

# The Practice

Stoke Road Surgery Newsletter  
Delivering quality primary care



Autumn 2015



## Flu Jab Season

It seems too soon to be writing this but it's that time of year again....flu jabs! Please make sure that you attend the surgery for your flu vaccination. It's really important to try to protect yourself against the most common strains of the influenza virus.

Those entitled to a free flu jab on the NHS are:

- those over 65 years of age
- those with chronic respiratory, cardiac or liver disease
- those with chronic renal or neurological problems
- those with diabetes
- those who are immunosuppressed or on immunosuppressant medication
- registered carers
- pregnant women.

We are doing our usual Saturday morning flu clinics but equally are happy to give you your vaccination if you are in surgery for another reason. Just ask the Doctor, Nurse or Health Care Assistant and they will be able to arrange one for you.

## Nasal flu vaccination for children

Influenza protection  
without the ouch



This year ALL children aged 2-7 years of age are entitled to a nasal flu vaccination.

If your child is in one of the 'at risk' groups, as listed above, they too are entitled to a flu vaccination. The nurse will

advise you whether this is a nasal spray or an injectable vaccination. Please ask at reception and an appointment can be made for your child.



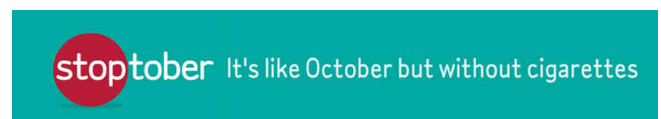
## In this edition:

- ❖ Flu Jab Season
- ❖ Children's Nasal Flus
- ❖ Shingles Vaccination
- ❖ 'Stoptober'
- ❖ Ear Syringing
- ❖ Dates for your diary
- ❖ Social Prescribing
- ❖ Fundraising
- ❖ Goodbye....
- ❖ Hello....
- ❖ Health awareness event
- ❖ Afternoon appointments
- ❖ Remote access appointments
- ❖ PPG over 65s activities
- ❖ PPG chairman's comment

## Shingles

A shingles vaccination is also available. There are however strict criteria as to who is eligible for this vaccination. NHS England have set up national criteria as to who is allowed this and there is a rolling rota of who it is available to this year. We will actively invite you to attend the surgery for a shingles vaccination if you fall into one of the appropriate categories.

If you have not been invited by us for this then please do not book in requesting this vaccination. We will be unable to administer it.



## 'Stoptober'

October is 'Stoptober' - All over the country people will take the 28-day challenge to stop smoking during the month of October.

Why don't you see if you can join in and make this change, if you are a smoker? See how much better you feel when you stop smoking!

Call 0800 0854113 or text bfree and your name to 65000.

Or call in to the award winning Quit Stop Shop in Southgate Street in Gloucester city centre, open seven days a week.

## Useful Contacts

Appointments  
01242 672007

Fax  
01242 678857

District nurses  
01242 679946

Health visitor  
0300 4216166

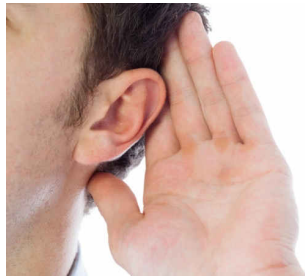
NHS advice  
111

The Practice

Stoke Road Surgery, 4 Stoke Road, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham GL52 8RP  
www.stokeroadsurgery.co.uk

## Ear Syringing

We would like to let you know about our ear syringing service at the surgery. We currently have one member of staff who has appointments set aside



to do ear syringing. If you feel that your ears need syringing then please let the receptionists know. They will book you onto a waiting list and the Health Care Assistant will contact you in due course. She will then advise you appropriately on how to oil your ears or make an appointment to assess your ears if needed.

You will need to oil your ears for 14 days before they can be syringed. Please make sure you follow the advice you have been given, to ensure the wax is really soft. This is for YOUR benefit! If the wax is still hard / dry then an ear syringe is unlikely to be successful and you may well have to come back again.

We get some grumbles about the time it takes to have an ear syringe appointment. Please remember that ear wax is inconvenient but it is not life threatening! We have to prioritise, and more urgent medical problems will take priority with appointment slots.

There are alternative private ear syringing providers that are available if you cannot wait for your NHS appointment.

## Dates for your diary



Dare we mention this already but... Christmas is coming!

Please remember to order your medications well in advance and make sure you have enough if you are going away. If you need to order your medicines early, just pop a note in with your prescription request or add a comment on-line in the medication ordering box. We will do our best to accommodate you but please give us time to process your request at this busy time of year!

Please prioritise your medical problems and use the pharmacy, NHS 111 or over-the-counter remedies as a first point of contact rather than calling the GP surgery.

We are open as usual except on:

**Friday 25th December 2015 - Surgery closed**  
**Monday 28th December- 2015 Surgery closed**  
**Friday 1st January 2016 - Surgery closed**



## 'Social Prescribing'



There is a new service being set up in GP practices across Gloucestershire called 'social prescribing'. There are many community-based voluntary organisations and services operating within Gloucestershire which successfully support the wellbeing of the population. Unfortunately these can be poorly understood, under-utilised and can appear disjointed to users and referrers. In addition, GPs have identified problems in their understanding of the availability of such services, access to them and the willingness of some patients to take up the service offered.

Social prescribing is a structured way of linking patients with non-medical needs to sources of support within a community. These opportunities may include; arts, creativity, physical activity, learning new skills, volunteering, mutual aid, befriending and self-help, as well as support for a wide range of problems including employment, benefits, housing, debt, legal advice and parenting problems.

Social prescribing will be staffed by "Hub Coordinators" who are based within your GP surgery for part of their work, so as to be easily accessible by patients. The social prescribing service will operate as a referral and signposting model, with hub coordinators able to refer and signpost to a wide range of national, countywide and local voluntary organisations and community groups. For some individuals support in the form of sign posting will be sufficient. Others will need a degree of one to one support to reach their identified health and wellbeing goals. This one to one support will be provided by the hub coordinators.

## Fundraising

We recently held our annual MacMillan coffee morning at the surgery. But instead of one morning, we had a whole week of delicious cakes! We made £148.90 and had a wonderful array of delicious cakes to boot as well.



## Goodbye....

We have said a sad farewell to Rachel Jardine, one of our health care assistants. Rachel is moving 'up north' to be nearer her family, now that she has grandchildren. She will be missed by us all!

## Hello.....

However, on the plus side we have the pleasure of being able to introduce two new staff members.

Jo Cutter and Fatuma Johnson both join us as new additions to our nursing team.

Jo was a nurse on the vascular ward at Cheltenham General, and I think some of you have recognised her from there!

Fatuma did her nurse training in England and then worked abroad for some years. She is now back in Gloucestershire with her family and is nursing again.

Please join us in welcoming them to the practice.



## Health Awareness Event

We were proud to work in partnership with our Patients Participation Group and Bishops Cleeve Secondary School to offer a 'health awareness event' at the school. This was on 15th October at Cleeve School.



We provided information aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and raising awareness about various physical and mental health issues that are pertinent to young people. There were a range of advisors from drugs and alcohol to mental health to young carers, to name a few.

This is the first time we have done such an event and it proved to be successful with lots of positive feedback from the young people themselves.



## Afternoon appointments

Please can we ask for your help!

We run a triage system in both mornings and afternoons. This means that all calls that are deemed urgent for that day are called back by the Doctor or Nurse and then prioritised. We have spent lots of time and energy trying to get this right and making the most effective use of our appointment time. We get many more calls in the morning than the afternoon. Because of this we have a team of Doctors and Nurses in the morning ready to help with your queries.

Subsequently our staffing rota are weighted so we have more clinical staff in the mornings and less in the afternoons.

However, we are finding that we are getting more calls coming through to the duty Doctor or Nurse in the afternoon that are of a routine nature and because it is more convenient due to working commitments.

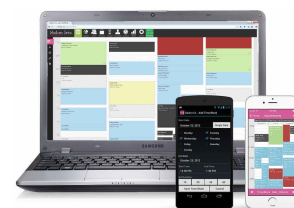
Please can we remind everyone that our afternoon appointments are for urgent medical problems. We just don't have the staff in place to be able to process lots of routine medical problems during the afternoons.

We offer early morning and late evening appointments for those who need them due to working commitments. Please ask the receptionist when booking your appointment if you would like one of these. They start from 7:00am in the morning and the evening appointments finish by 7:45pm.

These are run by the usual Doctors in the practice. We hope you can see we really are trying to help, so please help us by using these appointments and not the urgent afternoon slots.

Thank you.

## Remote Access Appointments



Whilst on the subject of appointments we would like to let you know about a new service being offered. This is a Government initiative in an attempt to ease some of the pressure on General Practice.

When you call the practice for an urgent medical problem, the Doctor or Nurse who has triaged the call may suggest you have an appointment at either St Pauls Medical Centre or the Healthy Living Centre in Hesters Way. This is called a 'remote access appointment'. There is a Doctor based there seeing patients from General Practices based all over Cheltenham. They can see and assess you and provide appropriate treatment if necessary.

If any further follow up is needed then this will be back with your usual GP.

We hope that this will prove to be a good option for those with acute medical problems and that it will also prove to be convenient, especially for those who work in Cheltenham itself.

## PPG - Over 65s activities

There is so much going on, in and around Bishops Cleeve!

Can you help us to help you?

Peggy and Maggie are members of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) specifically looking at the needs of the over 65s in the practice and representing the views of this group.

As you may imagine this group represents a large percentage of the surgery population.

In the last year we have produced a leaflet outlining some of the activities available in the area and have been surprised and delighted at how much is going on.

We hope you have seen our leaflet which has been available at libraries, chemists and always at the surgery.

We cover clubs and activities, carers support, meals, Women's Institutes, choirs, exercise classes, medical facilities and a host of useful numbers.

### **Is your club or activity in our leaflet?**

We are now updating this leaflet and would be grateful for your help in letting us know of any other activities which you think may not be mentioned, or of any changes that may have occurred to those already listed.

Information is so important and if you don't know you might be missing out.

Please contact us through the surgery and address any correspondence to us by name, and marked PPG, and we will get back to you.

Peggy Dyer & Maggie Morris



## PPG Chairmans letter

Paul Holliday



Carrying and bearing the weight and demand of local Primary Care medical provision for patients is the designated function of Stoke Road Surgery. If you have become aware of the steel fabrication masonry - support structures appearing on the surgery premises, there is a heartening background story to relate to you. A few years ago, due to construction limitations and constraints on capacity, plans were first outlined for expanding and extending the premises.

What you should also be aware of is that in those early preparations, the existing premises construction was under professional examination. The listed structure boundary wall came under particular scrutiny. The early diagnosis was of failing masonry, with the original foundations permanently unable to load - bear the weight above. At the time, in the process of my experience across the county of listed masonry structures, the boundary wall was going to require some carefully considered 'medical attention.'

To my unprecedented reassurance, sure enough, the practitioners of construction engineering professional advice, from the consulting engineers, have constructed a site-specific public safety protecting novel solution. The solid steel fabrication is capable of bearing many tonnes of masonry loading at any point of the identified construction weakness. There is more: the masonry, like the human frame, has many individual curved and straight edges. In a particularly skilled way, a carpenter has provided soft wood timber frame points of direct surface contact, to 'soft touch' keep the masonry secure, until a permanent solution can be found. In a strange parallel with the many things that Stoke Road Surgery does in delivering Primary Care, my assessment of this precautionary approach, is that it is exemplary.



*The Practice*

Stoke Road Surgery, 4 Stoke Road, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham GL52 8RP  
[www.stokeroadsurgery.co.uk](http://www.stokeroadsurgery.co.uk)