

# St Lukes Medical Centre & Greenswood Medical Newsletter

## Practice Update

Chinese curse: “May you live in interesting times”...well, we have to say these last few months have certainly been ‘interesting’ and the next handful are not going to be any more mundane! We have successfully merged the 2 practices, and while there are still lots of details to be ironed out we do feel more established as a larger organisation, and we hope you can see the benefits of that too. So, for example, the Greenswood site has been upgraded, and the patients there have had the benefit of seeing a female doctor if wished.



But we have struggled with medical staffing through illness, and at times have been nearly over-whelmed. Many other Practices in the Bay, and indeed around the country have been in a similar position, or even worse off, but we do thank you for being forbearing at times when the doctors have been particularly thin on the ground, and would ask for your continued patience as further changes take place. Elsewhere in the Newsletter you will see that Dr Eva Baker is moving on at the end of this month, and we will sorely miss her hard work and dedication. September and October look, currently, like being quite difficult months, but we shall see. If you think that your query or concern can be dealt with by talking to a nurse, then that may take some of the pressure off the doctors, so please discuss that with the Receptionist, or a short 5-minute phone call can also suffice often.

Rest assured – we are working flat out to serve you as best we can, cutting holidays, extending hours etc. And we don't plan to let up any time soon!

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## Good Luck to Dr Baker

Dr Eva Baker left us at the end of August. Dr Baker, originally from Germany worked in Scotland and Bristol before joining St Luke's as a Partner at the beginning of January 2010. Dr Baker is moving on to pastures new where she will be working closer to her family, we are sad to say good bye and wish her the very best of luck in her new adventure.



## Welcome

Dr Charlotte Wright our new Registrar has joined us and will be seeing patients at both St Lukes Medical Centre & Greenswood Medical from August.

## NEW Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We are pleased to announce that our surgery's Patient Participation Group is being set up and would like to invite anyone from either Practice who would like to become involved and have a positive influence.



A drop in session has been arranged on:

**Thursday 8th October 2015**, at the Berry Head Hotel Brixham between 3.00pm - 7.00pm. Please feel free to come between these hours to hear more in an informal setting with those involved. All ideas will be valued and listened to.

Please contact Pat Reeves (PPG Co-ordinator) for any questions about the day: pat.reeves@nhs.net

### What is the purpose of the group?

- PPG's were developed to extend patient involvement with the NHS, they can provide practical support for the practice and can contribute to the continuous improvement of services
- They are a route for patients to advise the practice on what matters most to the patient and identify solutions to problems, the PPG works closely with the practice

### What the group is NOT for

- A forum for individual complaints
- A tool for implementation of the Governments or any individuals pre-determined agenda

## Men ACWY Vaccine

St Luke's and Greenwood Medical Centres will be offering appointments for eligible patients from the 1st September.

Young teenagers, sixth formers and 'fresher' students going to university for the first time are now routinely offered a vaccination to prevent meningitis W disease. The Men ACWY vaccine protects against four different causes of meningitis and septicaemia – meningococcal (Men) A, C, W and Y diseases.

All 17- and 18-year-olds in school year 13 and first-time university students up to the age of 25 are eligible for the Men ACWY vaccine as part of the NHS vaccination programme.

It is very important that you take up the vaccine. It is being offered in response to a rapidly growing increase in cases of a highly aggressive strain of meningococcal disease group W. This disease can cause meningitis and septicemia that can kill in hours, and those who recover may be left severely disabled.

### Going to university?

If you are a university student starting before this date, we can accommodate an earlier appointment. You are at more risk of meningitis and septicaemia in the first weeks at university when you mix with lots of new people, some of whom may unknowingly carry the meningococcal bacteria, which is usually spread through prolonged close contact.



## 111 Non Emergency Number

The 111 number is fast, easy and free. You can speak to a highly trained adviser 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you, they can further advise you on the availability of local services.



Don't forget to always dial 999 for life-threatening conditions such as: Severe chest pain, Severe difficulty breathing, Unconsciousness, Severe loss of blood, Severe burns or scalds, Choking, Suspected stroke, Fitting or concussion, Drowning and Severe allergic reactions.

## Men B Vaccine for Babies

A new vaccine to prevent meningitis is being offered to babies as part of the routine NHS childhood vaccination programme. The Men B vaccine is recommended for babies aged 2 months, followed by a second dose at 4 months, and a booster at 12 months.

There is also a temporary catch-up programme for babies who are due their 3- and 4-month vaccinations in September 2015, to protect them when they are most at risk from infection.



The Men B vaccine will protect your baby against infection by meningococcal group B bacteria which are responsible for more than 90% of meningococcal infections in young children. Meningococcal infections can be very serious, causing meningitis and septicaemia (blood poisoning), which can lead to severe brain damage, amputations and in some cases death.

Meningitis and septicaemia caused by meningococcal group B bacteria can affect people of any age, but is most common in babies and young children.

The new programme makes England the first country in the world to offer a national, routine and publicly funded Men B vaccination programme.

### Which babies should have the Men B vaccine?

The Men B vaccine is offered to babies alongside their other routine vaccinations at:

- 2 months
- 4 months
- 12 months



## Colour Rush, Fun Run 12th September

A number of staff from St Lukes and Greenwood will be taking part in this year's Colour Rush, whilst this is a fun event for us all to take part in it is also a great opportunity to raise money for Rowcroft Hospice.

The hospice's services are provided without charge, but they are not without cost. Current yearly expenditure for all the hospice's services stand at over £8.9 million. Rowcroft receives limited NHS funding, amounting to 23% of expenditure, leaving the hospice needing to raise £19,000 each day, 365 days a year, to provide its vital services.



If you would like to sponsor us please visit our just giving page [www.justgiving.com/SLuGsBrixham](http://www.justgiving.com/SLuGsBrixham) or complete the sponsor form held behind reception. (Please be aware any

## Flu Vaccination 2015/16

The practice takes receipt of stock in September 2015, and we invite the following eligible people to come forward and book an appointment:

- Those aged 65 years and over
- Those aged six months to under 65 in clinical risk groups
- Pregnant women (at any stage)
- All two, three and four year olds (but not five years or older) on 31 August 2015
- All Children of school years One and Two
- Those in long - stay residential care homes
- Carers

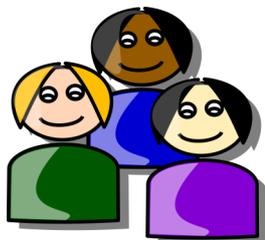
### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Can I get the flu vaccine privately?

People who aren't eligible for a flu jab on the NHS can pay for a flu vaccination privately. The flu vaccine may be available from pharmacies or in supermarkets. It is provided on a private patient basis and you have to pay. The vaccine costs up to £20.

#### When am I most at risk from flu?

Flu circulates every winter, usually over a few weeks. This means many people get ill around the same time. In a bad year, this can be an epidemic. However, it is impossible to predict how many cases of flu there will be each year.



#### Can I go to work / school if I have been in contact with somebody who has recently been diagnosed with flu?

Yes. You should go about your everyday business, but stay at home if you develop flu-like symptoms.

#### Does everyone need a flu jab?

No, just people who are at special risk of problems if they catch flu. Ask your GP about having an NHS flu vaccination if: you're aged 65 or over, you're pregnant, you have a serious medical condition, you're very overweight, you live in a residential or nursing home, you're the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill, your child is in an at-risk group and is aged six months to two years

#### Why are certain groups targeted for the flu jab?

Complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia are more common in people with other diseases, especially if they are also elderly. Almost all of the deaths related to flu are in people in these groups. In long-stay residential homes, vaccination prevents the rapid spread of flu among residents.

#### How long will the flu jab protect me for?

The flu jab will provide protection for you for the upcoming flu season. People eligible for flu vaccination should have the vaccine each year.

#### Can I have the flu jab while I'm taking antibiotics?

Yes, it's fine to have the flu jab while you are taking a course of antibiotics, provided you are not ill with fever.

#### How long does the flu vaccine take to become effective?

It takes between 10 and 14 days for your immune system to respond fully after you've had the flu jab.

#### If I had the flu jab last year, do I need it again now?

Yes. The viruses that cause flu can change every year, which means the flu (and the vaccine) this winter may be different from last winter.

#### Can the flu jab cause flu?

No. The vaccine does not contain any live viruses, so it cannot cause flu. You may get a slight temperature and aching muscles for a couple of days afterwards, and your arm may feel a bit sore where you had the injection. Other reactions are rare, and flu jabs are very safe.

#### When is the best time to get my flu jab?

The best time is as soon as your GP gets supplies of the vaccine. This will usually be between September and early November. But don't worry if you've missed this time, you can have the flu jab right up to the end of the flu season in February and March.

#### Is there anyone who cannot have a flu jab?

Yes. You should not have the flu vaccine if you have ever had an allergic reaction to a flu vaccine or one of its ingredients. This happens very rarely. You also need to take precautions if you have an egg allergy.

#### Why is it recommended that healthcare workers are vaccinated?

Vaccination prevents healthcare workers passing flu on to, or getting flu from, their patients. It also helps the NHS to keep running effectively during a flu outbreak, when GPs and hospital services are particularly busy.

#### Can I have a flu jab if I'm breastfeeding?

Yes. The vaccine poses no risk to a breastfeeding mother or her baby, or to pregnant women.

#### Is it OK to have the flu vaccine during pregnancy?

Yes. The flu vaccine is recommended for pregnant women and is safe to have at any stage of pregnancy, including in the first trimester and right up to the expected due date. It helps protect the mother-to-be and her newborn baby from catching flu.