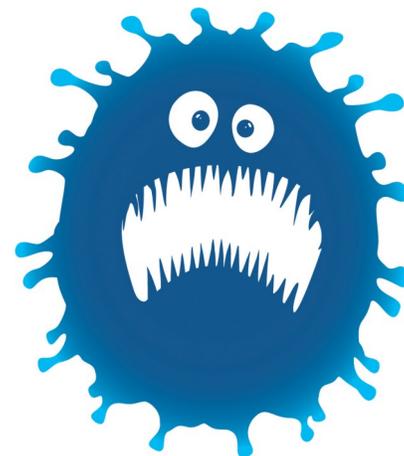




In touch

with your local NHS

No more excuses Facts about Flu



With Christmas around the corner and the winter period well underway, doctors across Cannock Chase have been busy trying to keep you well. Inevitably this has led to an increased focus on the flu virus and what they can do to protect their more vulnerable patients.

At best the flu is a nasty disease that can make the healthiest of people unwell for a number of days. At worst it can lead to complications such as pneumonia and bronchitis and can even be fatal.

Flu symptoms can also hit quite suddenly and can be very severe. They usually include fever, chills, headaches and aching muscles. You can also get a cough and a sore throat as well. Because Flu is caused by a virus and not bacteria, antibiotics will not treat it, however the flu vaccine will help to prevent you getting the virus in the first place.

The vaccine is completely safe and has been used for many years. However, there is still some confusion around who is eligible for the vaccine and here we try to tackle some of the misunderstanding and the myths that have developed over the years.

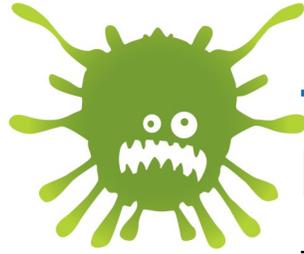
Anyone can get flu, but it can be more serious for certain people, such as:

- People aged 65 or over
- People with a serious medical condition
- Pregnant women

If you are in one of these groups (or have one of the conditions listed on page 2) you are more vulnerable to the effects of flu (even if you are generally fit and healthy) and could develop flu complications. These are the more serious illnesses such as bronchitis and pneumonia and could result in hospitalisation. Flu can also make existing medical conditions worse.

Ensuring people live healthier, longer lives

Should you have the flu jab?



New Opening Hours for Cannock's Minor Injuries Unit

If you are 65 years old or over you should have the flu vaccine. You should also have the vaccine if you are pregnant or have any of the following problems, regardless of your age:

- a serious heart complaint
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including asthma, bronchitis and emphysema
- serious kidney disease
- diabetes
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment such as steroid medication or cancer treatment
- if you have had a stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- if you have a problem with your spleen or have had your spleen removed
- if you are a nominated carer for someone
- your GP may also advise you to have a flu jab if you have serious liver disease, multiple sclerosis or some other diseases of the nervous system

Children aged two; three and four by 1st September 2014 are also eligible for the flu vaccine as well as at risk pupils from the Fluenze Pilot for school years 7 and 8, who do not meet the inclusion criteria (e.g. have an egg allergy).

ALL of the practices within the Cannock Chase area will be allowing patients to either drop in on a designated day or to pre-book for their flu jab. Contact your GP practice to get further details about how you can get yours.

The opening hours at the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) in Cannock Chase Hospital have changed.

From December 1st onwards this means the MIU will be open seven days a week with the new opening hours of 10:30am until 6:30pm.

Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) Governing Body approved the proposal to reduce the opening hours at the unit, following a four-week consultation with the public, held during September. CCG Chairman Dr Johnny McMahon said:

"The CCG listened carefully to the debates held throughout the consultation process and we believe that many of the matters raised have been addressed.

"These measures will ensure that the reduction in hours can be implemented from December 1st safely and appropriately to ensure patients continue to have access to high quality, safe services". He added: "A range of alternative health services are available and we are communicating these in a number of ways to the public of Cannock Chase, including taking out advertising with the local media, producing and distributing information to house-holds in the area and sharing the message at supermarkets and through schools.

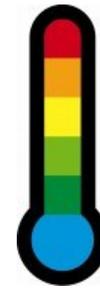
"We will carry on raising awareness of the health services available, as the public told us during the consultation that they weren't clear on what services they should be accessing and that is something we need to help change."

For more information on Choose Well please go to www.cannockchaseccg.nhs.uk.



Helping you to

Choose Well



**Choose
well.**

in Cannock Chase

Healthcare leaders are rolling out a campaign across Cannock Chase to ensure people have all the information they need to 'Choose Well' when they need to access healthcare services.

Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) launched Choose Well to try to help people understand the medical help available to them and where they can go for treatment when they need it in the quickest, most effective and most appropriate way.

Chair of Cannock Chase CCG, Dr Johnny McMahon, said: "A lot of people who need some form of medical treatment will just turn up at A&E, often completely unnecessarily, inconveniencing themselves and adding pressure to a system that is already very busy, especially at this time of year.

"The reality is there are a long list of alternatives and more often than not, people can get the care they need quicker and more conveniently elsewhere."

Dr McMahon said the CCG was focussing on getting the message out to people all over Cannock Chase in as many different ways as possible and making sure they knew what healthcare services were available in their area and what those services were best used for.

"During our consultation into Cannock's Minor Injuries Unit, one of the things people told us was that they wanted to know exactly what health services were available to them and how to access them," he said. "So in response to that, we're trying to find as many different ways as possible to get this message across.

"We've been talking to local papers and radio stations about sharing the message, using our own website and Twitter account, putting banners, posters and flyers in GP Practices, Cannock Chase Hospital, council offices, leisure centres, children's centres and even local supermarkets where CCG staff have been handing out information on some of the busiest shopping days of the year," said Dr McMahon.

"We're even going into primary schools to work with children on developing a message that can be rolled out locally in the form of a game."

The Choose Well campaign aims to help people understand the options available and improve their experience of local health services, pointing people in the most appropriate direction to treat everything from a grazed knee and diarrhoea to a sprained ankle and chest pain. A copy of the banner, can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

Keep A&E free for emergencies only



The table below shows you the health services you can access for everything from a grazed knee and diarrhoea to a sprained ankle and chest pain.

Self-care 	Grazed Knee Cough or cold Sore throat	Make sure your medicine cupboard is stocked up with over the counter remedies
NHS 111 	Unsure Unwell Confused Need to know where to go	When you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
Pharmacy 	Diarrhoea Runny Nose Headache	For advice on common illnesses and medicines to treat them
Your GP and Out of Hours 	Ear pain Backache Throat infection	If you have an illness or injury that won't go away make an appointment to see your GP. If it's outside your GP's opening hours, you can telephone your GP surgery to be directed to the local 'Out of Hours' service.
Minor Injuries Unit or Walk-in Centre 	Strains Sprains Stitches Burns	For minor injuries and illnesses which can be treated by an experienced nurse. Local provision and opening times may vary, call 111 for further advice or download the app.
A&E and 999 	Choking Chest pain Blackout Blood loss	Life threatening situations and emergency



You can now download the free Choose Well app for information about the nearest GP, MIU, Pharmacy and A&E department wherever you are in Staffordshire.





New **Electronic** **Prescription Service** launched across Cannock Chase



Dr Mo Huda

An innovative electronic service is set to be launched for patients in Cannock Chase, making collecting your prescription simpler and more convenient than ever.

The free NHS service - which will reduce the need for patients to visit GP surgeries just to collect a paper prescription – is being introduced at a number of GP practices in the area from December.

The Red Lion Surgery in Cannock, the Horsefair Practice in Rugeley and the Essington Medical Centre will be the first to go live in the Cannock Chase area with the remaining practices going live during 2015.

Dr Mo Huda, a local GP and Clinical Lead for IT at Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) – the healthcare body responsible for introducing the new service to the county town - said: “The Electronic Prescription Service, or EPS, gives patients the chance to choose to have their prescriptions sent electronically, and securely, from their GP to a pharmacy or dispensing outlet of their choice.

“That means people can choose a pharmacy that is convenient to them, such as one near to work, home or on the route of their weekly shop.

“It also means people won’t have to make a trip to their GP surgery just to collect a prescription, something that will be especially useful to those patients who receive repeat prescriptions. Because prescriptions will be prepared in advance, the EPS should also reduce the time patients have to spend waiting in the pharmacy,” he said.

Patients who want to start using EPS can talk to their pharmacist or GP and nominate a pharmacy or dispensing appliance contract (DAC) that they wish to collect their prescriptions from in the future. Patients who wish to continue to use paper prescriptions do not need to do anything.

Dr Huda added: “Electronic prescribing can be hugely beneficial for patients, GP surgeries and community pharmacies, and makes the process of getting a prescription simpler and more convenient for patients.

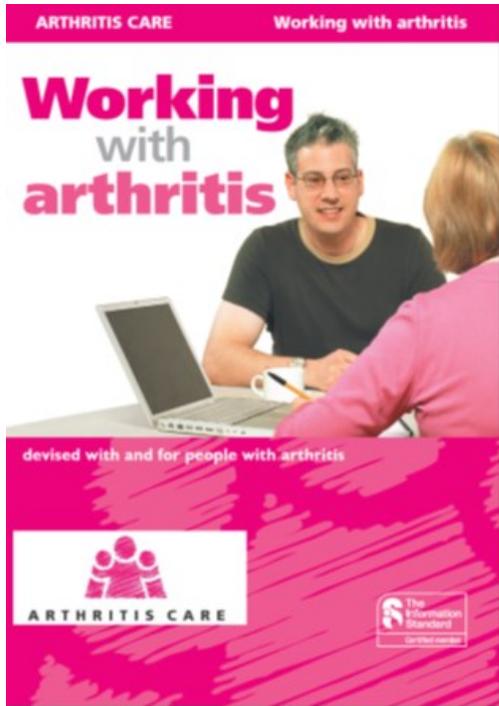
“Cannock Chase CCG is working closely with local surgeries and pharmacies to ensure this service is available for all local residents in the coming months.”

Arthritis Care



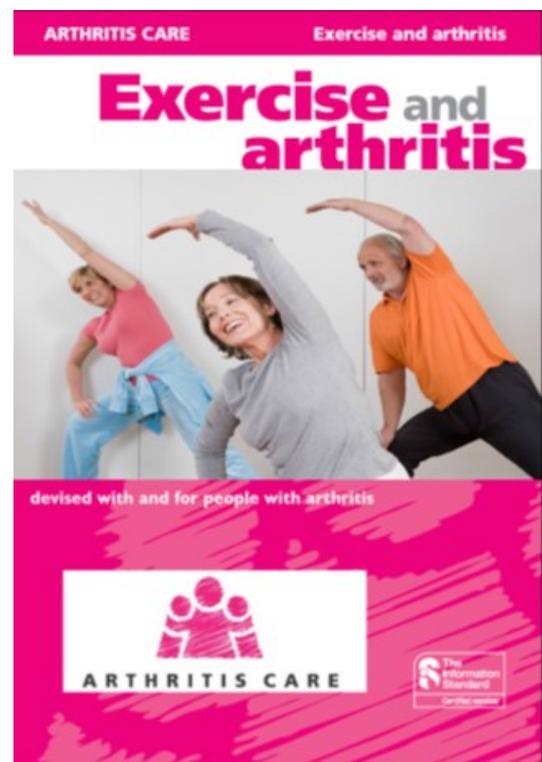
ARTHRITIS CARE

There are around 10 million people with arthritis in the UK. That's 10 million individuals, plus their families, each affected in a unique way.



Arthritis means inflammation of the joints. Most people with arthritis will experience pain and difficulty moving around.

Around 10 million people in the UK have arthritis and, like them, you can take control of your symptoms and continue to have a good quality of life.



Arthritis is not just a disease of older people – it can affect people of all ages, including children. It is not clear what causes arthritis and there is no cure at present.

However, there is plenty you can do to manage your condition and lead a full and active life.

For further information and advice please click on this link <http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk/Home>

Members Wanted

You are receiving this newsletter because you want to have more say in the NHS and actively participate in designing and shaping healthcare services.

At Cannock Chase CCG we need more people like you. So, if you know someone who would be interested in becoming a member please encourage them to join.

As you know, there is no time commitment required and members can be involved as little or as much as they like, joining is as simple as completing our Online Membership Registration Form or completing a membership form that can be obtained from GP Practices.