**AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2020**

**Flu Vaccinations – everything you need to know**

We anticipated the flu vaccination take-up would be higher than ever this year. Vaccinations commenced in September. We’ve had several Saturday clinics which resulted in excellent feedback from many patients who commented on the *‘slick, organised and efficient’* service.

We created a one-way system to keep patients as safe as possible and asked patients to have their arm ready as they walked in! If you’re 65 or over, or you have a condition such as asthma, you’ll be eligible for a free flu jab. If you’ve missed the opportunity we can still book you in, providing you meet the eligibility criteria.

**"Having your flu jab this year is more important than ever. With flu circulating at the same time as Covid19, this could make our more elderly and vulnerable patients very unwell. We would advise all our eligible patients to have the flu jab to protect themselves as much as possible this winter"** Dr Daisy Curling

If you know that you are eligible and have had your flu jab whilst in hospital, or elsewhere, please let us know so that we can update your records.

**Flu jabs for patients aged 50 – 65**

The government stated their intention to vaccinate those aged 50 – 65 on the NHS this year. We are yet to receive those vaccinations. We’ll update relevant patients if and when these come through.

**Our measures to keep you safe**

We want to offer all the essential services whilst taking care to mitigate risks during this pandemic. We still offer face to face appointments for essential matters such as blood tests, cervical screening, vaccinations, dressings, suture removal and so on.

You can assist with this by only coming into the surgery when it’s essential. If you have a question, please call us rather than popping in. Very often the people in the building for booked appointments have health complications, or are unwell, may be pregnant or are simply vulnerable due to their age. Your cooperation in not putting these patients at an increased risk is appreciated.

**How to request regular prescriptions during these times**

Despite usually asking patients *not* to call us with prescription requests, we have encouraged patients to phone us for these in recent months to discourage patients from coming into the building unnecessarily. However, with demand for our services increasing, we feel that phone-calls should be restricted to enquiries, appointment booking and so on. Therefore, we ask you to request online access via your pharmacy or to use our online service. Please ask us to set this service up for you.

**Open Surgery Update**

Open Surgery continues on a phone-call basis to assess the best way forward for each patient. We continue to be committed to offering a daily provision for urgent matters which cannot wait for a routine appointment. Patients can call us between 8.00-10.30 a.m. on weekdays for a call back the same morning. Doctors may use video calls where appropriate and if a patient needs to be examined, this can be arranged with the correct PPE in place.