



FLU SEASON 2009

Hello to all our Patients!

We thought it may be a good opportunity to write this newsletter as we see the majority of our Patients for their annual flu jab. Whilst writing this, we are still waiting for information on the provision of the swine flu vaccine, so we may see some of you more than once this year! This time of year is hectic for us all, and for us, to vaccinate thousands of people with the minimum wait, yet most effective system is always a challenge. Thank you to all of you who let us know how good the service is - unless this year is very different, none of you will have to wait long in the surgery for your vaccine. But thank you for your patience if there is a delay this year!

We are noticing an increase in the number of people who run out of their medication and ask us to prepare an immediate prescription. All of us know that sometimes we are not as organised as we should be and this can happen, but the amount of work that goes into preparing your prescription should not be underestimated! The number of issues are checked, as are any requirements for blood tests, blood pressure checks, any interactions with other medication you may have been started on and so on. Whilst the paper issue can be run off quickly by the prescriptions clerk, the Doctor who signs the prescription is under an obligation to check that it is safe for you to take - so interrupting them "between Patients", whilst they are taking telephone calls, looking at results or many of the other tasks they have to do is not appropriate. We also are concerned that Patients don't know what to do, should they discover they have run out on a weekend when we are closed. To order a repeat prescription - order on line (WWW.AbbeyMeadSurgery.co.uk); drop your repeat order either through our letter box when we are closed, in person, or by post - if you enclosed a stamped self-addressed envelope we will post it back to you. Or you can make an arrangement with any of the local chemists to collect your paper prescription so that the medication is ready for you to collect - they collect from us every afternoon. We must ask you to allow 48 hours for your prescription to be ready to collect - if you do run out, and need an emergency supply, we may be able to organise it, but you will have to call back and it will not be able to be issued while you wait. If you do run out of medication, you can go to your regular chemist, and they may be able to provide you with a 7 day supply.

NEW SERVICE.....NEW SERVICE.....NEW SERVICE.....NEW SERVICE.....NEW SERVICE.....

We are delighted to introduce to you our new **SIGNPOSTING** service. Our Nurses hold a short telephone session each day, where they can give advice on minor illnesses - so the things that you need clinical advice for on the same day and probably do not need an appointment for. Our Receptionists will offer this to you, and if you think it could help, then a slot will be booked for you and the Nurse will ring you back. We have trialled it through the summer and the feedback has been very good. So if you don't know where to go to get some medical advice - try our Signposting service - and if they can't help, they will point you in the right direction! They work very closely with the Duty Doctor of the day, so it helps them too.

Please do use the rest of the Team for any other queries - our Receptionists can pass on information to your Doctor, our Secretarial Team can deal with any issues regarding hospital appointments or referrals, our Dispensers and Prescriptions Clerks can help with anything to do with prescriptions - all of these work with our Doctors and of course, do not make any clinical decisions themselves! However, this does help the Doctors to deal with the clinical, rather than the administrative side, as a priority. So if you are not sure who can help you - if when you ring you tell the Receptionist what you need some help with, they can direct you to the most appropriate person!

We also really wanted to thank those of you who completed the questionnaire sent to you at home, by the Department of Health. This was based on access and ease of making appointments here at Abbey Mead. Completely due to **your** responses, we were one of the few Surgeries who achieved the standard that the Department were looking for. We try to keep as accessible as possible - we feel our Signposting system will help continue this high standard. **THANK YOU.**

PATIENT PARTICIPATION - we are keen to start a Patient Participation Group, to provide feedback as to how we could develop in the future. Doesn't need to be too time consuming, but maybe meet a few times a year, but would need to be Patient led. If you are interested, please contact our Practice Manager. We have tried to do this previously from time to time and not had a great response - but we will keep on trying!