



November 2020

# **Bourn Surgery Newsletter**

**[www.bournsurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.bournsurgery.nhs.uk)**

## **Coronavirus Special - again!**

National headlines have now proclaimed that a vaccine for COVID-19 is close. Some have even talked about vaccination programmes beginning before Christmas. Whilst we certainly would want to be involved in any vaccination campaign, we don't have any firm information yet about what this might involve. We do not yet know if every GP practice will vaccinate their own patients, or whether larger vaccine hubs will be created. As we are sure you can imagine, frantic work is going on this week and next, to try and put together these details. In the meantime, our priority is to continue providing safe and accessible care to you all, as we have done since the beginning of the pandemic.

The news that potentially effective vaccines have been developed is very exciting and, given the normal time that it takes for effective vaccines to be developed, quite miraculous. The key step is going to be these vaccines gaining regulation from the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency), an independent national organisation that regulates every medication or device that can be prescribed within the UK. This is a crucial safety step, and until this happens, we do not yet know for certain which vaccine/vaccines will be used for mass immunisation.

What we do know is that, irrespective of which of the vaccines in development are chosen, this is not going to be like a 'flu vaccine. 'Flu vaccines are delivered in their own little syringes, and kept refrigerated. They can safely last in a vaccine fridge for several months. We can run our 'flu clinics a bit like a conveyor belt, as many of you will have experienced, getting a large number of people vaccinated in a short period of time. These new vaccines are completely different. The vaccine will need to be given in two doses, three-four weeks apart. They need to be stored frozen in special dry ice, at about  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Surgeries don't have those freezers, so they will be delivered whilst they are defrosting for use. They can then only be stored for a few days before expiring. They don't come in their own little syringes, and will require careful drawing up from a main vial, diluting and mixing, a process which will take about 20 minutes, needing two clinicians, for each patient. Once the patient has received their vaccine, they must wait for 15 minutes to ensure no serious reaction.

This is not going to be a simple undertaking, and it will take time to get the details together to plan a safe way to deliver this vaccination programme, while continuing to be able to provide you with the care you need. We will update you when we know more, but hopefully there is now a little light at the end of the long tunnel.

## **‘Flu Vaccination Programme**

We are delighted with how our vaccination programme has gone so far this year. We have vaccinated hundreds of patients so far. For the first time ever, we have used every single vaccine; demand has been staggering, due to the current pandemic. You may not be aware, but we have to order our ‘flu vaccines by the start of the year, so the vaccines we are now giving were ordered in January, when no-one could have predicted subsequent events. We have recently received additional vaccines from the Government’s central supply, and still look on course to offer a vaccine to anyone who is eligible for NHS vaccination. Thank you to all of our patients for their patience while we waited for our stocks to arrive, and for complying with the social distancing measures we put in place during our vaccination clinics. We are very grateful for your support. We would also like to thank those members of our Patient Participation Group who gave up their time to help with car parking during our busy Saturday vaccination clinics. This support of our Surgery means such a lot to us.

## **Abusive behaviour at the Surgery**

Very sadly, much like GP surgeries and hospitals up and down the country, the last few months has seen a dramatic rise in levels of verbal abuse directed towards NHS staff. Here at Bourn we are unfortunately no different. While the vast majority of our patients behave respectfully and appropriately, we have had a large increase in the numbers of patients who are rude, abusive or behave inappropriately to our staff. All staff members, from the Reception and Dispensary teams, to the doctors and nurses have experienced this, although our Receptionists have borne the brunt of this behaviour. While we understand that everyone is struggling with the current pandemic, and that stress can make us short-tempered, there is no excuse for verbal abuse, threats or shouting. Every member of staff at Bourn Surgery has worked exceptionally hard throughout this pandemic and we are incredibly proud of them all. In September 2020 we performed 30-50% more appointments than we did in September 2019, with these appointments on average lasting 40% longer. This increase is unprecedented, and reflects the pressure that General Practice is under, not just at Bourn, but nationally. We are doing our very best in difficult circumstances, and are always grateful for constructive feedback and criticism. However, **we insist that our staff are treated with kindness and respect, and we will not tolerate abuse.** If you have comments or concerns about your treatment at Bourn, please contact the Practice Manager, Mrs Tracey Wilson, to raise these in the appropriate way.

So for now, remember the importance of social distancing and good, frequent hand-washing. Stay safe and well, protect yourself and others, and please call if you need us.

### **Reception**

- **Mon-Fri:**  
8.30am-1pm, 1.30pm-6pm
- **Appointments:** 01954 719469
- **Emergencies:** 01954 719313
- **[www.bournsurgery.nhs.uk](http://www.bournsurgery.nhs.uk)**

### **Dispensary**

- **Mon-Fri:** 8.30am-1pm,  
2pm-6pm

### **Out of Hours**

- **NHS 111**