**Autumn Newsletter 2017 **

We had feedback from a patient recently saying that the waiting area was not nice and that the Reception Staff were most unhelpful. Unfortunately as the remarks were anonymous and the patient did not clarify the circumstances, we are unable to discuss the reason for the patient feeling aggrieved. Any complaints are taken very seriously and we try hard to learn from them. If patients or their representatives feel that there is an area we could improve on, or that they don’t understand why we are dealing with a situation in a certain manner, please discuss it with us.

We are hoping to replace some of the chairs in the reception area. Ideally for hygiene reasons we will get chairs that are washable/wipeable. Do you think the waiting area should be re-painted? Confidentiality has been mentioned a few times recently. We have discussed at our Practice Meeting the possibility of getting some sort of screen to put up at the reception desk, but some members of staff feel this may cut us off from the patients. We don’t want patients to feel that there is a barrier between them and the Receptionists. If you would like to discuss something with the Receptionist in confidence please ask, as this could be done in another room.

**We changed the opening times of the Dispensary Phone on 19th June 2017 the prescription phone line – 01747 840950 will be available only at these times:**

**Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri: 09:15 -10:30 and 14:00 – Closing**

**and Weds: 09:15 – 12:00**

**We did put details of this change in the Summer Newsletter and we put slips detailing the change into every patient’s medication bag since then. Unfortunately we have not been able to change the message that is played to callers on the dispensary phone. It’s a technical matter and we are trying to resolve this. There is only one person in Dispensary at a time, doing a variety of tasks; dispensing, ordering, accepting orders, dealing with requests from the GP’s and Nurses during clinic times etc. If the Dispenser is in the middle of dispensing to a patient she is not able to answer the phone. We know that being interrupted whilst in the middle of dispensing increases the risk of an error. We are committed to carrying out our work in a safe and professional manner. We are constantly striving to find ways of working that ensure errors are not made. We realise that it can be frustrating when the dispensary phone is not answered.**

**Patients can still order their medication on–line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To register for on-line services simply give your email address to the Receptionist and provide a proof of ID. Please DO NOT ask the Receptionist to order your medications, either in person at the desk, or on the phone. Patients can still request medication using their repeat slips.**

We were informed by Public Health England that there was a confirmed case of Meningococcal disease in a student who attends college in Bristol. It is very important that those eligible for vaccination against Meningitis receive their vaccination. If you or your child receives an invitation to attend the Surgery for a Meningitis vaccination please book an appointment as soon as you can. For more information view the NHS Choices website or Public Health England website.

Symptoms of meningitis: Symptoms of meningitis develop suddenly and can include:

* a high temperature (fever) of 38C (100.4F) or above
* being sick
* a [headache](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/headache/Pages/Introduction.aspx)
* a blotchy rash that doesn't fade when a glass is rolled over it (this won't always develop)
* a [stiff neck](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Neck-pain/Pages/Introduction.aspx)
* a dislike of bright lights
* drowsiness or unresponsiveness
* seizures (fits)

These symptoms can appear in any order and some may not appear.

When to get medical help: You should get medical advice as soon as possible if you're concerned that you or your child could have meningitis.

Trust your instincts and don't wait until a rash develops.

Call 999 for an ambulance or go to [your nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/accident-and-emergency-services/locationsearch/428) immediately if you think you or your child might be seriously ill.

Call [NHS 111](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Pages/NHS-111.aspx) or your GP surgery for advice if you're not sure if it's anything serious or you think you may have been exposed to someone with meningitis.

Vaccinations against meningitis: Vaccinations offer some protection against certain causes of meningitis. These include the:

* [meningitis B vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/meningitis-B-vaccine.aspx) – offered to babies aged 8 weeks, followed by a second dose at 16 weeks, and a booster at 1 year
* [6-in-1 vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/5-in-1-infant-DTaPIPVHib-vaccine.aspx) – offered to babies at 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age
* [pneumococcal vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/pneumococcal-vaccination.aspx) – offered to babies at 8 weeks, 16 weeks and 1 year old
* [meningitis C vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/men-c-vaccine.aspx) – offered at 12 weeks of age, 1 year, and to teenagers and first-time university students
* [MMR vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/mmr-vaccine.aspx) – offered to babies at 1 year and a second dose at 3 years and 4 months
* [meningitis ACWY vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations/Pages/men-acwy-vaccine.aspx) – offered to teenagers, sixth formers and "fresher" students going to university for the first time, up to 25 years of age.

**FLU**

**Our annual ‘walk in’ Saturday flu vaccination clinic will be held on 30th September 2017 09:30-11.30**

**Flu is a common infectious viral illness spread by coughs and sneezes. It can be very unpleasant, but you'll usually begin to feel better within about a week.**

**You can catch flu – short for influenza – all year round, but it's especially common in winter, which is why it's also known as "seasonal flu".**

**It's not the same as the** [**common cold**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cold-common/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**. Flu is caused by a different group of viruses and the symptoms tend to start more suddenly, be more severe and last longer.**

***Some of the main symptoms of flu include:***

* ***a high temperature (fever) of 38C (100.4F) or above***
* ***tiredness and weakness***
* ***a***[***headache***](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/headache/Pages/Introduction.aspx)
* ***general aches and pains***
* ***a dry, chesty***[***cough***](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cough/pages/introduction.aspx)

**Cold-like symptoms – such as a blocked or runny nose, sneezing, and a**[**sore throat**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/Pages/Introduction.aspx) **– can also be caused by flu, but they tend to be less severe than the other symptoms you have.**

**Flu can make you feel so exhausted and unwell that you have to stay in bed and rest until you feel better.**

**What to do: If you're otherwise fit and healthy, there's usually no need to see a doctor if you have flu-like symptoms.**

**The best remedy is to rest at home, keep warm and drink plenty of water to avoid** [**dehydration**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Dehydration/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**. You can take** [**paracetamol**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Painkillers-paracetamol/Pages/Introduction.aspx) **or** [**ibuprofen**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Painkillers-ibuprofen/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**to lower a high temperature and relieve aches if necessary.**

**Stay off work or school until you're feeling better. For most people, this will take about a week.**

**When to see your GP: Consider visiting your GP if:**

* **you're 65 years of age or over**
* **you're pregnant**
* **you have a long-term medical condition – such as** [**diabetes**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Diabetes/Pages/Diabetes.aspx)**, heart disease, lung disease,**[**kidney disease**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Kidney-disease-chronic/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**or a neurological disease**
* **you have a weakened immune system – for example, because you're having** [**chemotherapy**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Chemotherapy/Pages/Definition.aspx) **or have** [**HIV**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/HIV/Pages/Introduction.aspx)
* **you develop** [**chest pain**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chest-pain/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**,** [**shortness of breath**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/shortness-of-breath/Pages/Introduction.aspx)**or difficulty breathing, or start** [**coughing up blood**](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coughing-up-blood/Pages/Introduction.aspx)
* **your symptoms are getting worse over time or haven't improved after a week**

**In these situations, you may need medication to treat or prevent** [**complications of flu**](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Flu/Pages/Complications.aspx)**.**

**People who should have flu jab**

**The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to people who are at risk. This is to ensure they are protected against catching flu and developing serious complications. You are eligible to receive a free flu jab if you:**

* **are 65 years of age or over**
* **are pregnant**
* **have certain medical conditions**
* **are living in a long-stay residential care home or other long-stay care facility**
* **receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill**
* **Patients who have been diagnosed as being ‘morbidly obese’**

**Front-line health and social care workers are also eligible to receive the flu vaccine. It is your employer's responsibility to arrange and pay for this vaccine.**

Some patients are also eligible for Pneumonia, which is a one off vaccination, and/or Shingles vaccinations please ask at Reception.

**Please note however that Zostavax (Shingles) vaccine SHOULD NOT be given at the same time as the Pneumonia vaccine. There should be a gap of at least 4 weeks between the two vaccinations!**