

Media release

18th September 2017

GP Surgeries open their doors to offer the flu vaccination

GP surgeries across Norfolk and Waveney are gearing up to provide special clinics to offer patients their annual flu jab.

Children aged between 2 and 10 years old will be offered the nasal spray vaccination. The adult flu vaccine is offered free to those in groups at particular risk of infection and complications from flu. The groups being offered the adult flu vaccine are:

- Pregnant women
- Those aged 65 or over
- Those aged under 65 with long-term conditions
- Carers

GPs are asking their patients to book a place in forthcoming flu clinics as soon as they are advertised. Alternatively, you can visit your nearest participating pharmacy.

GP surgeries are also testing atrial fibrillation in patients over the age of 65. Although flu vaccinations are available from other outlets it is only GP surgeries who are offering the additional check for abnormal heart rates at the same time.

In addition to the atrial fibrillation and flu vaccination applicable patients are able to receive Pneumococcal vaccines protecting patients against the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. The vaccine can prevent some cases of pneumonia, meningitis, and sepsis. A pneumococcal infection can affect anyone. However, some people are at higher risk of serious illness and can be given the pneumococcal vaccination on the NHS.

Dr Anoop Dhesi, Chair of North Norfolk CCG and Partner at Stalham Staithe GP Surgery said: “Flu can be incredibly unpleasant for many people but for a select few it can be fatal. The best way for people to protect themselves and loved ones around them is to get the vaccination on offer especially those offered it for free on the NHS.”

Dr Louise Smith, Director of Public Health said: “If you have a bad cold or the flu, you are best to manage your illness from home, without seeing a doctor or visiting a hospital. You shouldn’t need to see your GP unless the symptoms become particularly severe, last far longer than usual or if you have a long-term health condition. If you think you might be suffering from flu and are concerned that your symptoms are worsening you can call NHS 111 for advice.”

A previous pilot programme showed vaccinating children had dual benefit; as well as protecting them from flu, it also protects others, such as parents, grandparents and siblings, as children are ‘super spreaders’ and are much more likely to infect others.

If you are not amongst the eligible categories to receive a flu vaccination free of charge on the NHS, please consider visiting a local pharmacy for the vaccine in order to protect yourself and your family this winter.

Ends

Notes to editors