

# Bedford Hill Family Practice Newsletter

ISSUE 3

AUGUST 2011

## Patient Reference Group

Would you like to have a say about the services provided at Bedford Hill Family Practice? We would like to hear your views.

We already have a face-to-face Patient Participation Group but we are now setting up a virtual patient reference group so that you can have your say. We will ask the members of this reference group some questions from time to time, such as what you think about our opening times or the quality of the care or service you received. We will contact you via email and keep our surveys concise so it shouldn't take too much of your time.

We aim to gather around 100 patients from as broad a spectrum as possible to get a truly representative sample. We need young people, workers, retirees, people with long term conditions and people from minority ethnic groups.

If you would like to participate, please fill in your details on the reverse side of this newsletter and hand in at reception or post it to the surgery FAO: Practice Manager.

We will be in touch shortly after we receive your form. Please note that no medical information or questions will be responded to.

*The information you supply us will be used lawfully, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The Data Protection Act 1998 gives you the right to know what information is held about you and sets out rules to make sure that this information is handled properly.*

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## Seasonal Flu Vaccinations - Flu vaccination top of your winter checklist

With flu season around the corner, we would like to remind you that flu clinics will be held again in September and October as usual. If you are over 65 or suffer from chronic disease (such as heart, lung, kidney or neurological disease) have diabetes, a weak immune system or if you are pregnant, then you may be at risk of flu. Invitations will be sent out to all patients eligible for a free flu jab with clinic dates and times.

### Flu Clinic Dates: 27 September, 29 September, 11 October, 18 October

- Flu is a viral infection of the respiratory tract, not a simple cold. It is particularly serious if you suffer from other diseases.
- Flu can lead to even more serious illness such as bronchitis and pneumonia. A lot of people, mainly older people, die from flu every winter.
- Flu spreads rapidly. Anyone living in nursing or care homes are at higher risk if there is an outbreak of flu.
- Flu is mainly associated with the winter season when it reappears, usually over a few short weeks, causing widespread misery to a large number of people.
- Viruses that cause flu change each year, so the vaccine created to protect you changes too.

## Seasonal Flu Vaccinations - Frequently asked Questions

### FAQs

#### 1. Can the vaccination cause flu?

*No, because the vaccine doesn't contain live viruses*

#### 2. Are there any side effects to the vaccine?

*There may be slight soreness at the point of injection and some people may feel slight cold like symptoms over the following days. More serious reactions are possible but rare.*

#### 3. When is the best time to get vaccinated?

*Between September and November. Don't wait until there is a flu epidemic.*

#### 4. Can anyone have the flu vaccine?

*The final decision as to who should be offered vaccination is a matter for the patient's medical practitioner, based on the individual's medical history.*

#### 5. How long will the jab protect me for?

*The flu jab will protect you for about a year.*

#### 6. If I had the flu jab last year, do I need it again now?

*Yes. The viruses that cause flu change every year, which means the flu (and the vaccine) this winter will be different from last winter's.*

#### 7. Can I get a flu jab if I'm breastfeeding?

*Yes, there is no evidence of risk from vaccinating pregnant women or those who are breastfeeding.*

#### 8. Can you have the seasonal flu vaccine at any time during pregnancy?

*Yes, the seasonal flu vaccine is safe to take whatever the stage of pregnancy, including in the first trimester and around the expected due date.*

### Patient Meeting

There will be a patient meeting held at the surgery on Thursday, 22 September 2011 from 7.00pm to 8.00pm. If you are interested in attending please contact Tracy Tester, Deputy Practice Manager on 020 8772 1748 to confirm your attendance.

“Light refreshments served”

#### Bedford Hill Family Practice

120 Bedford Hill  
Balham  
London  
SW12 9HS

Phone: 020 8673 1720  
Fax: 020 8673 5794  
Bedfordhillfamilypractice.co.uk

### Patient Reference Group ....personal details

Yes, I am interested in becoming a member of a virtual patient group and consent to receiving emails from the practice from time to time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut along the dotted line and hand in at reception or post to the practice manager to the address on the left.