**Brookside Surgery**

[www.brooksidesurgery.co.uk](http://www.brooksidesurgery.co.uk)

**FLU VACCINATIONS**

Following a review by the Joint Committee on Vaccination & immunisation (JCVI), the seasonal flu vaccination campaign will begin on 3rd October this year. This change is to ensure maximum protection from the vaccine when influenza infections are at a peak. We will be holding dedicated flu vaccination clincs on;-

**THURSDAY 3rd OCTOBER 12.00 noon – 3.00pm**

**SATURDAY 12th OCTOBER 9.00 am - 2.00 pm**

**SATURDAY 19th OCTOBER 9.00 am - 2.00 pm**

Appointments for those eligible for an NHS flu jab are now bookable either by calling reception or through the self-booking link in our text messages.

Details of all eligible patient groups can be found at [www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine). If you receive a carer’s allowance or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick, then you are eligible for a free flu vaccination.

Also, anyone who lives with someone who is more likely to get a severe infection due to a weakened immune system, such as someone living with HIV, someone who has had a transplant or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis is also eligible for a free NHS flu vaccination

**Children aged 2 - 3 years**

As in previous years, children aged 2 and 3 as of 31st August 2024 (born between1st September 2020 and 31st August 2022) will be eligible for a nasal flu vaccine. Appointments for this age group are now available.

**COVID BOOSTER VACCINATIONS**

We are hoping to be able to offer the COVID vaccine boosters to eligible patients this Autumn but at the time of going to print we have not had confirmation of this. Please keep an eye on our website and social media for more updates.

**RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL (RSV) VACCINE**

From 1 September 2024, those who turn 75 and those age 75 to 79 will be eligible for a free vaccine to protect them from respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). RSV is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs. RSV infection often causes symptoms similar to a cold, including cough, sore throat, sneezing and a runny or blocked nose. It can also make you become wheezy or short of breath and lead to pneumonia and other life-threatening conditions. There is no specific treatment, and most infections will get better by themselves but every year thousands of older adults need hospital care for RSV. For more information go to [www.nhs.uk/conditions/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv)

We will begin to call patients via text or letter and ask that you book your appointment for this vaccine when called. Unfortunately, this vaccine cannot be given at the same time as the flu vaccine so a separate appointment will be required.

RSV infection is also common in young children but it is most serious for small babies therefore, all pregnant women are recommended to have this vaccine from 28 weeks pregnant to ensure the new-born baby has some protection.

**CARE NAVIGATORS**

We are fortunate to have a number of allied clinicians now working at Brookside Surgery alongside our GPs and Practice Nurses. We are able to book patients directly into clinics with these healthcare professionals and can often offer appointments without the need to see or speak to a GP first. To offer our patients the most appropriate care and advice, our reception team have undergone additional training and worked with our GPs to set out clear guidelines for them to work from. As part of this you will be asked to give brief details of the reasons for appointments, this is entirely to aid us to provide you with the most appropriate and timely care. We hope our patients will see the benefits of this wider role for our Care Navigators and we have already received many positive comments.

**DISPENSARY ANSWER MACHINE**

During the pandemic many patients turned to ordering repeat medication via the dispensary answerphone in order to minimise in person contact. While this met the needs of both patients and the Practice during that time, there have been continued concerns that this method is liable to error or miss communication, particularly around drug pronunciations and the clarity of messages (especially from mobile phone). With the development of the NHS App and the increased information available through this, we have been encouraging our patients to order repeat medication via the app rather than by the answerphone. We have seen a decline in the number of requests being received by the answerphone and the GP Partners have taken the decision to remove the answerphone facility with effect from 1st October. After this date you will be able to order your repeat medication by:-

* NHS App or Patient Access online account
* Paper request using the repeat slip given out with your medication
* Submit an online request via our website

If you have any medication queries then you should call and speak to our Care Navigators who will arrange for a Dispenser to contact you or you can submit an online request.

Our dispensary staff will be continuing to help patients with this transition during September and if you have any concerns then please speak to one of them.

**DISPENSING OF CONTROLLED DRUGS**

Some medications come under the legislation concerning controlled drugs and correspondingly this entails our staff in a lot of paperwork and checks when these are dispensed to patients and requires 2 qualified members of staff to be present. We are therefore asking patients that have controlled drugs prescribed to ensure that they allow extra time when collecting these and we respectfully ask that you arrive no later then 15 minutes before we close at lunchtime and the end of the day.

**LEARNING EVENT**

The Practice will be closed staff training on Wednesday 18th September from 2.00 – 5.00 pm.