

SEPTEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

St. Helens Clinical Commissioning Group

As most of you will be aware, the practice is one of 35 practices that form the St. Helens CCG. As in many walks of life, the CCG is under considerable financial pressure and is looking to make efficiency savings where it can – or face having sanctions imposed by NHS England. As part of the CCG, we have a duty to make sure no money is wasted and what we have is used wisely. Below are some ways in which you might play your part – to quote a former prime minister ‘we are all in this together’.

1. Do not book appointments unless you really need them – most acute illness is self-limiting and can be self-managed. Make use of ‘care at the chemist’, NHS Choices website, the walk-in-centre etc.
2. If you do need to be seen, make every effort to be seen within practice opening hours and not wait until just after 6pm and overload St. Helens Rota.
3. Do not turn up in A+E unless you have had an accident requiring immediate attention or it is a genuine emergency – such as chest pain, shortness of breath, heavy bleeding, broken bones etc. Ask yourself whether you could self-manage, or go to the WIC. If you need a GP out of hours, phone the surgery number to get through to the GP out-of-hours service and do not just turn up in A+E for GP-appropriate problems.
4. Avoid alcohol excess resulting in A+E attendance.
5. Do not request/agree to referrals for further care and then change your mind after being seen, or ask to start again at a different hospital.
6. Do not miss secondary care appointments necessitating a new referral at additional cost.
7. Do not miss GP appointments – we lack the capacity for this and it adversely affects other patients.

As a practice, we are being asked to do the following;

1. Use the new referral management system – all referral requests to go through a triage system where a decision is made by someone else as to whether the referral will go ahead.
2. Work with the medicines management team to ensure that we are prescribing as efficiently as possible (this might mean changing medication brands or formulation – tablets to capsules, etc).
3. Try to keep patients out of hospital as much as possible and to make use of all the community support services available.
4. Not to refer for conditions of lower clinical priority – benign skin lesions, simple varicose veins, cysts etc.
5. Not to prescribe items that can be bought over the counter.

If we do not all pull together we risk losing services. Please play your part and help us to play ours.

Flu Vaccines

The time is nearly upon us once more. We should have our vaccines in by 19th September (first batch). We aim to run daily clinics. Please contact reception after this date for an appointment.

Donations

The practice has received two very generous donations recently. We have purchased a Dyson fan for summer use to keep the waiting room cooler and are thinking about purchasing a Dyson air blade dryer for the patient facilities. We hope both of these help towards patient comfort and are humbled to be remembered in this way.