

THE FRIENDS OF STAPLEHURST HEALTH CENTRE

NEWSLETTER No. 54

FEBRUARY, 2021

Sponsored by Staplehurst Community Events Group

CLINICAL SYSTEM UPGRADE

By the time you read this the Health Centre's Clinical IT system will have been upgraded as instructed by the Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group to be the EMIS web which is used widely throughout the NHS. There will inevitably have been some inconvenience to patients and staff whilst the upgrade was under way but we believe that this new system will provide a more efficient way of managing your healthcare needs by introducing better ways of working for our practice, and also enable us to be better connected to other NHS services both locally and nationally.

INFORMATION ON COVID-19 VACCINE

All patients aged 70 and over have been offered their first Covid-19 vaccination and a total of around 1100 patients have been involved. None of the 11 GP practices in the Weald Primary Care Network (PCN) were awarded contracts to vaccinate their patients and so patients were obliged to attend centres at the Headcorn surgery and airfield run by the Ridge PCN or the Ticehurst centre run by the Ticehurst Pharmacy. Around 50 patients who did not have their own transport were taken to the centre by Alison Smith, the Parish Clerk, Paddy Riordan, the Chairman of the Parish Council and some of their colleagues, and this kindness was much appreciated by those patients who needed help in travelling.

The next stage of the vaccination programme is to start on those between 18 and 69. They will receive letters from NHS England, inviting them to book appointments by E mail with a wide range of vaccination centres from which to choose.

HEALTH CENTRE CLOSURES FOR TRAINING

The Health Centre will be closed for professional development training from 1pm on the following dates in 2021:-

12 May 10 June

If you need to contact a doctor urgently on these afternoons phone 111.

STAYING WELL - ADVICE FROM THE BRITISH LUNG FOUNDATION

If you have asthma or COPD cold weather can cause a flare up or worsening of your lung condition but these are some of the things you can do to look after your lungs in cold weather:-

Check the weather before you go out and if its too cold or windy, you are not feeling well or having trouble breathing, stay indoors and keep warm. High humidity may affect your breathing. When you are out and about, make sure to keep your head, hands and feet warm by wearing a hat, gloves and an extra pair of socks if necessary. If you have a reliever inhaler, try using it 15 minutes before going outside, and carry it with you as cold air can tighten your airways, making it harder to breathe. Try to breathe through the nose as this will warm the air you breathe in. Cover your mouth with a scarf.

MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

An emergency information scheme, supported by Paddock Wood and District Lions, free to the user, low tech and simple to use.

This scheme is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their important personal and medical details on a standard form and in a common location – the fridge! This is where the emergency services expect to find it. They will know it is there because of two stickers provided in the bottle are stuck, one on the inside of the front door or main entrance and one on the fridge door.

It can save vital time and really helps the emergency service providing them with vital information when it is needed. Whilst focussed on the more vulnerable people in our community anyone can have an accident at home, so this scheme can benefit anyone.

Message in a Bottle is usually available free from health centres, GP practices and pharmacies but the current Covid pandemic has made this impractical. If you would like the Paddock Wood Lions to send you one of these bottles please ring 0345 833 9564 or email enquiries@paddockwoodlions.co.uk and the Lions will deliver it.

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY THE FRIENDS OF STAPLEHURST HEALTH CENTRE. Chairman: Mr. Rory Silkin, Secretary & Treasurer: Mr. Robin Oakley (Tel 01580 891516) Trustees: Mrs. Suzanne Douglas, Sister Alison Edwards, Mr. Lester Gosbee and Mr. Robin Kenworthy.

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Wellbeing in the Weald

This local organisation has the aim of promoting health and wellbeing to build a stronger community. Well-being is described in the English Oxford Dictionary as 'the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy'. These three things can mean something completely different to each one of us and each feeling can take many forms. Five steps to wellbeing can be as set out below:-

Connect: Talk and listen, be there, feel connected.

Be Active: Do what you can, enjoy what you do, move your mood.

Take Notice: Remember the simple things that bring you joy.

Keep Learning: Embrace new experiences, see opportunities, surprise yourself.

Give: Your time, your words, your presence.

Wellbeing is more to do with feeling good about ourselves, getting the most out of our lives and feeling connected to other people. It enables us to cope when life gets tough or when our health suffers.

For more information about Wellbeing in the Weald go to the website:

www.wellbeingintheweald.co.uk

ANTIBIOTICS Taking antibiotics when you don't need them puts you and your family at risk, as the harmful bacteria that live inside you are encouraged to become resistant. If you or a family member are feeling unwell, have a cold or flu and you haven't been prescribed antibiotics there are some self-care ways to help you feel better. Ask your pharmacist to recommend medicines to help with symptoms or pain. Get plenty of rest and make sure you drink enough water. If you have a fever it is a sign that your body is fighting the infection and usually gets better by itself in most cases. You can use paracetamol if you or any child over 12 years are uncomfortable as a result of fever, but do read the instructions as to dosage. Make sure you use a tissue for your nose and wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading your infection to family and friends.

HEALTH CENTRE ACCESS FOR CARE DURING COVID-19

NHS England and Public Health England have set out a protocol for GP practices everywhere, (not just Staplehurst) which states that all patients must be triaged and can only visit the surgery if requested by a clinician. This is to reduce the possibility of Covid infection being introduced into the building, which if it happened, would lead to a 2-day shut down for deep cleaning. The receptionists taking patient calls are doing what they have been instructed to do. Please respect them.

BEWARE OF SEPSIS

Sepsis occurs when the body's immune system's response to an injury or an infection is excessive and causes the body to attack itself, damaging tissues and organs. **Five people are killed by sepsis every hour in the UK, but sepsis can be successfully treated with antibiotics if diagnosed quickly.**

Sepsis sometimes begins with symptoms which resemble influenza, e.g. high body temperatures, severe breathlessness and muscle pain. Other signs of sepsis include urine retention, skin discolouration, speech slurring and a general feeling of feeling very unwell. In children there is the added possibility of convulsions, lethargy, rapid breathing and a rash which does not disappear when pressed on. The child may look pale and abnormally cold to the touch. If sepsis is suspected call the surgery or if it is out of hours dial 111.

Staplehurst Community Events Group is very pleased to support the Friends newsletter again for 2021.

Whilst hopefully, we will be able to arrange events this year, currently we cannot confirm anything. As things become clearer, and hopefully better for us all, we will get going and try and put on some great events for the community.

In the meantime, we'd like to welcome our latest committee member Katie Higgins, and thank her for organising the brilliant Christmas Tree and Lights at the Parade. She says...

The generous donations of the wider Staplehurst community raised just over £1000 for our Christmas tree fundraiser which meant that we were able to buy coloured lights for the whole of the parade plus a magnificent tree from Elphicks Christmas trees, together with lights and baubles for decorating the tree. The wonderful sewing talent of the Staplehurst WI were on display with their Christmas bunting and many individuals and local groups including the Knit and Natter group, all the Church groups, Staplehurst School and pre schools made angels to decorate the tree. Special thanks also go to Richard James who made the freestanding stars and of course the star for the top of the tree. The wonderful Payback team, Paddy and members of the Parish Council who did a great job of erecting the tree and putting the lights up, with huge help and thanks to Jon Grimwood with the cherry picker from Acorn plant hire.

The money raised more than covered the decorations and so we were able to spend £260 on food which we donated to the community Hub.

Truly a community effort and some much needed light and joy which brightened a difficult Christmas.

