



## HAYFEVER UPDATE

### Who is at risk?

Hay fever is one of the most common allergic conditions. It is estimated that there are more than 10 million people with hay fever in England. Hay fever usually begins in childhood or during the teenage years, but you can get it at any age. The condition is more common in boys than in girls. In adults, men and women are equally affected. Hay fever is more likely if there is a family history of allergies, particularly asthma or eczema.

### What can you do?

Many cases of hay fever can be controlled using over the counter medication available from your pharmacist and a visit to the doctor is not always necessary however if your symptoms are not controlled or are particularly severe you should make an appointment to see your GP as you may benefit from prescription medication. There is a lot more information available on the NHS choices website at: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hay-fever/pages/introduction.aspx>

## DON'T BE A DNA



During March, April and May there were 190 missed appointments, this has improved slightly since the last quarter but we would still ask that you let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend an appointment either here at the surgery or with another healthcare provider such as the hospital.

## CHANGES TO BLOOD TESTS

Blood test clinics have now been increased at Solihull hospital and reduced at Boots in Mell Square. If you need a blood test, the following clinics and times are now available to you:

**BOOTS Offer a walk in clinic, Monday to Friday – 8.30am to 4pm.**

*No longer available weekends*

**SOLIHULL HOSPITAL Phlebotomy Service** has extended their service to include the following clinics:

• MONDAY – FRIDAY 9AM – 4.30PM

• SATURDAY 9AM – 12 NOON • SUNDAY 10.30AM – 1.30PM

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO TAKE YOUR FORM WITH YOU, THE RESULTS WILL BE SENT DIRECT TO YOUR GP.**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We have the following protected learning days at the practice that are part of the Solihull NHS planned calendar of training events we will therefore be closed from 1.00pm on the following dates:

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> November

We will be closed for Bank holiday Monday on 26<sup>th</sup> August

## PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Our PPG is looking to recruit some new members, you can be any age, male or female and all we ask is that you can give us your ideas and that you attend and participate in our meetings that are usually held around every 10 weeks. Please ask at reception for more information.

*We recently held our Dementia Focus Evening and it was specifically aimed at patients, carers, family members and anyone who is affected by dementia of any kind. We had two wonderful guest speakers from the Alzheimer's society and Helping Hands who provided us with information about what is on offer for patients and family members locally and they shared some wonderful real life stories about people living with dementia.*

*The evening was a real success and everyone who attended certainly took something from the evening that would be of practical use to them.*

*We will be holding another event in the near future and would love to see more people there, I am sure it would be of some benefit to you.*

We can now refer you directly to the Alzheimer's society if you have dementia so please either ask at reception or at your next appointment with your doctor, and you will find that there is more support for you and your carers available from them.



## Your local NHS says CHOOSE WELL

The NHS is appealing to Solihull people not to go to A&E departments unless they genuinely have a very serious or life threatening health problem.

Every year hospitals report that an increasing number of people are using A&E, when there are more suitable health services available. This is costing the NHS millions of pounds that could be spent on other services, and taking up A&E doctors' and nurses' time that could be spent on those with the most serious of illnesses.

The Choose Well campaign aims to encourage people to find a more appropriate service for minor injuries and ailments. In particular, the campaign will focus on providing information to:

- families with young children
- young people aged 15 – 24
- people with long term conditions such as diabetes or respiratory problems.

The Choose Well campaign asks the public to think about how serious their health problem is and then choose the right service.

- For very minor problems such as a hangover, indigestion, or a grazed knee, people should self-care
- For minor infections, coughs and colds, advice can be given by local pharmacies
- For ailments such as stomach pain and vomiting, a persistent cough or ear pain, call your GP surgery, or if the surgery is closed contact the 'out-of-hours' GP service, or visit your local walk in centre or minor injuries unit. Details can be found at [www.nhs.uk/choosewell](http://www.nhs.uk/choosewell)

If you are not sure which service to choose, call GP's out-of-hours service or visit NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

## NHS 111 service

NHS 111 is a new service that's being introduced to make it easier for you to access local NHS healthcare services. NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

### When to use it

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. Therefore call 111 if:

- You need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next

For less urgent health needs, contact your GP or local pharmacist in the usual way.

For immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.

### How does it work?

The NHS 111 service is staffed by a team of fully trained advisers, supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. They will ask you questions to assess your symptoms, then give you the healthcare advice you need or direct you straightaway to the local service that can help you best. That could be A&E, an out of hours doctor, an urgent care centre or a walk in centre, community nurse, an emergency dentist or a late-opening chemist.

Where possible, the NHS 111 team will book you an appointment or transfer you directly to the people you need to speak to.

If NHS 111 advisers think you need an ambulance, they will immediately arrange for one to be sent to you.

Calls to 111 are recorded. All calls and the records created are maintained securely, and will only be shared with others directly involved with your care.



**when it's less urgent than 999**

## And Finally!

As a result of patient suggestions and comments we are in the process of purchasing some new chairs with arms for the reception area and we hope you will find them much more comfortable to sit in and easier to get out of!