

The St Katherine's Surgery Newsletter is printed approximately every quarter. It is produced by the Surgery staff and the Patient Participation Group committee members (PPG) who work together to compile it. If you, as a patient, have any particular subject that you would like us to include, please let the Receptionist know.

All the staff at St Katherine's Surgery and members of the Patient Group would like to wish our patients an enjoyable Christmas and a happy & healthy New Year!

Please see the poster in the waiting room noting Christmas closing times for this Surgery with advice about ordering your prescriptions in good time.

Changes to the Partnership and to Surgery Staff

We should like to welcome Dr Gill Flowers to the Partnership at St Katherine's Surgery. Dr Flowers has been working at the Practice since 2014 as a Salaried GP but she now becomes one of a team of eight Partners. Her medical interests are Women's Health, Gynaecology, Obstetrics, and Family Planning.

Some of you may know that Dr Conway has reduced the hours that she works at St Katherine's. Dr Conway has taken a post at St Michael's Hospice but will be working with us at the Practice all day every Monday. Those patients registered with her have been assigned a new registered GP and should have received a letter informing them of who this is. Dr Flowers and Dr Wheeler have increased their working hours so that we can maintain the service for our patients.

Dr Carpenter is taking leave of absence from the Practice but will be returning at the end of February next year. Meanwhile Dr Hannah Wainman and Dr Sara Moran, with other GPs at the Practice, will be looking after Dr Carpenter's patients during this time.

We would like to warmly welcome the newest members of our Reception Team, Lottie and Phoebe. We know they will try to get to know you all as quickly as possible.

We are sad to report that Beverley Evans, our Lead Practice Nurse, will be leaving us at Christmas. Beverley has found an alternative nursing role in her home town which allows her to walk to work rather than have a long drive. Beverley will be very much missed and has done a fantastic job leading the Nursing Team in the two years that she has been with us; we wish her well in her new position.

We are also sad to say that Practice Nurse, Ellianne, has moved to pastures new. To replace her, we are very happy to welcome Claire on her return to the St Katherine's Surgery Nursing Team. Claire used to work with us and has also acted as a locum more recently.

Winter Bugs

The NHS offers plenty of good advice on how to beat the winter ailments from home without having to see your GP. One of the simplest ways to avoid getting the 'Winter lurgy' is to stay indoors in the warm, rest, drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and eat warm, healthy, wholesome foods. If you are

feeling ill, make sure that you let a friend or neighbour know. The local pharmacists are also able to offer confidential help and advice on how to beat winter ailments, which medication to take, or even whether or not they consider that you should see a doctor.

Please remember

no amount of antibiotics will cure your cold or flu symptoms

these are caused by a virus

antibiotics are effective only against bacteria

You do not need antibiotics for common illness such as coughs and colds. It is important to understand that to take antibiotics when they are not needed can lead to antibiotic resistance; it can also lead to unpleasant side effects. Funds would be saved which could be redirected to other areas.

All colds, and most coughs and sore throats, are caused by viruses. It is very common for children to catch coughs and colds, especially when they start school. The best way to treat most colds, coughs or sore throats is to rest and to drink plenty of fluids. There are also medicines available from pharmacies to ease the symptoms, such as paracetamol. If symptoms persist, or worsen to include breathlessness or chest pains, or if you are very concerned, then arrange to see your doctor - but please do not assume that you will be prescribed antibiotics.



Antibiotics are medicines used to resist infections caused by bacteria.

Resistance happens when bacteria 'adapt' and find a way to survive the effects of an antibiotic.



If antibiotics are used repeatedly they will no longer kill those bacteria.

But if we use antibiotics *only* when necessary, this will slow the development of 'resistance'. We would have more time to develop new antibiotics to which the bacteria (for a while) would have no resistance.

This is especially important because in recent years fewer new antibiotics have been discovered.

If you are prescribed antibiotics, be sure to take the full course: follow the instructions carefully – if all the bacteria are not killed the ones that are left can develop resistance.

Stay Well this Winter and Keep Warm

NHS England and Public Health England have launched a new campaign to encourage people most at risk from the cold weather, including those with long-term health conditions and over 65, to prepare for the lower temperatures. About 25,000 people die each winter compared with other times in the year; 80% of these deaths are of people suffering with circulatory diseases (such as heart disease, lung illnesses and stroke), dementia and respiratory diseases (such as asthma).

Exposure to cold indoor or outdoor temperatures increases blood pressure, thereby increasing the risk of heart failure, kidney disease, stroke or dementia. Cold temperatures can also make blood more likely to clot, which can lead to heart attacks and stroke. Cold can also affect the respiratory system which then reduces the lung's ability to fight infections. This explains why lower temperatures are often linked with bronchitis and pneumonia.

Professor Paul Cosford, Director for Health Protection and Medical Director at Public Health England writes: *'Throughout the cold weather, looking out for yourself and others is essential to keeping healthy. With winter on the way, now is a good time to make sure you, and those you know who may be particularly at risk from the cold, are as prepared as possible. If you qualify for the free flu jab, get it now. Also remember that eating a healthy, balanced diet and that staying physically active can keep you healthy. There are a variety of ways you can apply for help to keep your house warm, such as Winter Fuel Payments, Warm Home Discounts and Cold Weather Payments. If you meet the criteria, register for priority service with your energy and water suppliers. Try to maintain indoor temperatures to at least 18°C (65°F), particularly if you find it hard to get around, have a long-term illness or are 65 or over. You may*

prefer your living room to be slightly warmer. Make sure your gas, solid fuel and oil burning appliances are serviced by a registered engineer so that they are working effectively and safely before the winter sets in. If we all look out for each other this winter we can really make a difference.'

These are the important points to remember for keeping warm and Staying Well in Winter:

- make sure, if you are eligible, that you have your flu vaccination
- keep your home warm – at least 18C (65F) is recommended
- use a hot water bottle or electric blanket – *but not both at the same time!*
- eat well – have nourishing meals regularly throughout the day and hot drinks
- stay active – try not to sit still for more than an hour; get up and move about
- wear warm clothes – several thin layers (cotton, wool or fleecy fibres) are better than one thick layer.
- wear shoes with good grip – these will help to prevent slips and falls on icy ground
- help your neighbours in winter – check on older friends and relatives
- check if you are eligible for cold weather benefits such as winter fuel payment and cold weather payment – www.gov.uk
- **For more information please visit**
<http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/winterhealth/pages/keepwarmkeepwell.aspx>.

A Successful Flu Clinic *and still counting!*

We have now held all our Saturday Influenza Vaccination Clinics; again, these were a great success. So far, we have vaccinated nearly 2500 patients to protect them against contracting the most common strains of the Influenza Virus.

Flu vaccination remains the most effective way of protecting yourself and others in your community from the spread of the Influenza Virus. This virus can cause complications in those who suffer from chronic conditions such as diabetes, immunosuppression, neurological conditions and respiratory conditions - like COPD and Asthma.

If you have received an invitation but missed our Saturday clinics please telephone Reception to arrange an appointment with one of our nurses for you to have this vaccination.

Please note – if you would not normally be eligible for a flu vaccination but are the main carer for a family member or friend you are eligible to receive it, free, at St Katherine's. Be sure to let us know if you are a 'carer' so that we can update your

medical record accordingly; this will ensure you are invited for vaccination next year. It will also 'sign post' you towards help and support which you may be interested in which is provided by Herefordshire Carers Support.

Shingles and Pneumococcal Vaccinations Are you eligible for either a Shingles Vaccination or a Pneumococcal Vaccination free on the NHS? If you were aged either 70, 71, 72, 73 or 78 or 79 on **1 September 2016** you are eligible to receive a vaccination to protect you against Shingles.

If you are aged over 65 or suffer from a chronic condition such as heart disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, splenic dysfunction or a compromised immune system you are eligible to have a vaccination to protect your against Pneumonia. *For more information on either of these vaccinations you can speak to a Receptionist, book in to see a Practice Nurse, or visit our website.*

Ear Syringing Demand for this service has increased but it is not a first line treatment and, as reported in previous St Katherine's Newsletters, has never been part of GP contracts with the CCG. The national Commissioning Framework for Hearing Loss Services is now in place. Leaflets explaining self-care are available which give advice, guidance and support. **However, the Care Commissioning**

Group (CCG) is working with the Audiology Department to see if a new service based in the market towns to provide accessible and tailored care would be possible. The CCG will consult with Patient Groups on this and we will keep you informed.

Online Services

Did you know that you can register for online Services through the Patient Access website?

To register for this service please visit Reception with a form of photographic ID; the Receptionist will then provide you with a registration letter to complete the process.

The Patient Access website allows you to:

- *order your repeat prescriptions online and check when they have been issued*
- *book, cancel and check your appointments*
- *update your contact details*
- *view parts of your medical record.*

Wellbeing Information and Signposting for Herefordshire (WISH)

WISH is a registered charity developed in partnership between Herefordshire Council and Services for Independent Living. It is for the residents of Herefordshire to use as a signposting service to the varying activities, services and information available in the county. It offers information and advice for both adults and children; these vary from accommodation, activities, advice and advocacy, carers, equipment, health and wellbeing, keeping safe, support at home, transport and understanding social care.

WISH is available as a website to be found at www.wisherfordshire.org and has an office in St Peter's Street, Hereford; telephone 01432 383880. Opening times 9.30 - 5pm Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri; 9.30 – 6.30pm Wed; 10 - 4pm Sat. A move is planned to the Library in Broad Street in February.

A Five Year Plan for Health and Care Services in Herefordshire

Sustainability and Transformation Plans

Last December NHS England outlined a new approach to ensure that health and care services are built around the needs of local populations. To do this, every health and care system in England must produce a Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP), showing how local services will work over the next five years – ultimately delivering better health, better patient care and improved NHS efficiency.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire (including all NHS health providers and commissioners and the two County Councils) have produced a joint plan which is now in draft form and ready for a three-month public consultation. It is important that members of the public have their say about this plan because it will shape our health and social care over the next five years. You can read more about the STP, including a copy of the draft Plan, by going to <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/yourconversation/> or ask to see a copy at Ledbury Library. *The St Katherine's Patient Group will be discussing the plan and asking patients for their views in order to submit a response to Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.*

Magazines in the waiting room: the Patient Group is now responsible for making sure that those in the waiting room are kept reasonably up-to-date and in good condition. We are looking for a small supply of suitable magazines; 'glossies' are best because they are more hard-wearing. If you subscribe to a magazine which you are willing to pass on, please leave your name and telephone number with the Receptionist and a member of the Patient Group will contact you. However - **please DO NOT leave your magazines with Reception - they have nowhere to store them! Thank you.**