

# THE ARLINGTON ROAD MEDICAL PRACTICE NEWSLETTER



October 2020

## *Flu Vaccinations 2020*

**W**e have had many enquiries as to how we will be running our flu vaccination clinics this year in view of the current Covid-19 guidelines. Well we can say that it will be very different to previous clinics when our waiting rooms were full as you all patiently awaited your vaccination!

**W**e can reassure all our patients that we will be following strict safety guidelines hence asking patients not to come early for their appointments as we can only have a certain number of patients in the practice at any one time. All patients will be triaged at the front door and have their temperature checked; all patients/practice staff will be required to wear masks and all patients will be requested to use the hand sanitiser in the practice. We have a one way system in place in that there will be an exit from the practice into Old Orchard Road - there will be exceptions for some patients, eg. wheelchair users who will still be able to exit via the main entrance.

**W**e do hope this information has reassured anyone who was concerned about coming into the practice and we recommend that everyone who is eligible to have a vaccination contacts the practice to book an appointment.

**W**e will be holding our Flu Vaccination Clinics on Saturdays and some weekdays, our first clinic was on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**T**his year, as last year, there will be 2 separate flu vaccines for adults. There will be the Adjuvanted trivalent flu vaccine (aTIV) vaccine for patients aged 65 and over and the Quadrivalent flu vaccine (QIV) for patients aged 18-64 years. Please be aware you will be asked your age when booking your appointment and again when you arrive at the surgery for your vaccination so we can ensure you are given the correct vaccination for your age.

### **When you attend for your appointment, please bear the following information in mind:**

- Please wear a face covering to your appointment
- Please come alone unless you rely on a carer to bring you
- Your temperature will be taken at the door before entering
- Appointments will be staggered – please arrive on time and not early as you will be invited into the surgery at the time of your appointment
- You cannot have your flu vaccination if you have had Coronavirus symptoms in the 14 days prior to your appointment
- Please remove as many layers of clothing as possible from your non-dominant upper arm, before entering the surgery

**A**s in recent years, children aged 6 months to 17 years, who are in an at risk group for flu vaccination, will receive the nasal spray vaccine. However, if they are clinically contraindicated to receive this, they will receive the injectable vaccine.

Anyone who is currently 64 years old but who will be 65 before the end of March 2020, will be eligible to have the aTIV flu vaccination.

### **Patients Eligible for Flu Vaccinations:**

- Anyone aged 65+ (defined as those born on or before 31.3.1956)
- Patients aged 6 months to 64 years with one or more of the following conditions
  - ♦ Chronic Respiratory Disease (severe asthma or asthma requiring repeated use of inhaled steroids) or COPD
  - ♦ Chronic Heart Disease
  - ♦ Chronic Kidney Disease at stage 3, 4 or 5
  - ♦ Chronic Liver Disease
  - ♦ Chronic Neurological Disease (including Stroke, TIA, Parkinson's Disease, Motor Neurone disease)
  - ♦ Diabetes
  - ♦ Asplenia or dysfunction of the spleen (this includes Sickle Cell Disease and Coeliac Syndrome)
  - ♦ Immunosuppression (due to disease or treatment)
  - ♦ Learning disabilities
  - ♦ BMI of over 40
  - ♦ Pregnant women

**C**hildren who fall into any of the above at-risk groups will be given Fluenz nasal spray. Children who are aged between 2 years to less than 9 years, who have not had flu immunisation before, will need two doses given a month apart. All other children will just need one dose (any children who are immunodeficient will need to have the injectable flu vaccine and not the nasal spray).

### **The following groups of patients are also eligible for flu vaccine:**

- People in long-stay residential or nursing homes
- Carers
- Health and social care staff
- Patients on the shielded Covid list
- Household contacts of patients on the shielded Covid list or of immunocompromised individuals who are sharing living accommodation

### **Further information regarding the Children's Flu Immunisation**

#### **Children in School Years Reception through to Year 7**

Children in this age group usually receive their immunisation from school health. If your child does have their immunisation in school, please contact us on the day the Fluenz is given, so that we can update your child's records immediately.

#### **All children aged 2 & 3 years old**

All children aged two and three years old are eligible for flu immunisation (ie. children born between 1.9.16-31.8.18 as at 31.8.20). These children will be given Fluenz nasal spray instead of an injection. Children who are healthy and do not fall into any of the at risk categories will only require one dose of the nasal spray.

We will not be vaccinating the children in the Saturday clinics but instead will be holding clinics for the Children's Appointments during the weekdays with the Practice Nurses. We will send letters out in September to the parents of all the 2 & 3 year old children inviting them in for flu vaccination.

#### **How to book your Flu Vaccination Appointment**

Please contact the surgery on 727531 to book your flu vaccination appointment. Our flu

booking line will be open 11.30am-1.00pm and 2.00-3.00pm daily, Monday to Friday. Please note, the surgery is closed from 1pm-2pm.

If you have an appointment at the surgery from now onwards you can have your flu vaccination at this appointment, as long as we have a sufficient supply of vaccine at that time, to save you attending again specifically for the Flu Clinic. Please mention it to the Doctor or Nurse that you see if you would like to have your flu vaccination whilst you are in for an appointment.

If you have an egg allergy, please mention this when booking your appointment.

### **Patients aged 50+**

Please note that, if you are aged between 50 and 64 and not in a clinical at risk group, the earliest you will be offered a flu vaccination is November, providing there is sufficient vaccine. No appointments will be offered for people in this age group until then. This is to ensure that those who are most at risk are vaccinated first. If you are aged 50 to 64 and are in a clinical 'at risk' group which is eligible for the flu vaccination, for example you have a health condition which puts you at risk from the flu, you can book your vaccination now.

### **Patients not eligible for a flu vaccination under the NHS Programme**

If you do not fall into any of the "at risk groups" for a free flu vaccination but you would like to have a flu vaccination you can attend any Pharmacy and pay for a flu vaccination which the Pharmacist will administer for you.



## ***Our Triage First Appointment System***

**T**he Covid Pandemic continues to raise its challenges and we are planning perpetually to adjust the way we deliver our services, in order to keep both our patients and staff as safe as possible.

**C**urrently our clinicians continue to telephone triage all requests for appointments. This ensures a number of safeguards:

- Anybody with potential Covid symptoms will not enter the surgery
- Reduces the risk of community transmission between individuals who may be carrying the virus but are asymptomatic, by avoiding unnecessary contact with others within the surgery
- Ensures that all patients have equal access to professional telephone advice from a GP
- Enables clinicians to make a fully informed decision on which patients need to be seen in a face to face consultation

**R**ecently there was a call in the media for GP Practices to once again offer face to face appointments. We would like to make it very clear that we do offer face to face appointments, and have been doing so since the beginning of the pandemic, but that these appointments are for patients whose need for treatment and further investigation can only be safely established via a face to face consultation. We continue to follow NHS England's advice in offering a triage first service to ensure that we offer the correct type of consultation to cater for each individual's need.

**W**e take this opportunity to politely remind you that you should not come to the practice in person, unless you have a booked appointment. For all enquiries (including prescription queries) please telephone the practice on 727531 or contact us via Engage Consult, which can be accessed from the home page of our website.

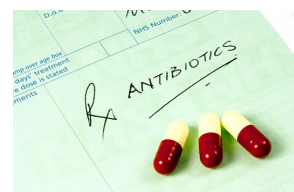


## *Prescription Enquiry Line (option 3 on our phone system)*

**O**ur prescription enquiry line is open 11:00-12:00 every morning and between 14:30-16:00 every afternoon. **Please note the slight change of time for the morning session – this has been adjusted to ensure the prescription monitor and triage doctor have time to liaise at the end of the morning.**

**P**lease remember that we cannot take prescription requests over the phone. The phone line is for enquiries only. To request your prescription, please use one of the following methods...

- Post – 1 Arlington Road, BN21 1DH.
- Patient Access - [www.patientaccess.com](http://www.patientaccess.com)
- Engage Consult – link via the home page of our website
- Our website - [www.arlingtonroadsurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.arlingtonroadsurgery.nhs.uk)
- Via your regular pharmacy



## *Arlington Pharmacy Current Opening Hours*

**Monday to Friday:** 08:30 - 18:30 – closed for lunch between 14:00 - 15:00.

**Saturday:** 09:00 - 13:00    **Sunday:** Closed

## *Mental Wellbeing*

**T**he current times continue to be anxious and stressful for people of all walks of life. Whether you are lonely and isolated or surrounded by your family 24/7 without a moment to call your own. Whether you are unemployed or your job is more demanding than normal. Whether you have friends/relatives you are continuously anxious about or you feel you have nobody who cares about you. Whether you have underlying medical conditions and fear to go out in public or whether you are usually as fit as a fiddle, but not being able to do all the things you usually do is making you feel low. Whatever your situation, help is available when everything feels too much.

**H**ealth in Mind provide courses and therapies to people who are registered with a GP in East Sussex, over 18 and struggling with mild to moderate stress, anxiety and or low mood. Their services, are still running but they do have less capacity than normal and are not able to offer some of their courses currently. However, if you make a self-referral via their website at [www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/service-health-mind](http://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/service-health-mind), they will contact you and let you know what they can offer.

**P**lease note they are not a crisis helpline. If you feel you need urgent help, please call the **Sussex Mental Health Line on 0300 5000 101**. This is a 24/7 service run by registered clinicians who can provide help, support and advice to anyone at any time of day or night.



If you have been referred to the MSK service for joint pain, muscle problems etc. and wish to chase up your appointment, **please call the MSK Care Advisers direct on 0300 3000 0003.**



## *Listen up for some Ear Wax Management Advice from Paul Lambirth, Our Lead Nurse*

### **What is Ear Wax?**

Ear wax is normal bodily secretion which provides protection for your ears. It is designed to stop dust, dirt and foreign bodies entering the ear canal and causing damage to the ear drum or the delicate skin lining of the canal itself.

- Your ears are self-cleaning and if you use cotton buds to remove the wax, it will only be pushed further down the ear canal and block the ear.
- If you have repeated problems with wax blocking your ears, using olive oil drops regularly may prevent this.

### **Causes of earwax**

You might have ear build-up because:

- You just have more wax in your ears –some people do naturally
- You have hairy or narrow canals (the tubes that link the eardrum and outer ear)
- Of your age – wax gets harder and more difficult to fall out
- Of hearing aids, earplugs and other things you put in your ear – these can push wax further in.

### **How you can treat earwax build up yourself**

Earwax usually falls out on its own. If it does not and blocks your ear, put 2 – 3 drops of olive oil in your ear 3 times a day for 5 days.

Over 2 weeks lumps of earwax should fall out of your ear, especially at night when you're lying down.

Speak to a pharmacist about earwax build-up. They can give advice and suggest treatment.

Do not use drops if you have a hole in your eardrum ( a perforated eardrum )

### **How to instil drops**

- Lie down with the affected ear upwards
- Gently pull the outer ear backwards and upwards. Using room temperature olive oil and the dropper, drop 2-3 drops in the ear canal and gently massage the area in front of the ear.
- Remain lying down for approximately 10 minutes and when up sit up, wipe away any excess oil.
- Repeat the procedure with the opposite ear if necessary.

### **Preventing earwax Build-up**

You can't prevent earwax. It is there to protect your ears from dirt and germs. But you can keep using eardrops to soften the wax. This will help it fall out on its own and should prevent blocked ears.





## *Chronic Disease Annual Reviews*

If you have asthma, COPD, hypertension or diabetes, you will, no doubt, be used to attending the surgery for an annual review. Covid-19 is obviously having an impact on the number patients we can invite into the practice and we are having to prioritise the patients who are considered to be the most clinically vulnerable.

Some patients may, therefore, receive a telephone call or text message regarding their asthma review from one of our Practice Nurses, rather than be invited for a face to face appointment in the first instance.

At the beginning of lockdown we had to cancel several diabetic clinics and we are now working hard to 'catch up' and will be in contact with an appointment as soon as we are able to. As you can imagine, we have several hundred patients to work our way through but please rest assured you have not been forgotten.



## *Breast and Cervical Screening*



Have you been invited for breast or cervical screening? Are you unsure whether to attend during the Pandemic? We would encourage patients to attend any screening appointments that are offered to them. These screening services are designed to identify possible cancers at an early stage when treatment is likely to be more successful and a full recovery more likely to be made.

If you have received an invitation for cervical screening, please telephone the Surgery on 727531, to make an appointment with our Practice Nurse.

All women aged from 50 to their 71st birthday, who are registered with a GP, are automatically invited for breast cancer screening every 3 years. Breast screening usually takes place in a mobile unit, please do take up this invitation when it is offered to you.

In the meantime, if you're worried about breast cancer symptoms, such as a lump or an area of thickened tissue in a breast, or you notice that your breasts look or feel different from what's normal for you, do not wait to be offered screening, please contact your GP.



## *Have we got an up to date mobile number for you?*



Please keep us informed of any changes to your contact details. We are increasingly using SMS messages to keep patients informed and to invite you to appointments, so please therefore ensure we have an up to date mobile telephone number for you.

You can inform us of any changes of address or telephone number via our website, using the change of contact details link at the bottom of the home screen. Engage Consult can also be used for change of contact details.



## How to Request a Covid Test



### You can get a free NHS Test if...

- ✓ you have any symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- ✓ you're getting a test for someone you live with who has symptoms
- ✓ you live in England and have been told to get a test before you go into hospital, for example, for surgery
- ✓ your local council asks you to get a test
- ✓ you're taking part in a government pilot project

### Do not ask for a test if...

- ✗ you live with someone who has coronavirus but you do not have symptoms yourself – you need to self-isolate
- ✗ you've been in close contact with someone who has the virus but you do not have symptoms – you do not need to do anything unless NHS Test and Trace tells you to
- ✗ you're going abroad but do not have symptoms
- ✗ you've arrived in the UK from abroad but do not have symptoms – you need to self-isolate if you've come from a country with a high coronavirus risk
- ✗ your employer or school has asked you to get a test but you do not have symptoms

### When to get a test...

If you have symptoms, get a test as soon as possible. You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms.

Book a visit to a test site to have the test today. Or order a home test kit if you cannot get to a test site.

On days 1 to 4 of your symptoms, you can get tested at a site or at home. If you're ordering a home test kit on day 4, do it by 3pm.

On day 5, you need to go to a test site. It's too late to order a home test kit.

### How to arrange a test...

You can arrange a test online <https://self-referral.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk> or if you do not have access to the internet, please call 119. If you are unable to arrange a Covid test, please ensure you fully self-isolate for 10 days as described below.

### Stay at home if you have symptoms

You must stay at home if you have symptoms, whether or not you get a test. Anyone in your support bubble must also stay at home. A support bubble is where someone who lives alone (or just with their children) can meet people from 1 other household.

### You must Self-isolate for at least 10 days if

- you have symptoms of coronavirus and you tested positive, had an unclear result or did not have a test
- you tested positive but have not had symptoms

If you have symptoms, the 10 days starts from when they started.

If you have not had symptoms, the 10 days starts from when you had the test. But if you get symptoms after your test, self-isolate for a further 10 days from when your symptoms start.

**You can stop self-isolating after 10 days if either:**

- you do not have any symptoms
- you just have a cough or changes to your sense of smell or taste – these can last for weeks after the infection has gone

**Keep self-isolating if you feel unwell with any of these symptoms after 10 days:**

- a high temperature or feeling hot and shivery
- a runny nose or sneezing
- feeling or being sick
- diarrhoea

Only stop self-isolating when these symptoms have gone.

If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.

***Dr Peter Williams***

Dr Williams is currently on sick leave from the Practice. Unfortunately, he has been diagnosed with liver cancer, but is hoping to undergo curative surgery in the very near future. We are sure you will join with us in wishing him well.



**O**ur doctors and staff would like to say a big thank you to all of our patients who have shown respect, appreciation, patience and understanding to both our clinical and non-clinical staff when accessing our services.

**W**e fully appreciate that adapting to changes in the way services are offered from any aspect of life can be challenging and stressful. The pandemic has meant that virtually every service we use has changed in some way or form and has therefore meant we all, as individuals, are facing a lack of normality wherever we turn. This can lead to frustration but it is vital that we all try to remember, wherever we are, whether that is using public transport, in a shop or restaurant, calling a health service or calling a helpline - to name but a few, to respect each other and acknowledge we are all facing the same or similar difficulties. Each service provider is probably as frustrated as we are at the inability to be able to offer their services in the usual way. It behoves us all to remember they are the face of that service but underneath they are an individual, who like ourselves are under immense stress and pressure on both a professional and personal level.

**S**o thank you for being so understanding. Our team really do work incredibly hard, from planning to delivering, in order to provide a service that can be accessed safely and efficiently under the current restrictions. Your appreciation, respect and patience is what keeps us going through the toughest days.





## *An Interview with Dr Ben McFadden*

- GP Partner with a specialist interest in Dermatology (Since 2016)
- Medical Student lead (Since 2017)
- FY2 lead (Since 2018)
- Caldicott Guardian (Since 2019)

### **How long did you train for?**

- 10 years to become a GP
  - 5 years at medical school
  - 2 years as a foundation doctor
  - 3 years GP training
- 1 year Dermatology Diploma

### **What were your favourite rotations?**

Everything except surgery!

### **How did you motivate yourself during training?**

By having clear end goals to work towards, and reaching these through a step-by-step process of setting and achieving smaller goals

### **What is your favourite part about being a GP?**

The opportunity to provide ongoing care and communication to patients that you get to know really well

### **What is your least favourite part about being a GP?**

The frustration of feeling like it's difficult to see as many patients due to changes in the NHS and increasing time pressures. There's also a lot of 'hidden' work during breaks, before, and after work - like letters, test results, reports, queries, etc – which can feel like a never ending task, reduce time available to spend with patients, and slow down patient care when results, letters etc can't be processed fast enough

### **What does a typical day look like for you?**

- Arrive just before 8am. Try to clear outstanding test results, staff tasks, queries and letters
- First patient at 8.30am
- Lunch break 12pm-2pm. Eat at desk, catching up on letters, notes, reports, tests, etc that have come through during the morning, as well as supervising students, FY2s, and registrars
- Last patient at 5.50pm. Clear all tasks, reports, paperwork, queries etc that have come through during the afternoon, to be ready for the morning
- Leave around 6.30pm-7pm

### **What additional tasks and responsibilities do you have on some days?**

- Extended hours, partners' meetings, and education evenings before or after work
- Caldicott Guardian tasks (relating to information and data governance and protection)
- Involvement in developing the practice and a vision for the future

### **What would you like to do within your role that you currently can't? What limits you?**

Most limited by time. With more time it would be possible to;

- See own patients on list
- Spend more time with each patient
- Follow up with patients after referrals to further care

**If you weren't a GP, what would you like to do?**

- Before beginning medical training; an Orthopaedic Surgeon, then later a Paediatrician
- Outside of medicine, a secondary school teacher of either sciences or languages

**In your opinion, what is the most important skill for your role?**

Communication, and ability to understand what people mean from both the things they say, and the things they don't say.

**Do you enjoy your job? Do you find it rewarding?**

The job is hard. The more you take on the harder it gets. But it is the best job in the world. You get to meet a lot of different people, and you get to help them

**What do you do to relax? What do you do to wind down after work and prepare for the next day/week?**

- Sleep; having enough sleep is important to cope with the business of upcoming days and tasks
- Exercise; a lot of exercise really helps the mind
  - Gym; most evenings for 30-60mins
  - Skiing
  - Running
- Play guitar
- Socialise
- Learn languages; it would be great to speak to patients in their first languages. Currently I can speak to patients in Italian

**What do you wish patients knew about your role?**

Sometimes patients can find it difficult to get an appointment with me and think I'm not in the practice, but I am usually here! However, I may not be in my GP role, for example, if I am supervising or training students/FY2s. If during the week, I'm not in the practice, I may be helping out at other practices. So it's not that I am not in the practice, but that there are many roles, responsibilities and tasks as well as seeing patients.

# ***THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER***



## **Annual General Meeting**

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) AGM was originally scheduled for 10th October. As the current circumstances make it impossible for the group to meet and open the invitation to all patients, the meeting is held in abeyance. All post holders on the committee are willing to continue in office until an election can take place.

If you are interested in becoming involved in the PPG, please send your name, address, telephone number and email address to Shirley Moth, Practice Manager at 1 Arlington Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 1DH.