

Talkback

NHS

Basildon and Brentwood
Clinical Commissioning Group

**November -
December 2017**

Welcome

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Hello,

Well, as the winter months approach, in this edition we focus on articles and advice to help you and your loved ones stay well during the colder weather.

Cold and damp weather can make us all more vulnerable to illness, particularly Flu which can be serious, so it is really important that people who are at an increased risk of catching Flu have their free vaccination each year. This year children are also being offered the Flu vaccination, in the form of a nasal spray, not only to protect themselves but also to stop the spread of the illness to other family members. Take a look at the article on Page 2 to find out who should have the vaccine.



Basildon and Brentwood Clinical Commissioning Group is a team of GPs and officers who choose and buy most of the NHS health services for Basildon, Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford. NHS England commission GP services in this locality.

The CCG is supporting Self Care Week in November (13 –19) and staff will be out and about at various venues offering information and advice about taking care of your mental and physical wellbeing to ensure you and your loved ones stay as healthy as possible. Self Care is about knowing how to take medicines properly, treating minor ailments yourself and seeking advice from appropriate experts such as your local pharmacist. It's important to make sure your medicine cabinet is well stocked with the essentials so you are prepared for common ailments such as coughs and colds. Patients who are involved in Patient Participation Groups at some GP practices in Basildon and Brentwood will be running information stands in their practices, so if you do visit your GP during that week take the opportunity to have a chat with the patient reps about the information and advice on display. I'm sure they will also be happy to tell you how you can get more involved in local health services by joining your Patient Participation Group.

Keep well and enjoy the festive season!

Alison Reeve – Lay Member, Patient and Public Involvement

Working for a better NHS for everybody

Helping you to stay well this winter

Winter can be seriously bad for our health, especially for people aged 65 or older and people with long term conditions.

The cold and damp weather, ice, snow and high winds can all aggravate any existing health problems and make us more vulnerable to illnesses that are more common in winter.

But there are lots of things you can do to stay well this winter.

Flu strikes in winter and it can be far more serious than you think. Flu can lead to serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia, and it can be deadly.

That's why it's very important that people who are at increased risk from flu have their free flu vaccination every year.

If you're eligible for a free flu vaccination and not yet had it, speak to your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist.

Also, don't forget that if you're aged 65 or over, you are eligible for the pneumococcal vaccine, which will help protect you from pneumococcal diseases such as pneumonia.

Keep warm as the weather chills

It's important to keep warm in winter - both inside and outdoors.

Heat your home to at least 18C (65F)

You might prefer your main living room to be slightly warmer.

Keep your bedroom window closed at night on winter nights

Breathing cold air can be bad for your health as it increases the risk of chest conditions.

Keep active when you're indoors

Try not to sit still for more than an hour or more.

Wear several layers of light clothes

Light layers trap warm air better than one bulky layer.

Make sure you're receiving all the help you're entitled to

Check at www.gov.uk/phe/keep-warm

Who should have the flu vaccine

You should have the free flu vaccine if you have any of the following medical conditions (this includes children and babies over six months of age):

- a heart problem
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties including emphysema or severe asthma
- a kidney disease
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as steroid medication or cancer treatment)
- liver disease
- had a stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- diabetes
- a neurological condition e.g. multiple sclerosis (MS), cerebral palsy or a learning disability
- a problem with your spleen e.g. sickle cell disease or you have had your spleen removed
- are seriously overweight

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness in children.

This year all two, three and four-year-olds and children in school years 1,2,3,4 are being offered the free flu vaccination. Children in years 5 and 6 are also being offered protection in Basildon and Brentwood.

As well as protecting children, the infection is then less able to spread to other family members and friends including their parents and grandparents. For most children the vaccine is given as a nasal spray so it is painless and easy to have.

You should also have a flu vaccination if you are:

- pregnant
- aged 65 years or over
- living in a residential care home
- a carer
- living with someone who is immunocompromised
- a health or social care worker with direct patient/service user contact

Get advice from your pharmacist

Winter can make existing health problems worse.

So if you feel like you're coming down with something, even if it's just a cough or a cold, don't wait until it gets worse. Act quickly. The sooner you get advice from a pharmacist the better.

Pharmacists are fully qualified to advise you on the best course of action. So go to see a pharmacist as soon as you start to feel unwell. This can be the best and quickest way to help you recover and get back to normal.

You can talk to your pharmacist in confidence, even about the most personal symptoms and you don't need to make an appointment.

Most pharmacies now have a private consultation area where you can discuss issues with your pharmacist without being overheard. Alternatively you can arrange a consultation over the phone.

If you can't get to a pharmacist yourself, ask someone to go for you or call your local pharmacy.

Offer a little extra help

Please remember that other people, such as older neighbours, friends and family members may need a bit of extra help over the winter. There's a lot you can do to help people who are more frail than you.

Keep in touch with your friends, neighbours and family and ask if they need any practical help, or if they're feeling under the weather.

Offer to get some shopping so that they're stocked up with enough food supplies for a few days, in case they can't go out.

Ask about their stock of prescription medicines

Remind them to check they've got the prescription medicines they need to see them through the Christmas holidays or when bad weather is forecast.

Is your medicine cabinet fit for the winter?

Most common winter ailments, such as colds, sore throat, cough, sinusitis or painful middle ear infection (earache) can't be treated with antibiotics.

What works instead?

Rest, drink plenty of fluids, take pain relievers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen and talk to your pharmacist for advice on getting the relief you need.

How long can I expect to suffer?

Middle ear infection - 4 days
Sore throat - 1 day
Cold - 1.5 weeks
Sinusitis - 2.5 weeks
Cough - 3 weeks



What should I do now?

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to meet your family's needs.

Be prepared for common ailments by keeping a well stocked medicine cabinet at home

Painkillers like aspirin, paracetamol and ibuprofen (aspirin mustn't be given to children under 16)

Oral rehydration salts to replace water and essential minerals lost in illnesses such as fever, diarrhoea and vomiting

Anti-diarrhoea tablets to control symptoms of diarrhoea ((do not give to children under 12)

Indigestion treatment - if you have stomach ache or heartburn, a simple antacid will reduce stomach acidity and bring relief

A first aid kit can help treat minor cuts, sprains and bruises and reduce the risk of cuts becoming infected. It should contain bandages, plasters, a thermometer, antiseptic, eyewash solution, sterile dressings, medical tape and tweezers for taking our splinters.

Always keep medicines out of reach of the reach and sight of children.

SELF CARE WEEK**NHS**

Embracing Self Care for Life

**13-19 November 2017** www.nhs.uk/selfcare

Self Care is about keeping yourself and your loved ones as fit and healthy as possible.

It's about knowing how to take medicines properly, treating minor ailments yourself and seeking the expert advice of your local pharmacist in the first instance.

If you have a long-term condition, self care is about understanding that condition and learning how to manage it well.

Basildon and Brentwood CCG is supporting Self Care Week from 13-19 November 2017 with advice for all ages on taking care of your physical and mental wellbeing.

Look out for events happening locally during Self Care Week.

Patients involved in Patient Participation Groups at some GP practices in Basildon and Brentwood will be running information stands and setting up displays.

CCG staff will be out and about in Self Care Week at the following locations and times:

- Tuesday November 14, 10am-3pm – stand in Outpatients at Basildon Hospital
- Thursday November 16, 10am-3pm – stand at Brentwood Community Hospital
- Friday 17 November, 12noon-4pm – stand at George Hurd Centre, Basildon SS14 2AB

Factsheets for common ailments



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Factsheets and other self care resources are available to download at www.basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk
If you would like a copy and do not have access to a computer, please call 01268 594617 to request a pack.

Self Care Forum

Helping people take care of themselves

You can find this set of fact sheets for common ailments on the Basildon and Brentwood CCG website at www.basildonandbrentwoodccg.nhs.uk

As well as useful facts and what you can expect in the normal progression, duration and recovery when a common illness occurs, the fact sheets have advice on what you can do to help yourself.

There's also "red flags" for when you should seek medical help and links to where you can find more information.

There are 14 fact sheets covering:

1. Low Back Pain
2. Eczema
3. Heartburn and indigestion
4. Fever in Children
5. Constipation
6. Headache and migraine
7. Coughs
8. Acne
9. Sprains and strains
10. Sore throat
11. Otitis Media (Middle Ear Infection)
12. Common Cold
13. Sinusitis
14. Urine symptoms in men

Living with Diabetes Day is hailed a success

On Friday 29 September, the CCG held a 'Living with Diabetes Day' in conjunction with Diabetes UK at Basildon Sporting Village.

The day focused on providing people with Type 2 diabetes with information on diabetes care, diet, foot care, eye care, mental health and exercise.

If you were unable to attend the event but would like to self refer onto a local diabetes education programme, please email swe.diabetics@nhs.net or call 0300 300 1509



Living with Diabetes Day: patients said they felt well informed and empowered to manage their diabetes.

NOVEMBER MOVEMBER FOCUS ON MEN'S HEALTH



November (or Movember) is the awareness month dedicated to helping men live happier, healthier and longer lives.

Every year the month of November is “taken over” by the Movember Foundation - a global charity which creates positive change for men’s health by raising awareness and funding projects on prostate cancer, testicular cancer, poor mental health and physical inactivity.

It’s the month for men to “Grow a Mo” and use their moustaches to inspire donations or start conversations around men’s health.

Anyone can join the Movember Foundation’s “How to Move” challenge by setting a challenging distance goal and then walking, running, cycling, swimming or rowing towards it.

To get involved in supporting Movember visit uk.movember.com

Dates for the diary

Thursday 23 November 1.30pm at Phoenix Place, Christopher Martin Road, Basildon SS14 3HG: Basildon and Brentwood CCG Board Meeting in public.

Tuesday 14 November, 10am-3pm at Basildon Hospital Outpatients: CCG information stand.

Tuesday 5 December, 10am-3pm at Basildon Hospital Outpatients: CCG information stand.

The five health symptoms men should not ignore

NHS Choices has a wealth of information on men’s health.

A lump on your testicle

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men aged 20-35. If you notice a lump or abnormality in your testicles, first see your GP. Most testicular lumps are not cancer but treatment is much more effective if cancer is diagnosed early.

Moles

Check your moles regularly and be aware of any change in colour or shape, or if they start bleeding. See your GP if a mole looks unusual or becomes itchy. It can then be checked and removed if necessary.

Feeling depressed

If you’re depressed, you may have lost interest in things you used to enjoy. If you’ve been having feelings of extreme sadness, contact your GP.

Trouble urinating

When the prostate is enlarged, it can press on the tube that carries urine from the bladder. This can make it hard to pass urine which can be a sign of prostate disease, including cancer. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the UK. Other symptoms include pain or burning when you pass urine and frequently waking up at night to pee. If you have any of these symptoms, see your GP.

Impotence

Most men have problems getting or keeping an erection (impotence) at some point. See your GP if your erection problems last for several weeks.

Helping you take the first step on your journey back to work

If you're thinking about returning to work after being unemployed for longer than 12 months and feel like you need some support then an Essex based project could be just what you need.

HeadsUp is a free programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund and is designed to help people who have a common mental health problem such as anxiety or depression find and maintain work after a period of long-term unemployment.

People wishing to take part will be matched with a peer support worker, someone who has been in a similar situation and has returned to work, who will help you to improve the practical skills you need to help you find a job such as writing a great CV or practicing interview techniques. As well as the practical stuff, the programme also places a great deal of emphasis on exploring and dealing with the emotional barriers that could be standing in your way of returning to work. Through a series of interactive workshops you'll identify these barriers and find ways to boost your self-confidence, take charge of your well-being and learn tricks to increase your personal resilience.

The support you receive will last for as long as you need it, even once you've found a job. You can move through the programme at a pace that suits you and be confident that you'll be supported all the way through by your peer support worker.

If you're ready to make some positive changes to your life and take the first step on your journey back to work then visit www.enableeast.org.uk/headsup to find out how to access the programme.

If you live in Basildon and Brentwood districts you can call **07880 035969**.

You can also follow the programme on social media @HeadsUpEssex.

TAKE THE FIRST STEP

We'll help you gain the confidence to get back into the workplace.

HeadsUp provides support, advice and mentoring to people with common mental health problems to help them get back into the workplace after a period of long-term unemployment.



Strength in numbers

You'll work with a peer support worker (someone who's been in your shoes) to improve the practical skills you need to help you find a job such as writing a great CV.



Boost your confidence

Take part in interactive workshops designed to explore the emotional obstacles that might be standing in the way of you finding a job such as anxiety or negative thought patterns.

ENABLEEAST.ORG.UK/HEADSUP

[f /HeadsUpEssex](https://www.facebook.com/HeadsUpEssex) [t @HeadsUpEssex](https://twitter.com/HeadsUpEssex)

HeadsUp is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund.



To take part in the HeadsUp innovative new employability programme, you must:

- **Have been unemployed or economically inactive for longer than 12 months (or six months if you are 25 or younger).**
- **Have a common mental health problem such as anxiety or depression**
- **Live in Essex**
- **You must have the right to work in the UK**

You must also be genuinely ready and committed to make positive changes to your life.

A word with the doctor - advice for better respiratory health from Dr Ken Wrixon

Now the clocks have changed and the evenings are drawing in, it's time to spend a little bit of time planning for the winter ahead. I don't just mean starting to buy Christmas presents, there are lots of things you can do to ensure a healthy season ahead!

Preparation is important at this time of year, especially for those with respiratory illness, as the cold weather is often a trigger for deterioration in your condition. Plan ahead - have you had your annual review with your GP or Specialist Nurse? Are you up to date with your vaccinations, especially flu and pneumonia vaccinations, which help prevent respiratory illnesses?

At this time of year it is important to take your medications regularly - have you had your prescriptions reviewed and do you have the right medications on standby, in case your health deteriorates? Do you know who you will turn to for advice, or rely on for support if you become unwell?

Don't wait for the New Year resolution to think about stopping smoking, now is the best time to quit. GP surgeries can offer advice and support, as well as our local Smoking Cessation Services.

Although your GP surgery is there should you need them during the winter months, there are several illnesses which can be safely treated at home.

Sore throats are common in winter and are almost always caused by viral infections. There's some evidence that changes in temperature, such as going from a warm, centrally heated room to the icy outdoors, can also affect the throat. One quick and easy remedy for a sore throat is to gargle with warm salty water. Dissolve one teaspoon of salt in a glass of part-cooled boiled water. It won't heal the infection, but it has anti-inflammatory properties and can have a soothing effect.

You can help prevent **colds** by washing your hands regularly. This destroys bugs that you may have picked up from touching surfaces used by other people, such as light switches and door handles.

Handwashing can also help prevent tummy upset, such as gastroenteritis. When people are ill with **vomiting and diarrhoea**, it's important to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Young children and the elderly are especially at risk. By drinking oral rehydration fluids (available from pharmacies), you can reduce the risk of dehydration.

Winter is a time when people can feel lonely and isolated. Do you know any elderly people who live alone locally? Find ways you can do your bit to help lonely or socially isolated elderly people in your community, including how to volunteer for organisations that support older people.

By planning ahead and keeping warm and active you can ensure you have a happy and healthy season ahead.

Keeping in touch...

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