Henley-in-Arden Medical Centre

Patient Participation Group (PPG) Newsletter

The PPG consists of a group of patients who work to try and improve communication between patients and the Medical Centre staff. We meet four times a year but can also raise any patient issues or concerns at any time.

RSV – Respiratory Syncytial Virus

The RSV vaccine helps protect against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a common virus that can make babies and older adults seriously ill. It's recommended during pregnancy and for adults aged 75-79. This free vaccine is available from 1st September 2024.

RSV is an infectious disease of the airways and lungs. RSV infection often causes symptoms similar to a cold, including:

- cough
- sore throat
- sneezing
- 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. However, every year thousands of older adults need hospital care for RSV, and some of them will die. RSV can be more severe in people with medical conditions such as heart or lung disease or a weakened immune system. RSV infection is common in young children but is most serious for small babies and for older people.

RSV infections can occur all year round, but cases peak every winter.

RSV can spread through coughs and sneezes.

The best way to protect yourself is to have the vaccine.

Almost all older adults will have had several RSV infections during their life. A single dose of vaccine will help to boost protection as you reach an age group at highest risk of serious RSV infection. Unlike the flu vaccine you do not need to have the RSV vaccine every year.

Older adult programme

From 1 September 2024, practices are required to offer and provide RSV vaccination to eligible patients as follows:

- Adults turning 75 years. These patients will remain eligible until they attain 80 years and will not be eligible thereafter
- Patients from 28 weeks of pregnancy. These patients will remain eligible until birth
- If you turned 80 on/or after 1st September 2024, you are eligible for the vaccine until 31st August 2025.

Those who should not have the RSV vaccine

Please tell the nurse or doctor if you have ever had a serious side-effect to a vaccine. If patients have a minor illness such as a cold they can receive the vaccine, but if they are very unwell or have a fever, they are advised to wait until they are better.

Patient Survey

During the Covid/Flu vaccination program, the PPG supported the Medical Centre by acting as stewards. At the same time we undertook a patient survey. Two of the questions addressed internet access and use of the NHS App. Of the age group surveyed around 30% do not have either a mobile phone or access to the internet or both. In 2025, the PPG will consider how best to pass on information to this patient group.

We also asked whether patients used the NHS App and 21% said they did. A number of patients indicated that they would welcome some training in how to use the NHS App, So if that would help you, then either send an email to henleyppg@btinternet.com or call in at Reception and leave your details and a member of the PPG will contact you.

Robin Rumbles, Chair PPG email: henleyppg@btinternet.com