hours

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm

To contact us you can use **Engage Consult, the online medical symptom taking tool** that allows you to get a message to the Practice, or telephone us.

Please note that our phone lines are extremely busy especially from 8am-11am, so if your query is non urgent please call at other times.

#### Times for Contacting a Doctor

Monday to Friday 8am - 6pm

#### Out of Hours

If you need assistance between 6pm-6.30pm on weekdays, please call the out-of-hours service on: **0300 555 5252**

At all other times, please call the **NHS on 111** (all calls are free).

## Practice Website – take a look!

[www.lighthousepractice.co.uk](http://www.lighthousepractice.co.uk)

Practice Facebook



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