



We are fast approaching flu vaccination season and I want to take this opportunity to remind everyone who is eligible to **call us from the 5 September 2022** to make an appointment for your annual NHS flu jab. Flu vaccinations will be available this year to all patients aged 50 and over and those under 50 with chronic health conditions.

Although I cannot give you exact dates as I write this Newsletter, the Flu Clinics will start in late September and will be running on a Saturday. We will of course continue to provide vaccinations opportunistically during normal routine appointments for eligible patients, so there is no need to book a separate flu appointment if you are seeing a clinician for a face to face appointment, once we have received our flu delivery in late September.

Flu is an unpredictable virus that can cause mild or unpleasant illness in most people, BUT it can cause severe illness and even death among vulnerable groups including older people, pregnant women and people with an underlying health condition. If you are not sure if you are eligible, please give us a call. We are unable to provide private vaccinations, but many local pharmacies do.

By having your flu jab, you are not only helping yourself, but you are also helping to protect the wider population from this nasty virus which can easily spread to vulnerable people who are much more at risk from complications.

For those patients eligible for a Covid booster vaccination, we are hoping to be able to give this along with the flu jab, as long as we receive delivery of the vaccine in time.

Surgery Premises Update

We have been asked for an update on what is happening with regard to our Surgery premises. Please see the article below from Dr Freda Bhatti, our Senior Partner.

To clarify, there will be no new surgery development in Great Bentley or elsewhere in the foreseeable future. The process of building a new surgery is immensely complicated and involves not just the Doctors but a developer, Clinical Commissioning Group (now Integrated Care Systems) and NHS England. Unfortunately, any development proposal that has been made has not fulfilled certain criteria in that process. There are many obstacles that must be overcome and there is little point being too specific, other than to state we have not been successful with the plans proposed to date. That is not to say we will not succeed one day in a new surgery building for Great Bentley and surrounding areas. The new Integrated Care Systems (our one is Suffolk and North East Essex - SNEE), established on 1 July 2022 with the end of CCGs, have been instructed by NHS England to place emphasis on improving primary care estates, as like us, many GPs nationally function out of buildings no longer fit for purpose for the modern day demands placed on GPs.

As to expansion – yes we are considering that option but have not advanced further as that is again dependent on many factors including NHS England agreement on any plans, but also the financial burden that would place on the Partnership.

Surgery Training Afternoon

Along with all other surgeries in the area we will be shut from 12 noon on Tuesday, 27 September 2022 for staff training. If patients require urgent care on this afternoon then they can contact 111 for assistance.

Patient Participation Group

The next PPG Meeting will be held on Thursday, 15 September 2022 at 6.30 pm at Great Bentley Village Hall.

Sue Mitson
Operations Manager