



The Elms Medical Practice Winter Newsletter

Editors Note

Thank you to everyone for your patience during our move to the new appointment system. Information Technology is a world of endless possibilities and such a wonderful efficient tool with a wealth of information at such speed, however when it stops working it can cause endless mayhem and stress. GP practices never move IT systems unless absolutely necessary and this was the case for us in September. Our on-site clinical system server needed to be upgraded however this is no longer sanctioned by our commissioning group so we had to move to a secure off-site server through our system suppliers 'InPs Vision '. For many years we have always used another excellent 3rd party piece of software called 'BMJ Informatica' for our appointment system; however moving to a hosted system meant we could only use Visions appointment software. The repercussions of this were huge, we had to remodel all our appointment templates, retrain every member of staff and worst of all we had to change all our on-line facilities. In theory this should be straight forward but of course with IT it's just never that simple. First of all Vision were themselves in the process of upgrading their appointment system and on-line services, unfortunately it will not be ready for release until sometime in 2016. In the meantime they had added a page to their on-line services explaining the move but sadly this left everyone confused as it looked like we were already going with that upgrade when in fact we were just changing from a completely different company and at this stage not able to have their upgraded format.

There is an added bonus now of being able to see a very small snapshot of your prescription history and any adverse reactions or allergies. More information will be available to view at a later date but only at your request.

At last things appear to have settled and the on-line facilities are indeed working well and we are getting lots of wonderful feedback from patients saying how much easier it is to use.



Flu Vaccination

We have had such low uptake numbers this year. We had 4 Saturday clinics, many nurse clinics in the week and our usual clinic in Redbourn, but possibly due to the very negative press about the flu vaccination last year and many patients having their flu jabs in the local chemists we find ourselves with a surplus of vaccine. We have already had to place our flu vaccine order for 2016 but we may consider reducing that order if we find out the chemists will be allowed to give the flu jab next year. We encourage our staff to have the flu vaccination and all the GP Partners have the flu vaccination every year as we are firm believers it helps prevent that extremely nasty virus. It's not too late to have it, so please book now:

Remember! It's FREE for all patients over 65 and for all ages with:

- Chronic respiratory disease including asthma & COPD
- Chronic heart disease
- Chronic renal disease
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic liver disease
- Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment
- Diabetes
- Stroke or mini stroke
- In long-stay residential and nursing homes
- Carers
- Pregnant women
- Healthy children aged 2,3 & 4 (Nasal Fluenz available for all children under 16)



GP Partner Dr May is back!

We say goodbye to our maternity locum Dr Amanda Allen next week. She has been covering Dr May's maternity time with her twins and I know will be very missed by all of us and the patients she has cared for over this time.

Dr May is coming back for a rest! We are all excited she is returning in January.



If you need help, have a question or have a problem and you don't know where to turn to, you can contact HertsHelp. They can put you in touch with the right people or organisations and will make sure you find the help you need. For more details:

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-community/ihertshelp/>

STAY WELL THIS WINTER

Get Ready For Winter!

Winter conditions can be seriously bad for our health, especially for people aged 65 or over, and people with long-term conditions.

Cold weather doesn't have to go hand in hand with illness. Here are some simple things you can do to help yourself stay well this winter.

- **Keep warm** - this may help prevent colds, flu or more serious health conditions such as heart attacks, strokes and pneumonia. Ideally your home should be 18 degrees or above.
- **Eat well** - food gives you energy, which helps to keep you warm. So, try to have regular hot meals and drinks throughout the day. Try and eat the right foods such as fruit and vegetables and cut down on the sugar.
- **Exercise** - Some kind of physical activity every day, particularly late afternoon, can help reduce early evening fatigue and improves your sleep. 150 minutes of exercise a week is recommended.
- **Relax** - Stress can make you feel fatigued and in these shorter daylight hours there is more pressure to get everything done in that shorter time. Try yoga, or meditation or simple breathing exercises to help you relax.
- **Sunlight** - Open the curtains as soon as you are up and try and get outside even if its just a short walk at lunchtime.

Winter Pressures



A reminder that if you do have a worry about a health problem when the surgery is closed, rather than calling 999 or going to A&E, which are just for emergencies, we would recommend that you call 111 which is an NHS helpline. From that helpline you get the advice you need and be pointed in the right direction.

We all wish you happiness and, above all, good health for 2016!

As always we welcome your feedback and thank you for your continued support.



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