

Drs. Liversedge, McCurdie, Wong, Yoxall & Peddie

Practice Matters

September 2019



We have reached the time of year again where patients who fall into an 'at risk' category can have their annual flu vaccination.

It is important that patients who are considered to be at risk have their flu vaccine each year, as flu can cause severe illness in the most vulnerable groups. The flu vaccination is free of charge on the NHS for patients who are considered to be at risk.

Patients who are considered to be 'at risk' and should have the vaccination include:

- Patients aged 65 and over
- Pregnant women
- Those who have a chronic, long term respiratory disease, such as asthma or COPD
- Those with neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's
- Patients who have diabetes
- Patients with a weakened immune system
- Carers
- Those who have had a stroke or TIA
- Patients with liver or kidney disease.

Children are now being offered the nasal flu vaccinations in school in Years 1-6 as a routine measure. However, children aged 2-3 years old will still be able to have their vaccination as a nasal spray here at the surgery. Also anyone under the age of 18 who is in an 'at risk' group will also be able to book in at the Surgery for their nasal flu vaccine.

If you are unsure if you are in any of the mentioned groups, would like some further information regarding an appointment, or need any other assistance, please contact the Surgery on 463232.

Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)

We would like to remind patients that if you have signed up for EPS at a pharmacy, you no longer need to come to reception to collect a paper prescription, this will have been sent electronically to the pharmacy you have nominated as your preference.

If you wish to check that this has been received, please contact the pharmacy you have registered with to confirm whether or not this has been received, and if it is ready for collection. Reception staff cannot tell you if your items have been dispensed or if they are ready to be delivered.

Upgrading practice systems



We have recently upgraded to a new computer system within the Practice, and also had a new telephone system installed to bring our technology up to date.

It is a completely different system to the previous one and it has taken quite a lot of getting used to. The staff have had to 'learn on the job' but thankfully most patients have been extremely patient with us, and for this we are very grateful!

This now means that patients who have registered previously for online services will, if not already done so, need to re-register now the new system is up and running. We understand that this will cause some inconvenience, but unfortunately, there is no way round this as we have changed to an entirely new provider. However, you will only need to do this once, you can still use the same apps that you have already, and there is no need to come back to Surgery with identification, unless this is the first time you have registered for online services.

We have been emailing patients with their new details, and a list of current available apps/websites that you can use to access the Surgery's online services. We are unable to recommend any specific website or app, as each person has their own needs and requirements.

This is also a good time to check that we have the correct details held on record for you, especially with email addresses and mobile numbers. Most websites require you to have an email to register and some apps require a mobile telephone number. If you have changed yours recently and are not sure if we have the right details, please give us a call then we can check for you.

Doctor's Letters



In the past, it was usual practice for patients who wish to take part in sporting events, or even apply for a passport, could request this information from the GP for a fee. However, the Doctors have now confirmed that they are now no longer providing this service to patients for the following reasons:

Passports

As a passport application requires the personal information of the person who is signing the form, for confidentiality reasons this will no longer be carried out.

Fitness to take part in a sporting event

The Doctor's have also advised that they can no longer provide letters confirming whether someone is fit to fly, or carry out any event that carries a risk to the person. Often, patients will ask for letters asking for the Doctor's confirmation that they are fit and healthy enough to carry out the activity they have chosen. The Doctor's do not have the relevant equipment to test a patient's fitness nor are they indemnified by their Insurance Company to make these decisions.

Pregnant ladies can also no longer obtain a 'fit to fly' letter, and this must be requested from your midwife, as they are the ones who are responsible for the safety of mother and baby during a pregnancy. The GP may not be aware of issues that have been discussed with the midwives and therefore, it is likely that confirmation may be given that a lady is fit and healthy when this is not the case.

Insurance forms may still be submitted for a Doctor to fill in, but patients will be expected to attend for an appointment with the GP to go through the form to ensure the right information is given. It will not always be possible to drop a form off and collect at a later date. There will usually also be a charge for this, and this will be advised at the time of the request.

Online Services

If you wish to register for online services, whether this is for the Patient Access website, or access via an app, then you will need to come to reception with 2 forms of ID, one of which must have your photograph on it.

You will need to provide your email address and mobile number (some apps require you to register with your mobile number) and we can print out the details you need to register.

We no longer have access to anything that is requested via the old 'Patient Services' so patients will need to re-register for Patient Access or equivalent if you wish to use online services.



Primary Care Navigator



Debbie Leyden now joins us as a Primary Care Navigator, which is a new role that has been created to provide support to members of the community.

Debbie is working with us, along with 5 other practices in the local area, and can assist with the elderly, vulnerable and people who are socially isolated. Her aim is to get to know the individual along with their carers/family and help to improve their health and general wellbeing.

She can signpost patients to community services and activities, and can take the time to listen and look at solutions or ways to make daily life a little bit better. This could mean getting help from services to assist with living at home, or even having a walk with someone who doesn't have the confidence to go out alone.

Patients do not need to be referred by the GP, so if you, or someone you know, would benefit from some extra support in their daily lives, please contact the Surgery and we can put them in touch with Debbie.

Prescription Requests

Unfortunately, we have had a rise in the number of people requesting same day "urgent" prescriptions for medication that they have run out of, despite taking this daily and being aware of how many tablets they have remaining. This has led to an increase in abuse directed at members of staff who are following the patient safety protocols put in place by the GP's, which is not acceptable.

We understand that there may be occasions when mistakes can be made, and quantities can be overlooked but we can never guarantee a prescription will be ready the same day when the Doctors and Nurses both have full clinics. **Prescription requests take 48 hours to process unless otherwise advised.**

Any prescribed items that can be bought over the counter will not be processed urgently. Please ensure you leave enough time for your medication request to be processed.

Evening and Weekend Appointments

If you find it difficult to get an appointment at the Surgery in our during our working hours of 8.00am – 6.30pm, or a Saturday morning, there is now the facility to make routine appointments for evenings and weekends at alternative GP practices.

The appointments are not held in our Surgery, and are not with our GP's, but you still have access to healthcare if you have a problem that you would like dealt with but have trouble getting to the surgery in a working day.



Evening and weekend appointments are now available



You can book an appointment to see a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional in the evening or at the weekend from a local Primary Care Access hub.

You can book an appointment with our receptionist or for urgent appointments ring NHS 111

Appointments are available for the following:

- GP's
- Nurses
- Advanced Nurse Practitioners
- Mental Health Workers
- Healthcare Assistants

You can be seen at either Waters Meeting Health Centre in Astley Bridge, Winifred Kettle Centre in Westhoughton, or the Urgent Treatment Centre at Royal Bolton Hospital. Their appointments are from 6.30pm – 9.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9.00am – 1.00pm on weekends and bank holidays.

To make one of these appointments, just speak to reception where they will be able to advise you which appointments are available at which location, and where possible, the name of the person you will be seeing. The receptionist may have to ask the nature of the appointment needed so they can make sure you are put with the right person – not all clinicians can carry out the same treatments and procedures. The nurse can deal with health checks, blood tests, contraception, cervical smear tests, asthma reviews and other issues that you might see the nurse for here in the Practice.

Please note that if you are attending for blood tests you MUST take a blood form with you to the appointment. This can be obtained from the Practice – if you do not have this with you when you attend then they will not be able take a blood sample. If you are wishing to attend for injections such as Vitamin B12, contraceptive injections or Zoladex, then you will need to take the injection with you, as these are not readily available.

Unfortunately, this is not a walk in facility and you will need an appointment to attend – if you require emergency out of hours care you should ring the Out of Hours number on the answering machine instead.

You can view this newsletter and find lots of other information on our practice website www.egertonanddunsscarhealthcentre.nhs.uk

You can also book, cancel and view appointments at www.patientservices.co.uk

