Shipston Medical Centre
Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Website: https://shipstonmc.warwickshire.nhs.uk/
Twitter: https://twitter.com/ShipstonGP
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ShipstonMC
Instagram: shipstonmedicalcentrenhs

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## AUTUMN EDITION



### STAFFING UPDATE

In October we will welcome Nicola Futers who will be working alongside Jan Flynn in the frailty team. Nicola will replace Liz Crabtree who retired in July.

### RSV VACCINATIONS

From 1 September 2024, those who turn 75 and those aged 75 to 79 will be eligible for a free vaccine to protect them from respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

RSV is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs. RSV infection often causes symptoms similar to a cold, including:

- cough
- sore throat
- sneezing
- a runny or blocked nose

It can also make you become wheezy or short of breath and lead to pneumonia and other life-threatening conditions. There is no specific treatment, and most infections will get better by themselves. Every year thousands of older adults need hospital care for RSV, and some of them will die. RSV can be more severe in people with medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or a weakened immune system. RSV infection is common in young children but is most serious for small babies and for older people.

You may be offered your shingles or pneumococcal vaccine at the same time as the RSV vaccine, it is safe to do so and reduces the number of appointments you will need to get protected from these diseases.

The guidance is to **avoid having flu or covid vaccines within 4 weeks of the RSV vaccine** as this can impact on the efficacy of each vaccine.

Because of this, we have offered vaccinations to the oldest in the eligible group first at the beginning of September before pausing the vaccination campaign for 6 weeks. This is because we will be offering flu and covid vaccines from the beginning of October and it is advised that at least 4 weeks are left between vaccines. Once the covid and flu campaigns have occurred we will once again invite patients.

When booking your appointment please ensure:

- you leave 4 weeks between your RSV vaccine appointment and any flu/covid appointment
- You are aged 75-79 on the day of your appointment. If you come before your 75th birthday or after you turn 80 we will not be able to vaccinate you as you will not be eligible

### FLU AND COVID VACCINES - AUTUMN 2024

The Autumn campaign to vaccinate those adults eligible against flu and covid starts on 3rd October 2024. This is a little later than usual and is a decision applied nationally by NHS England. This is because the latest scientific evidence shows that protection from the flu vaccine decreases over time in adults. It is therefore better to have the vaccine closer to when flu typically circulates.

The eligible populations for both flu and covid boosters are:

- Those aged 65 and over
- Those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups (severe chronic

respiratory disease, chronic heart disease and vascular disease, severe chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic neurological disease, diabetes, asplenia or spleen dysfunction, those with a weakened immune system, BMI of greater than 40)
- Pregnant women
- Carers
- Those who live with someone who has a weakened immune system

Where possible the Medical Centre will send invites by email or text message with a link you can follow to book your own appointment. We will be providing over 7000 vaccines in an 8 week period, so really appreciate those who are able to, booking via the link provided in their invite as this will help reduce the wait on the telephone for those who do not have that option.

Children's vaccinations are available from September, and the practice will be vaccinating 2 and 3 year olds and children in a clinical risk group. We are unable to vaccinate those who miss the vaccination at school - the schools will offer a later vaccination date to those who missed the initial date.




This month the focus for this series turns to…
**Catherine Haine – Long Term Conditions Review Coordinator**
Maybe if you've called Shipston Medical Centre (SMC) to check the progress of a hospital referral you will have spoken to Catherine (Cat), because three mornings a week she works as a medical secretary, but for the rest of the week, her focus is very much on coordinating all the work needed behind the scenes to organise timely long term condition reviews.

What is defined as a long-term condition? Once again, I consulted the NHS England website and found this description ... 'any medical condition for which a patient has to take regular medication or receive regular monitoring in order to make sure the condition remains well controlled ...' Examples include conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive airways disease (COPD), diabetes, high blood pressure, heart failure, atrial fibrillation, depression.

Of course, an individual patient may have more than one of these conditions and that is where it can become complex and time consuming for both the patient and the Practice if checks, blood tests and reviews are not arranged efficiently.

Before going on to find out how Cat goes about her coordinator role, I thought it would be interesting to hear first about her background. After college, she worked in Boots in Chipping Norton during which time, she achieved her qualification as a dispenser. After a move to the Shipston Boots she was encouraged to make the move to SMC – initially again as a dispenser, but working her way up to become Dispensary Manager. Deciding to return to work after a period of maternity leave, she was offered the opportunity to take on her current roles, both of which benefit from her previous experience as part of the SMC team.

Cat outlined for me the process she follows when scheduling which patients to contact for their (usually annual) LTC reviews. Essentially, this involves identifying relevant patients in or around their birthday month so that all their health conditions can be reviewed together – usually around 500 patients to be reviewed each month. Not only is this more convenient for the patient and Practice, it also means that from the safety

point of view, any symptoms or medication issues relating to multiple LTCs can be picked up. Similar reviews are needed for those on HRT, for contraception checks, thyroid function tests and for those on blood thinners as examples.

Prior to review, patients may need a blood test or specific health checks such as your weight, pulse, blood pressure, urine, lifestyle update, a foot check (the latter in the case of diabetes). Cat's role involves identifying which tests and checks are needed for an individual patient depending on the range of conditions they have. She then sets the wheels in motion for the patient to book an appropriate appointment with a healthcare assistant, by sending a text, email or letter according to the patient's preference. With all tests and checks completed, the patient is then booked in where necessary, for appropriate review appointments with a nurse, GP, Caitlin, the Physician's Associate, Sukhi, the Clinical Pharmacist, or Kam, Pharmacy Technician. In the case of (for example) a blood thinner review, completion of a simple text questionnaire may be all that is needed. Once all reviews have been completed, then medication is updated if required, and authorisation provided for continuation of any repeat prescriptions.

One plea from Cat – if you receive an invitation for a review, whether by text, email or letter, do please follow up with the medical centre to make an appointment. Without such reviews repeat prescription arrangements cannot be continued because the necessary checks need to take place first.

As is now my tradition I asked Cat what aspects of her coordinator role she particularly enjoys. Fortunately – she apparently likes a challenge, 'getting the job done well' – for it certainly seems a challenge to me, organising the reviews of 500 patients a month!

**Carole Nossiter, Chair, Shipston PPG**

**COLLECTIVE ACTION STATEMENT FROM THE PARTNERS**

The Partners at Shipston Medical Centre support the collective action voted for by 98.3% of GPs who responded to the BMA vote. We support all GP colleagues in taking collective action and understand and agree to the rationale for this, recognising the signification under-funding experienced by primary case over the last decade.

In considering the list of proposed actions and our response to them, we are thinking of the best interests and experience of our patient population and thus only taking action where there is minimal impact on patients. We are not making any changes to how patients can access our service.

**GP AUTOMATE**

Every week our clinicians receive hundreds of test results; many of these are routine and filing them away is part of the growing administrative burden that our clinicians manage alongside direct patient contact. Last year we partnered with GP Automate, a GP-led company which uses innovative technology to assess and file normal, routine results on behalf of our clinicians, freeing them to spend more time on clinical care or reviewing those results which merit more careful attention.

Patients may have noticed that they have received texts notifying them that their results are normal; this is an optional aspect of the GP Automate software which we had hoped would provide benefit to our patients. In practice we found that these messages caused a few problems; for example, patients receiving multiple messages back-to-back and worrying about not receiving a text when results have been reviewed and filed by a clinician manually.

We have made the decision to deactivate this automated text messaging system for results from November 2024. Patients who would like to know the result of any investigations are welcome to check on the NHS App - they can also utilise our Accurx Triage system (which is available on our website) to clarify with the team and should receive a response within 24 hours. Our clinicians should contact you if you have results that require further action – note the practice do not routinely receive and are not responsible for tests requested by other teams (for example hospital doctors).

**SURGERY CLOSURES**

**Staff Meetings**
The surgery is closed for these between 1 and 1.45pm on:

Tuesday 10th September 2024
Wednesday 9th October 2024
Thursday 21st November 2024

**Staff Training**
Each month all Warwickshire GP surgeries are closed for one afternoon from 12.30pm for staff training. The next dates are:

Wednesday 16th October
Thursday 14th November

**THE DR SUE PRITCHARD MEMORIAL CHALLENGE**
These FREE memorial challenge activities successfully delivered by the Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership (SHWP) are now funded by The Inclusive Communities Fund (ICF) with the Fund being inspired by the momentum generated by the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The ICF grant of c£15K has enabled SHWP to continue to deliver their popular existing programme of free activities in Shipston and surrounding villages. In addition they have three new activities on offer, Pickleball and Table Tennis at Tysoe Village Hall on Thursdays 7:15-9.15pm and a Seated Exercise class at Ettington Community Centre on Wednesdays at 11am.

**Let's talk Boxercise**
Boxercise is a fun, non-combative form of exercise great for fitness, coordination and combatting stress. It's based on the principles of boxing training, but you won't come home with a black eye! It really is suitable for all, and no prior training or level of fitness is required. Classes started back at The Townsend Hall on the 5th September and are alternating between 16-18-year-olds and 14 - 16-year-olds.

On the 12th and 19th September, we have a workshop from a well-known charity, LifeSpace, the first focused on Peer Listening and the second workshop on Anxiety. You don't have to attend both but can just book onto which ever you choose. All the workshops and classes are free of charge and can be booked via https://bookwhen.com/shwp88 [bookwhen.com] or via the QR code below.

***First come, first served.***

**New Toy Library**
The Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership has been successful in securing funding for a Toy Library here in Shipston. Special thanks go to Jo Barker, supported by Warwickshire County Council, the Stour Lions and Shipston Town Council. The Toy Library will be located in the town with an online booking system for ordering

toys in advance. Initially the toys available will be for babies and preschool children. We are in the process of finalising arrangements and more details will follow but if you would like to be involved as a volunteer, please email shipstontoylibrary@gmail.com for more information. Watch this space!




To find out more, take a look at the website (https://www.shwp.org.uk/) or call 01608 663320 or email admin@shwp.org

**NHS APP**

Have you downloaded the NHS App yet? It is a quick, easy and safe way of accessing information about your health, including viewing your health record to see information such as your allergies and medicines. You can also use it to request your repeat prescriptions and nominate a pharmacy where you'd like to collect them; book and manage appointments and view test results.

You can download it for free on the App Store or on Google Play.

**ONLINE TRIAGE FORM**

As we approach the colder seasons and illnesses such as flu begin to circulate, we often find that the practice is busier than usual and patients may face a longer wait on the telephone. We would like to remind patients that medical and administrative requests can be submitted using our online form. This form is available from our website, but also from the NHS App. Your submission will be reviewed by our clinical team and someone will notify you of the outcome of their assessment within 24 hours. If you telephone the surgery, the same process occurs but with the potential for a lengthy wait on the telephone during our busier periods! Please consider using our online form next time you contact the surgery.

**COMMUNITY WARM HUBS**

The Shipston Community Warm Hub continues to be open each Thursday 10am to 12 noon at the Scout Hut on New Street. You're assured a warm welcome, a good cuppa with cake and biscuits and the chance to make new friends. Keep an eye out for updates in future newsletters on regular events that will be hosted there on a monthly basis. Also why not check out the news page on Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership's website: https://www.shwp.org.uk/news/

**Every Thursday** Jacqui Close, Social Prescriber from Shipston Medical Centre and a counsellor from Mind are on hand to assist with any health and wellbeing needs.

**1st Thursday** of each month there are tools and resources to help people get online. Staff will be able to run through basic digital questions.

**1st and 2nd Thursday** of each month there will be cooking sessions with Wendy. Ideally, please book a place the week before.

**3rd Thursday** of each month the Frailty Nurse from Shipston Medical Centre will be there.

**4th Thursday** of each month Shipston Home Nursing staff will come to offer **bereavement support.**

**HAVE YOU HEARD OF HEALTHWATCH WARWICKSHIRE?**

Healthwatch Warwickshire is an independent service for everyone who uses health and social care services. Together with their volunteers they help make your voice heard and improve services including GP surgeries, Hospital Services, Social Care Services, Dental Practices and others. Tell them about your experience of local NHS and social care services. This is their webpage https://www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk/ but they can also be contacted on phone - 01926 422 823 and on email - info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk; Instagram - healthwatch_warwickshire and Twitter. - @healthwatchwarw

**SHARING THE INFORMATION**

If you know of patients who aren't on Facebook do let them know that the newsletter is available for collection from Reception, Dispensary and in the Waiting Room. If they have their medication delivered, they can also ask the delivery driver for a copy.

The newsletter is also published on our website under Patient News, and we alert on Facebook and Twitter when it's published. We are also trialling emailing out to patients so if you'd like to be added to the email list then please contact reception.