



## Armadale Group Practice – Autumn 2018 Newsletter

<b>Issue 31</b>	<b>September 2018</b>	<b>Dorothy Conn, Practice Manager</b>
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Welcome to the new issue of our Newsletter; designed to keep you up-to-date with developments in the Practice.

### Staffing

Our endeavour to fill our vacant GP sessions continues and we are delighted that we have managed to secure a Locum GP. Dr Sukhdeep Gill will be working with us on a part-time basis and I am sure you will all make him feel welcome in Armadale.

In our last Newsletter, we explained about Signposting and what our plans for this will be. We continue to adopt this initiative in a phased manner with the next step in the pipeline. When you next make an appointment, the Receptionist will ask the reason for this appointment; this is not the Receptionist being nosy but it allow the most appropriate medical care from the most appropriate health professional at the most appropriate time to be given.

The HSCP have also given us the services of a Pharmacist who will work alongside our GPs for 3 sessions per week. This, hopefully, will alleviate some of the pressure on the GPs from a prescribing perspective.

### Online Services

The Practice will shortly be offering online services meaning that you will be able to order repeat prescriptions online. We currently use our website to allow you to order your prescriptions online if you wish to do this, however, we will be changing the process for this. In a short while, you will be able to order your prescriptions by going directly into our clinical system to do this. You will be able to see at a glance your current repeat prescriptions so there will be no need to type in the medication you require. This will ensure accuracy as quantities and dosage will also be displayed.

In order for you to use this system, you will need to have a username and password; we will issue this in the Practice. To allow the changeover, we will run with the 2 systems for a short time.

We will keep you informed of when this process will be changing so that you can apply for your username and password.

In the future, you will also be able to book appointments and see some of the information in your GP records, including medications and allergies.

### Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme 2018-19

It's almost that time of year again! Our order for the 'flu vaccination has been put in and we hope to run our first 'Flu Clinic will be held on **Saturday, 6 October 2018.**

Obviously we will wait for delivery of this vaccine before we start booking appointments. Throughout the Practice we will display posters advising you when the bookings are open.

You are eligible for the free 'flu jab if you are:

Anyone who suffers from a health condition, who is pregnant, who is 65 or over or those who work in healthcare, should get the 'flu vaccine.

If you have a health condition, 'flu can hit you hardest. The vaccine is the safest and most effective way of protecting yourself.

Conditions and diseases which can make 'flu much more dangerous include:

- asthma
- bronchitis
- emphysema
- cystic fibrosis
- chronic heart disease
- chronic kidney failure
- multiple sclerosis
- liver problems (such as cirrhosis/hepatitis)
- diabetes
- asplenia or dysfunction of the spleen
- being very overweight
- HIV infection

Reception staff have a more detailed list of eligibility – please ask if you are unsure if you are entitled to this vaccination.

If you are pregnant, you are at greater risk of complications from 'flu. Having the vaccine now could help you avoid catching flu and protect your baby.

If you have children who suffer from any of the conditions above, they should be immunised too.

Anyone undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment should also get immunised.

Unpaid carers of any age, including young carers, are also eligible for the 'flu vaccine.

If you are a healthcare worker (anyone who works in health and social care) it is recommended you have the flu vaccine too.

The vaccine takes around 10 days to work and should protect you from 'flu for around a year. You have to get immunised annually because the virus changes constantly and your immunity reduces over time. Last year's vaccine won't necessarily protect you from this year's 'flu viruses. The flu vaccine can't give you 'flu, but it can stop you catching it. For the maximum protection possible, make sure you get immunised every year.

Anyone who falls under one of the [eligible groups](#) will be offered a free 'flu immunisation. Those aged 16 or over, who are not eligible for free immunisation, can get the vaccine in many high street pharmacies for a small fee.

Healthy people who catch the 'flu are likely to feel very unwell for up to a week but will normally recover. You can help stop the spread of 'flu by catching a sneeze in a tissue and washing your hands regularly. If you think you have the 'flu you can seek advice from a Pharmacist, through NHS 24 or from ourselves.

From September 2018, we will be organising our Seasonal 'Flu Clinics. There will be posters displayed throughout the Surgery with dates – if you are eligible for the 'flu vaccination, just ask at Reception and an appointment will be made for you. We aim to have the 'Flu Clinics on a Saturday morning; this allows us to maintain our level of surgeries throughout the week and concentrate purely on 'flu vaccinations at the designated clinic.

**Also, pre-school children aged 2-5 years and all primary school children in P1-7 will be offered immunisation against 'flu this autumn. The 'flu vaccine will then be offered every year to continue to protect your child against 'flu viruses. Pre-school children will be given the vaccine in the Surgery but primary school children will be given this at school.**

Most children will be able to receive the 'flu vaccine as a painless nasal spray. However, the nasal spray will not be offered to babies and young children under 2 years of age because it has not been approved for this age group. But if children are immunised then the chances of it spreading to younger children will be reduced. Alternative forms of the 'flu vaccine are available for children with underlying medical conditions from 6 months of age.

Continuing from last year also, is the shingles vaccination. **This year, it is being offered to anyone born between 2 September 1938 and 1 September 1948 (both dates inclusive).**

Unlike other infectious illnesses, you can't catch shingles from someone else. Instead, if you've ever had chickenpox, the virus that causes shingles lies inactive in your body and can become active again later in life.

Shingles (also known as herpes zoster) can be very painful and is more common among older people. And the older you are, the worse it can be. For some people, the pain can last for many years.

But this vaccination can reduce your risk of getting shingles, or, if you do get shingles, it can reduce how serious the symptoms will be.

Again we have more information in the surgery, just ask at Reception or speak to the Doctor or Nurse.

### Carers



Following a successful tender process commissioned by West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership, Carers of West Lothian are now providing an information, advice and support service for people with learning and physical disabilities living in West Lothian.

This is in addition to our existing information, advice and support service for all unpaid carers across West Lothian.

For more information on the support available, please get in touch:

Tel: 01506 448000

Email: [office@carers-westlothian.com](mailto:office@carers-westlothian.com)

## Do you have a physical or learning disability?

Carers of West Lothian can offer information, support and advice.

Some of the ways Carers West Lothian can help you are:

- Having someone to talk to.
- Benefits advice
- Information on community support services
- Signposting or referral to other services
- Access to Radar Key
- Information on your rights
- Opportunities to have your say on local services

### Dates for your Diary

The surgery will be closed on the following afternoon to allow for staff training:

Wednesday, 5 September 2018	Wednesday, 3 October 2018
Wednesday, 7 November 2018	

The Out-of-Hours service will be covering when the practice is closed. This service can be contacted on telephone number 111.

Public Holidays:

Monday, 17 September 2018 – Public Holiday	Tuesday, 25 December 2018 – Christmas Day
Wednesday, 26 December 2018 – Boxing Day	Tuesday, 1 January 2019 – Public Holiday
Wednesday, 2 January 2019 – Public Holiday	

Please ensure you have medication to last over the holiday periods.

**Remember that NHS24 can also provide routine medical advice during the day, even when the practice is not on holiday.**

**Finally, do** you have any suggestions for items you would like to be included in the newsletter? We appreciate any contact, whether you like something or whether you have suggestions for change – drop a note to the Practice Manager, Dorothy Conn.