

Churchmere Medical Group

Patient Newsletter

Edition 27 – October 2026

Welcome to the October edition of the patient newsletter.

As I prepare to send this newsletter out, we are all preparing ourselves for the first storms of this season – Austin and Boelo.

This has turned our attention to staying well this winter so in this newsletter on page six you will see the first edition of our new feature 'Stay well this Winter' – this will be a feature that we will keep during the winter months and will give you hints and tips to stay well – this first edition is on the subject of Vaccinations!

Also, in this edition we have provided a summary of our two flu vaccination clinics which where a huge success thanks to the effort of our volunteers and staff members. If you are eligible for the flu vaccine and not yet had yours then please do ask your clinician to administer it at your next appointment.

We do hope you enjoy this newsletter and find the contents useful.

Olivia A Barker

Patient Services Manager





Flu and Covid Clinic Review - Ellesmere

A Fantastic Community Effort! 💙💉

On Saturday 3 October, our vaccination clinic at Lakelands School, Ellesmere was a huge success, with an incredible 330 COVID vaccinations and 1,004 flu vaccinations administered.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our dedicated practice team whose hard work, commitment and professionalism made the clinic possible. Their efforts ensured the day ran smoothly and enabled us to protect so many patients ahead of the winter season.

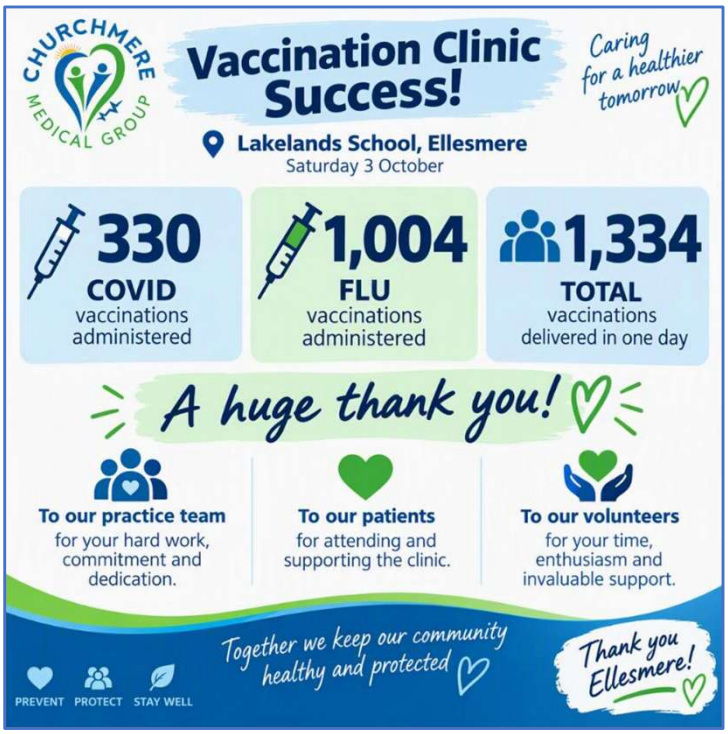
A thank you also goes to all of our patients who attended and supported the clinic, and to our wonderful volunteers whose time, enthusiasm and assistance were invaluable throughout the day.

Together, we achieved something truly remarkable for our local community.

✅ 330 COVID vaccinations

✅ 1,004 flu vaccinations

1,334 vaccinations delivered in one day





Flu and Covid Clinic Review - Whitchuch

A Fantastic Community Effort! 💙💉

Following on from this on Saturday 17th October our Clayton Health Centre played host to our Whitchurch Flu and Covid clinic. Again, this was a fantastic community effort with volunteers manning our car park and our staff directing patients inside the building.

The day was a huge success with a total of 1,318 vaccinations being delivered in the one day.

We would also like to extend our thanks to members of our Patient Participation Group who gave their time to help the day run smoothly and also to volunteers from Shropshire Rural Support who had a stand at both events.





Pharmacy First

Community Pharmacists offer a wide range of services and often work in conjunction with our GP's.

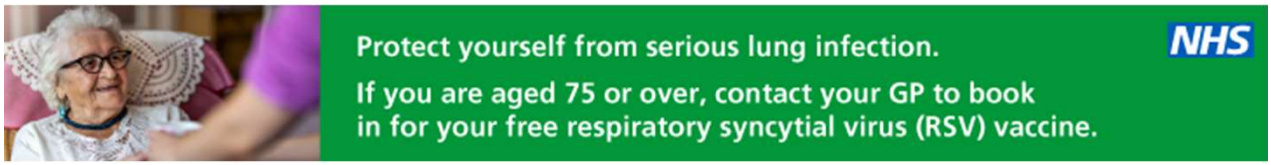
When you submit a triage request you may get a response advising you that you have been referred to your nominated Pharmacy. This will generally be for one of the following symptoms:

- Sinusitis (aged 12 years and over)
- Sore throat (aged 5 years and over)
- Earache (aged 1 to 17 years)
- Infected insect bites (aged 1 year and over)
- Impetigo (aged 1 year and over)
- Shingles (aged 18 years and over)
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs) (women aged 16 to 64 years)

Seeing your local pharmacist will often be quicker and more efficient as they can prescribe and dispense any medication you may need. If you have any of the above you don't need to be referred by the GP you can always visit your local pharmacy first.









As a practice, Churchmere Medical Group is involved in clinical research, giving our patients opportunities to participate in studies while helping contribute to research that may inform future healthcare.

💙 We're currently taking part in DaRe2THINK

DaRe2THINK is a national research study sponsored by the University of Birmingham and funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

What is the study looking at?

The study focuses on people aged 55–73 who have atrial fibrillation (AF) and are at a lower or intermediate risk of stroke.

Researchers want to understand whether treating these patients with direct oral anticoagulants (DOACs) could reduce the risk of:

🧠 Stroke

❤️ Cardiovascular death and heart attack

🩸 Blood clots and thromboembolism

🧠 Vascular dementia

👥 What does taking part involve?

Eligible patients are invited to consider participating and, if they consent, are randomly allocated to either receive a DOAC or continue with their usual care without additional anticoagulation. One of the interesting things about DaRe2THINK is that it has been designed as a largely remote study. Patients can complete consent and follow-up activities remotely, including quality-of-life and cognitive assessments, with no additional visits required after baseline.

By participating in research like this, Churchmere is playing a part in answering important questions about preventing serious illness and improving future patient care.



Stay Well this Winter!

Part one of our 'Stay Well this Winter' looks at the vaccines you may well be eligible for and how to prevent catching a respiratory infection.

Stay strong with winter vaccines

Free NHS vaccines are the best way to help protect yourself and your family this winter. Winter viruses, such as flu, spread more during colder months. The vaccines will help to protect you against these illnesses and reduce your chances of becoming seriously ill or needing hospital care.
You may be eligible for:

- **Flu Vaccine**
  - Aged 65 or over
  - Aged 6 months to 64 years with certain long-term health conditions
  - Aged 2 to 3 years
  - Pregnant
  - Living in a care home
  - The main carer for an older or disabled person

- **COVID-19 vaccine**
  - People aged 75 or over
  - People aged 6 months to 74 years who have a
  - Weakened immune system because of a health
  - Condition or treatment
  - Residents in an older adult care home

- **RSV Vaccine**
  - People aged 75 and over
  - Individuals aged 65 to 74, with a weakened immune system due to a medical condition or treatment, or
  - Who have long-term lung conditions (such as COPD)
  - All residents in older adult care homes

Preventing respiratory infections

Flu and respiratory tract infections are often spread through coughs and sneezes. To reduce the risk of spreading infections:

- Cover your mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (if you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow, not into your hand)
- Wash your hands regularly
- Throw away used tissues immediately



Parents guide to Childhood Vaccinations

UK Government

NHS

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS

Why are childhood vaccines important?

Childhood infections can cause serious illness, hospitalisation, and life-long disabilities.

Vaccines help protect your child from these infections.



What illnesses do childhood vaccines protect against?

From 8 weeks old, children are offered vaccines throughout childhood that help protect against serious illnesses, including measles, a type of bacteria that can cause meningitis, whooping cough and chickenpox.



How many illnesses do childhood vaccines prevent?

Routine childhood vaccinations prevent nearly **5,000 deaths** and more than **200,000 hospital admissions** every year in England.



Are vaccines safe for my child?

All vaccinations offered by the NHS are thoroughly tested to assess how safe and effective they are.

Research from around the world shows that immunisation is the safest way to protect your children's health.



What happens if my child misses a vaccine?

If your child misses a vaccine, they may not be fully protected, but you can catch up on most missed vaccines.

Contact your GP practice to check for any missed vaccinations and book an appointment.



What side effects might my child have after a vaccine?

Most side effects are mild and do not last long.

Your child may have a sore arm or leg, a mild fever, feel sleepy, unsettled or less hungry than usual.



STAY STRONG.
GET VACCINATED.

For more information, **scan the QR code** or visit our website **NHS/childhoodvaccines.co.uk**



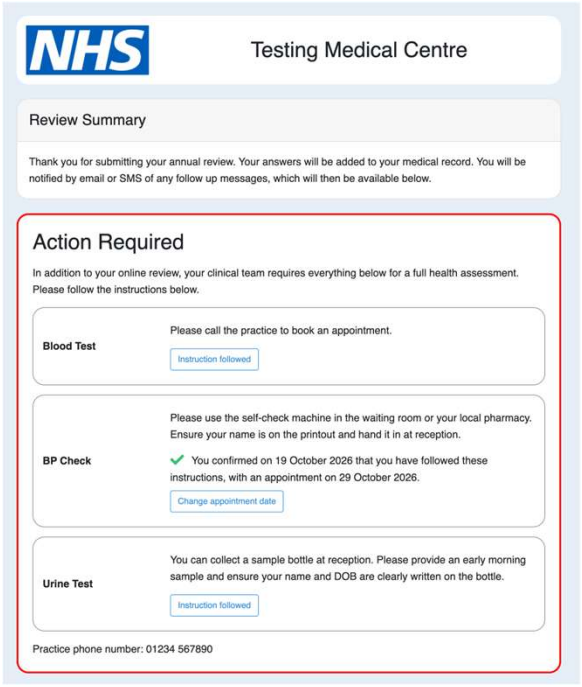
Annual Review Reminders

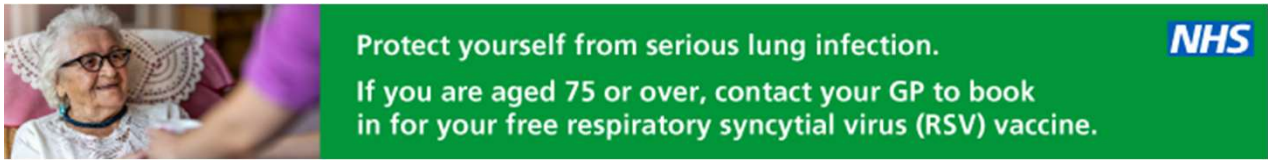
The reception team have had a lot of feedback from patients around the number of reminders that MedLink send which may not be required.

We have discussed this with MedLink and they have now improved the system to allow you, the patient to advise the system when you have taken the required steps and this will prevent further reminders from appearing. Should you wish, the system will also allow you to add your appointment date if relevant – such as if you are having a blood test at Whitchurch Hospital.

As the team from Medlink said '*Patients have the option to indicate that they have followed the instructions sent to them. They can also add an appointment date if relevant. If a patient indicates all instructions have been followed, this will prevent future reminders being sent. This will allow Medlink and Churchmere Medical Group to differentiate between those patients who have taken the required steps but appointment or results are awaited and those genuine non-responders who we need to contact*'.

Thank you for your feedback on this it has really helped to improve the system.







Calmer Cafes in Shropshire - Whitchurch





Protect yourself from serious lung infection.

If you are aged 75 or over, contact your GP to book in for your free respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine.

NHS



Smoking Cessation Clinics at Churchmere Medical Group

Do not forget we run smoking cessation clinics at Churchmere Medical Group if you are looking for support. The clinics are run at our Clayton Health Centre on a Thursday and at our Ellesmere Health Centre on a Tuesday. To book an appointment please complete an online anima triage form or call our reception team who will be delighted to book an appointment for you.





Friends and Family Test (FFT) – September Summary

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our Friends and Family Test during September. Your feedback is extremely valuable and helps us understand what we are doing well and where we can continue to improve our services.

We received 1,114 responses, with 88.4% of patients rating their experience as either Very Good or Good.

September results:

- ⭐ **Very Good – 75.7%**
- 👍 **Good – 12.7%**
- **Neither Good nor Poor – 5.1%**
- **Poor – 2.9%**
- **Very Poor – 2.7%**
- **Don't know – 0.9%**

We were pleased to see many positive comments about our friendly and professional staff, helpful reception teams, nursing staff and clinicians, as well as patients who felt listened to, reassured and well cared for.

Your feedback also highlighted areas where we can do better. Some patients told us about difficulties accessing appointments, waiting times, communication, prescription and administrative delays, and challenges using automated systems.

We recognise how frustrating these experiences can be, particularly when you are unwell or need help quickly. We are continuing to look at these areas, with a particular focus on improving access, keeping patients informed about delays, making communication clearer and ensuring that patients who struggle with digital or automated systems can still access appropriate support.

We would like to thank all our patients for their honest and constructive feedback. Every response helps us to understand your experience and identify where changes can make a positive difference.



Calmer Cafes in Shropshire - Ellesmere



This service is designed for people who may be struggling with their mental health. We provide a safe space to talk and receive peer support.

PEER-SUPPORT SESSIONS IN Ellesmere

DAYS & TIMES	VENUE
MONTHLY POP-UP CAFE 2PM - 4PM	OUR SPACE, ELLESMERE, SY12 0AE

BOOKING INFORMATION

These facilitated sessions run monthly with a maximum of 6 persons per session.
These smaller groups allow for greater opportunity for sharing and peer connection.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CALL **01743 368 647** TO FIND OUT WHEN THE NEXT SESSION IS PLANNED AND BOOK YOUR PLACE

Call us on our 24/7 supportline **01743 368 647** for more information

Registered charity: 1003117 | www.shropshiremhs.com
01743 368 647