

KNEBWORTH AND MARYMEAD MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

January 2021

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS STATUS

The Practice, in conjunction with three other local Practices, has commenced vaccinating patients at the Roebuck Surgery in Broadwater, Stevenage. To date, we have given two doses of the Pfizer vaccine to approximately 1000 patients across the four Practices. Working with our community services, we have also commenced the vaccination of both care home residents and their staff.

We have received limited supplies of the Oxford-Astra Zeneca vaccine and hope that, from now onwards, we will receive regular weekly deliveries. We are planning more clinics and will let you know about these as soon as possible.

An important development is the opening of the mass vaccination centre at Robertson House in Stevenage. Anyone over 80 years of age, or care home workers or front-line medical staff, can phone 119 to make an appointment there.

Many of you have been contacting the Practice and asking when you will be vaccinated. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JVCi), which advises the Health Minister, has set the priorities and the order in which people will be vaccinated. You will be contacted when you are due to receive your vaccination. Please do not ring the surgery about this.

Patients aged 80 or over should be having their vaccination now, but it is important to remember that we did not receive enough vaccine for all the patients in this group, therefore some of you have not yet been contacted nor vaccinated.

What should you do if you are aged 80 or over and have not had your vaccination?

- housebound patients – we are planning to commence vaccinating our housebound patients in the week commencing 18th of January
- care home residents – we commenced vaccinating care home residents on 8th January and will continue this until all residents have been vaccinated
- if you are aged 80 or over and have not been contacted or vaccinated, you have not been forgotten and, as more vaccine becomes available, we will contact you. Alternatively, you can book an appointment at mass vaccination centre at Robertson House in Stevenage by phoning 119.

It is important to remember that you will be vaccinated in line with the JVCi guidelines and priorities. It is pointless phoning the surgery to try and get around these guidelines. We have to work to them; every vaccination we give is reported to NHS England, and if we do not follow the guidelines issued by the JVCi we will be reprimanded.

So, I repeat, please do not ring the surgery:

- **to ask when you will be vaccinated – we are following the JVCi guidelines and will be contacting patients in line with these guidelines when we have more vaccine and when clinics are arranged**
- **to ask to be brought forward – we cannot do this.**

Ken Spooner; Practice Manager, Knebworth and Marymead Medical Practice



We would like to invite you to a Zoom interactive meeting on
**Saturday, 16th January at 11.00 am or Tuesday, 26th January at 7.00 pm or
Thursday, 4th February at 1.30 pm or Saturday, 20th February at 11.00 am**

Local volunteers and the NHS are urging residents to become more cancer aware, and sign up to **free online** sessions in their area.

The campaign **Cancel Out Cancer** involves 60-minute sessions which are a fantastic way to help people:

- understand what cancer is and isn't, including busting some myths
- spot cancer early, and get to know what the signs and symptoms of cancer are
- know the value of screening, and the importance of early diagnosis
- be positive about health and small lifestyle changes to help prevent cancer.

Being online means people can take part in the comfort and safety of their own homes, and the sessions are for everyone – voluntary organisations community groups, local clubs, or even just for family and friends to get together for an hour with our fantastic volunteers.

Sign up for one of these sessions by emailing enhertsccg.engagement@nhs.net or mandypreedy@hotmail.com. For more information, please contact Rosie Chisnell on 07774 528822 or Mandy Preedy on 07366 389425.

NHS 111, Herts Urgent Care Service – A New Approach

If someone is seriously ill or injured, you should always call 999. However, if you have an urgent medical problem and you are not sure what to do, NHS 111 can help. Anyone going online to 111.nhs.uk or calling the free 111 number will be given a thorough assessment by the Herts Urgent Care Service (HUC) and then helped to find treatment, which could be their local pharmacy or their GP surgery.

NHS 111 can already make booked appointments with GP surgeries and pharmacies, or they can divert a call to the ambulance service if necessary. Callers can also get directly through to a specialist mental health team.

Now there is an additional service that Herts Urgent Care can provide through NHS 111. They are now able to make a booked appointment for you at an Urgent Care Centre or an Emergency Department. This new system will help to ensure that everyone who needs urgent care can be seen safely and comfortably without spending an inordinate amount of time in a hospital waiting room and reduce the likelihood of contracting Covid-19, flu or other viruses.

The New QEII Urgent Care Centre, Welwyn Garden City

Since Monday, 11th January, the New QEII Urgent Care Centre for minor illnesses and injuries has been closing its doors to new patients at 10.00pm every evening and then reopening at 8.00 am every morning. All patients who arrive before 10.00 pm will have their treatment completed before the Urgent Care Centre closes at midnight.

This has been to allow clinical staff to be redeployed to the Lister Hospital where an increasing number of patients are being treated for Covid-19. This is a temporary measure which will be reviewed on a weekly basis.

For patients who need to access overnight services, GP appointments will still be available at the New QEII for those who are assessed as needing them by the NHS 111 Service. Between 8.00 am and 10.00 pm, patients with minor illnesses or injuries will still be directed to the New QEII's Urgent Care Centre, and will be asked to attend alone wherever possible to maintain social distancing.

FORTHCOMING PPG MEETINGS

The next PPG is at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 19th January, which will again take place via the magic of Zoom. If you would like to join this online event, please notify one of the PPG Officers (contact details below) so that you can receive the Zoom code and password.

Our February Meeting will be at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, the 16th, also by Zoom and, again, if you wish to take part in this Meeting, please contact one of the PPG Officers.

Looking ahead, you may wish to make a note in your diaries of the dates for the PPG Meetings in the remainder of the first half of the year: 16th March, 20th April and 18th May. These are all Tuesdays, we always start at 7.00 pm and the Meetings don't go on for any longer than one and a half hours. All are welcome to join us.

PPG CONTACTS

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Produced by The Knebworth and Marymead Patient Participation Group