



# Swallowfield Medical Practice Newsletter Summer 2014



Welcome to the summer newsletter from Swallowfield Medical Practice. This newsletter is produced jointly by the Practice and the Patient Participation Group and aims to improve communication with our patients. We hope you find it informative.

## Dates for your Diary - Flu Clinics 2014

Our flu clinics are being held on:

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September and Saturday 11th October 2014**  
**8.30am until 12 noon.**

If you are in one of the following at-risk groups then you really should have your immunisation: Heart disease; Stroke; TIA; MS; Asthma; COPD; Diabetes; Kidney disease; Liver disease; Immunosuppressed; aged 65 years or over; a Carer or are Pregnant.

Please come along to one of the Flu Clinics to get your free vaccination.

## Flu Vaccinations for Children aged 2, 3 or 4 years

Last year the government introduced a programme to vaccinate children against influenza. This campaign is being rolled out to a wider age group this year.

Will your child be aged 2, 3 or 4 years on 1st September 2014? (ie: date of birth on or after 2 September 2009 and on or before 1 September 2012). If so they are eligible for a flu vaccination - this will be in the form of a nasal spray and not a jab. More information will be available shortly so please look out for adverts in the surgery or on our website for details of clinics.

## Appointments

On average our doctors see around 1000 patients each week! We are constantly reviewing our appointments system to try and deal with the ever increasing demand. We have recently introduced an enhanced duty doctor system to try and cope with the pressure and this is having a positive impact so far. However, we have noticed that an increasing number of patients are phoning mid/late afternoon wanting to be seen the same day. We would like to encourage patients to phone earlier in the day if they feel they need to be seen the same day so that workload can be managed more effectively. Thank you.

## Put Patients First Campaign

### Did you know?

- General Practice deals with 90% of patient contacts in the NHS - more and more patients are coming to see their GP as a result of increasing population and health challenges - in particular the growing number of people living with one or more long term conditions.
- The amount of funding for General Practice is shrinking
- In 2005/6 General Practice received 10.75% of the UK NHS budget
- In 2011/12 General Practice received 8.4% of the UK NHS budget - a historic all time low and this figure is still falling.....
- There is a shortage of newly registered doctors coming into General Practice

In response to this the Royal College of GPs and the National Association for Patient Participation has launched the **'Put Patients First: Back General Practice Campaign'** calling for the share of funding to be increased to 11% by 2017. We need your support - for more information please go to: [www.putpatientsfirst.rcgp.org](http://www.putpatientsfirst.rcgp.org).

## Staff changes

Dr Brigitte Smith is leaving us in early August to take up a post closer to her home. We are currently advertising for a new GP but after more than 2 weeks of advertising in national publications we have yet to receive a single expression of interest...

## Travel-associated Measles

Figures just published by Public Health England show there were 70 cases of measles confirmed in England between January and March this year. Around a third of these cases were infected while overseas. With measles circulating widely across many parts of the world it is important that before you go on holiday you are aware of your own and your family's vaccination status and ensure you have received 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

## Be Sun Smart

Being protected from the harmful effects of the sun is something you need to be aware of every day throughout the summer. Sun damage doesn't just happen when you're holidaying in the sunshine, it can occur when you're not expecting it, for example when you're gardening or walking and even on a cloudy day.

Whether you're on holiday or at home you can protect yourself by following the Sun Smart Message:

- Spend time in the shade between 11.am and 3.pm
- Make sure you never burn
- Cover up with a T shirt, hat & sunglasses
- Use Factor 15+ sunscreen that blocks both UVA & UVB rays and isn't past its expiry date
- Always take special care of children's skin. The best way is to cover them up and keep them in the shade

Finally, do report any mole changes or unusual skin growths to your G.P.

## Giving Blood

Giving blood is quick, easy and saves lives.

Most people can give blood. You should be able to as long as you are:

- Fit and healthy
- Weigh over 7st 12lbs (50kgs)
- Aged between 17 and 66 (up to 70 if you have given blood before)

(However, your blood volume needs estimating before donating if you are female, aged under 20, weigh under 65kgs and are under 165cm in height)

To register for a session or find out more call 'NHS Blood' on: 0300 123 2323 or visit their website at [www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk)

Some forthcoming local sessions are being held at:

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Arborfield Community Complex, Princess Marina Drive | 03/07/2014 |
| Lower Earley Crescent Centre, Warbler Drive         | 04/07/2014 |
| Winnersh Community Centre                           | 29/07/2014 |
| Shinfield Parish Hall, School Green                 | 08/08/2014 |

## South Central Ambulance Service - by Ian Hammond

As a newly elected Public Governor of the South Central Ambulance Service Trust (SCAS) - the NHS Ambulance service provider for the four counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Hampshire, and as a First Responder for SCAS in your local area, I would like to open communications with you as fellow local patients and villagers, potential "999" patients, and also as the "owners" of the service

SCAS provide Accident and Emergency service on the "999" system to around 4 million people in an area of approximately 3,500 square miles , 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For the most life threatening calls, we have to meet Government targets of attendance in your home or place of work within 8 minutes. We also operate the NHS

"111" service providing non-emergency service as an integrated platform alongside "999"

SCAS not only meet Government performance targets, but also receive approximately four times more compliments than complaints, and we currently have a 97% patient satisfaction rate. For a large part of the public's time, we are an "invisible" service - that is, you only meet us when there is an emergency, but that doesn't mean you should not think about how you may help our service.

How can YOU help us to continue to perform at this level of achievement?

- By trying seeking appropriate routine treatment before things reach a crisis point
- Remembering that it is an "Accident" or "Emergency" service, and not a substitute for seeking a routine appointment or telephone consultation with a GP
- If you do need to call "999", remember that the call taker in many instances stays on the line, but this does not delay the response as there are several people listening and acting simultaneously - it does not delay response.
- If you are waiting for an Ambulance, if you have a person available or a neighbour, then position that person in order to attract the vehicle - even though our systems are very accurate, some house numbers or names can be quite well hidden
- At night, put on a lot of lights, and move vehicles out of the way to allow easy access.
- If you are a driver, use your mirror, and MOVE over when you see or hear blue lights and sirens. Equally, if you see our Swallowfield BMW Responder vehicle in your mirror with daytime headlamps on, please also give way, or move over, as we may also be on a 999 call to a life threatening emergency, but we are not permitted use of blue lights and sirens!

Finally, and most importantly I would appeal for anyone who would like to become a member of the SCAS Trust to join in sharing the day to day meetings, events, news and information of SCAS, and to give very important feedback to the Trust on how we performed for you, with your Ambulance service. Leaflets and membership forms are available from the Swallowfield Medical Practice - if you wish to participate in what is YOUR AMBULANCE SERVICE.

## Useful Numbers and Contact details

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Main Line:             | 0118 9883134   |
| Appointments:          | 0118 9883473   |
| 24hr Automated System: | 0118 9769606   |
| Dispensary:            | 0118 9883459   |
| Fax:                   | 0118 9885759   |
| Website:               | <a href="http://www.swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk">www.swallowfieldmedicalpractice.co.uk</a> |