

# Cherrymead Chat

Winter 2020

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## Winter Influenza Vaccinations 2020

This year has brought us many new challenges due to the changes we have had to make to deal with the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Influenza vaccination scheme has been affected because we have had to screen patients for coronavirus symptoms and practice social distancing in the waiting room. The usual walk in clinics had to be pre-booked. We therefore held additional surgeries to our usual three Saturday morning dates.

As of 13 December just over 2000 influenza vaccinations had been given to our patients who are at high risk of having severe illness due to influenza. Of these 58% were given to people over 65 and 42% to people under 65. We are grateful to our Community Pharmacy and School Nursing colleagues who have helped to protect the people in the community by giving vaccinations.

Fewer people with respiratory conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and fewer carers have had vaccinations than previously. We understand that it is very worrying to have to go out during the pandemic. We do urge you to contact us if you are in these groups and have not had a vaccination so that we can arrange

for you to have one with full coronavirus prevention measures in place.

Influenza vaccination is recommended for all women at any stage of pregnancy to protect both mother and baby from influenza, which can cause severe symptoms and complications in both. Please contact the surgery as soon as possible if you are pregnant and have not had a vaccination.

A second Influenza vaccination campaign has been introduced this season to reduce influenza spread and hospital admissions during the Coronavirus Pandemic. This is aimed at people aged between 50 and 64 years who would not normally be considered to be at high risk of having severe influenza illness. We have contacted patients in this group to invite them to pre-booked clinics which begin this month.

The vaccination which will be used is "Flublok". It has been used in the USA for many years and has been granted a temporary licence in this county by the Department of Health to deal with the additional health need during the pandemic. Please read the leaflet attached to your invitation before your appointment.

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### GETTING HELP DURING THE BANK HOLIDAYS

We'll be closed on December 25, December 28 and January 1 this year.

**Call 999 immediately if you or someone else is having a heart attack or stroke. Every second counts with these conditions.**

**Also call 999 if you think someone has had a major trauma, such as from a serious road traffic accident, a stabbing, a shooting, a fall from height, or a serious head injury.**

**Call 999 in a medical emergency. Medical emergencies can include loss of consciousness, an acute confused state, fits that aren't stopping, chest pain, severe breathing difficulties, severe bleeding that can't be stopped, severe allergic reactions, severe burns or scalds.**

**If it's not a life-threatening emergency and you or the person you're with doesn't need immediate medical attention, please consider other options before dialling 999. These could be self-care, calling NHS 111, or talking to a pharmacist.**

**Choosing the best service for your needs will ensure that the ambulance service is able to respond to the people who need help the most.**

Looking for health advice?

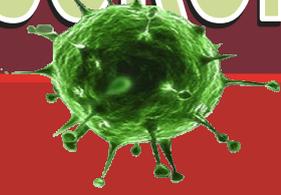
Ask NHS is a new app for you, making it easier to find advice and book appointments

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# CORONAVIRUS VACCINATIONS



The third campaign and second new one this season is for Coronavirus vaccination.

The vaccination to be used is produced by Pfizer/BioNTech. The UK medicines regulator, the MHRA, states that it is safe to use and offers up to 95% protection against coronavirus. Two doses are needed, to be given 21 - 28 days apart.

The people who will receive the vaccine, starting with the highest priority, are currently as follows:

- Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
- All those 80 years and older and frontline health and social care workers
- All those 75 years of age and older
- All those 70 years of age and older and those deemed to be clinically vulnerable
- All those 65 years of age and over
- All individuals aged 16 to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
- All those 60 years of age and over
- All those 55 years of age and over
- All those 50 years and over
- The rest of the population, with priorities yet to be determined.

The vaccine is given in two doses 21 days apart. People may not be protected until at least 7 days after the second dose of the vaccine. It is not available for use in children under 16 years of age as its safety and efficacy below that age have not been established.

It is stored in a special refrigerator at  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The vaccine must be thawed at very specific temperatures and can only be kept for short periods of time once thawed. It is then diluted at room temperature using a special technique and once diluted cannot be transported elsewhere. It must be used within six hours after dilution.

The injection is given into the upper arm deltoid muscle. It

cannot be given to people with a history of immediate onset anaphylaxis to a vaccine, medicine or food. The current recommendation is that people should be observed at the vaccination centre for 15 minutes following vaccination in case of an adverse reaction.

Side effects include pain or redness at the injection site, fever, chills, fatigue, headache, nausea and joint and muscle pains. These are usually not severe and resolve within a few days. A pain killer such as paracetamol can be used if needed.

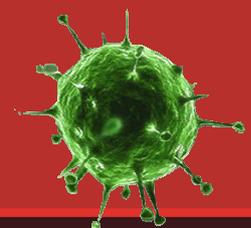
GP surgeries were offered the option of providing this service by NHS England. The instructions for storage and dilution of the vaccine and its shelf life mean that we cannot keep the vaccine on site at Cherrymead Surgery.

We do not have the facilities to observe large numbers of patients for fifteen minutes in the surgery. It has therefore been proposed that the vaccine should be held and given at hubs across Buckinghamshire to which patients would travel. The staff for the hubs and visits to housebound patients would need to be provided by the GP surgeries, potentially for seven days a week from 8am to 8pm.

We are very keen that our patients should be immunised against coronavirus and to be able to give convenient access to the vaccine to our patients. We have thought about this in depth and discussed the issues with local GP surgeries in the ARC Bucks Primary Care Network and with Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group. We have concluded that unfortunately we cannot provide an immunisation service directly without a considerable reduction in our other usual GP services. We are concerned about the harm this may do to our patients with complex or serious conditions and have therefore decided not to participate directly in giving coronavirus vaccinations.

The vaccine will be made available to all eligible patients registered with us but will be given to our patients by another provider commissioned by NHS England. You will be contacted when the service is available as you become eligible. In the event that the requirements of the services change and we are able to provide coronavirus vaccinations we will inform you at the earliest available opportunity.

*Dr King and Dr Fraser*



## Merry Christmas from the Patient Reference Group

We were absolutely thrilled to be able to assist the Surgery at the flu clinics in September and October. This was a very different task from previous years due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The Surgery did a fantastic job, from the organising of appointments to the seamless delivery on the day. We very much enjoyed being able to talk to those who attended - from a safe distance of course! We have very much missed our usual opportunities to speak to members of the surgery.

It was wonderful to see the fantastic teamwork from all involved and everyone in good spirits (I'm sure Dr King treating us all to a bacon sandwich helped enormously) and even in the rain! A big thanks to everyone for following the COVID 19 guidance to help us keep everyone safe.

The PRG have been able to maintain monthly meetings remotely to continue to support the surgery. If you would like more information about the Patient Reference Group or if you are interested in joining please visit: [www.cherrymeasurgery.co.uk/ppg.aspx?t=5](http://www.cherrymeasurgery.co.uk/ppg.aspx?t=5)

On behalf of the PRG we wish all the friends and family of Cherrymead Surgery a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year!

Imogen Carey

PRG Member



During the first wave of COVID-19 in March only people with high grade abnormal smears could be seen by the Buckinghamshire Hospitals Trust Colposcopy Clinic. Fewer patients than usual could be seen in each clinic due to the infection control measures which had to be put in place. That resulted in a four month wait for appointments for people with lower grade smears.

Buckinghamshire Hospitals Trust has laid on extra Colposcopy clinics on Saturdays at Wycombe Hospital to see patients. In spite of this there is still a backlog of patients waiting for appointments. The letter from the National Cervical Screening Service which is sent to people needing a referral after a smear still indicates that people will hear about an appointment within two weeks and to contact their GP if they have not heard from the Colposcopy Clinic.

Unfortunately there are no plans by the National Cervical Screening Service to amend the letter. Please therefore note when you receive the letter that the referral has been made. The Colposcopy Clinic Booking Coordinator will contact you as soon as an appointment can be offered.

## WELCOME

We are very fortunate to have been able to welcome several new members to the Cherrymead Surgery team during the autumn.

Dr Hazel Dent and Dr Ram Kumar joined us in October as salaried GPs. They are busy learning about our systems and our patients.

Jacque Lovelock and Amina Mahmood joined our Reception team and are kept busy with your queries.

Alan Stonell is our new Compliance Officer> He is making sure we remain safe and up to date with legislation.

Paige Langley has joined our Nursing team as Practice Nurse.

Tobin Snelling is the new Personal Assistant to the Partners.

# Avoid a Slip, a Trip or a Fall this Winter

'A fall is an event which causes a person to, unintentionally, rest on the ground or lower level. It is not a result of a major event (such as a stroke) or overwhelming hazard'

*Public Health England (Falls: applying All Our Health 31 January 2020)*

Falls are the most common cause of injury related death in people over the age of 75. Over 5,000 older people died as a result of a fall in 2017. That was a 70% increase on the numbers in 2010.

*Age UK (Falls in later life: a huge concern for older people)*

In addition, a fall with a small injury or no injury can have a huge impact on an individual's confidence. This can have a big impact on future mobility. That may lead to further falls.

A huge number of falls are avoidable with some simple measures!

## Footwear

- Shoes should fit well and not slip off
- Cushioned and supportive
- Avoid heels and sandals
- Good grip on the soles
- Always wear shoes/slippers – even indoors.
- Avoid walking in bare feet, socks or tights

## Keeping Well

- Get your eyes and glasses checked regularly
- Check your hearing. Hearing problems can severely affect your balance
- Eat a good balanced diet and eat regularly throughout the day
- Keep well hydrated. Drink six to eight glasses of fluid each day
- Avoid or reduce alcohol intake
- Stay active to maintain muscle strength



## Environment

- Remove trip hazards. They include trailing wires, clutter, rugs and loose floor coverings
- Make sure there is adequate lighting, particularly if you get up during the night
- Install grab handles and stair rails
- Change or adapt furniture to make moving around easier.

For further information visit:

[www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/)



[www.kooth.com/](http://www.kooth.com/) is a free, safe and anonymous online wellbeing community. It is for young people aged 11-18. Kooth is commissioned by the NHS across Buckinghamshire.

It provides a range of text based services to support young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Kooth's trained and qualified counsellors are available from midday until 10pm each weekday and 6pm to 10pm at weekends, 365 days per year.

Kooth also hosts pre-moderated, age-appropriate peer to peer discussion boards. It holds live forums and mini activities. They are all designed to give young person both friendly information and therapeutic content.

Young people do not need to be referred to access Kooth. They can sign up and drop in whenever they want.

**O**ne Recovery Bucks is for those aged 18 or over who are using, or affected by, the problems associated with drugs and/or alcohol. ORB enables them to make the changes that they want to make. That may be to reduce or completely stop their use. ORB provides a team of specialist prescribers. That includes doctors, nurses, recovery workers, community connectors, peer mentors and recovery coaches. They all help you to achieve this. It also operate a family and carers service with specialist support workers there to help you.



ORB is open every day except national holidays and weekends. Opening hours are from 9am-8pm on Mondays and Thursdays and 9am-5pm on other weekdays, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. An online referral form is available or call 0300 772 9672. Please visit the website for further information: [onerecoverybucks.org/](http://onerecoverybucks.org/)

### **Your PRG Needs You!**

The PRG is the Patient Reference Group for Cherrymead Surgery. We are a group of patients who meet with the Surgery Manager and a Partner once a month. We are there to support the Surgery and also give a patient opinion on what goes on.

As a group we produce this Newsletter. We also organise Health Information Meetings for patients on a variety of health conditions. We have a notice board in the downstairs waiting room. It will keep you up to date on our activities. You can also see action points from our meetings on the Cherrymead website [www.cherrymeadsurgery.co.uk](http://www.cherrymeadsurgery.co.uk)

We are always keen to welcome new members to the group. If you are interested in joining us or have questions about what we do please get in touch. For more information on how you can get involved with the Cherrymead Surgery Patient Reference Group please contact us : [prgcherrymead@gmail.com](mailto:prgcherrymead@gmail.com)