

October in Kingstone Surgery

Our Saturday flu clinic on the 15th saw us vaccinating 693 patients on one day! Thank you all for being so cheerful and making a long day enjoyable. We will have more mid week clinics and another on Sunday 23rd- still with some slots left. We were able to get the COVID booster delivery in time for the 15th and so many chose to have both COVID and flu together. Although we will try to keep our COVID stocks up we cannot guarantee that this will be available at every flu clinic- we will do our best to save you a trip into town, though. As mentioned last month, everyone over 50 years is eligible for flu and Autumn COVID boosters this year, as are those under 50 years in 'at risk' groups.

The flu season is predicted to be more severe this winter, after 2 years of a relatively mild seasonal flu season (probably thanks to social distancing). Since the masks are now off, we DO recommend that all who are eligible book a vaccine. Remember that if you have an appointment for something unrelated, we may well be able to give you an 'opportunistic' jab at that time. The flu vaccine varies in the protection it gives year on year- usually between 30-60% against contracting flu. This year the strains have come from Darwin, Victoria, Phuket and Austria. It's almost as good as travelling somewhere exotic yourself!

In other news- thank you to those who have been making the most of our 'Herefordshire duty team' urgent on-the-day-phone-calls. Funding has been diverted from GP surgeries to provide this. The aim of it is to help recruit more GPs to Herefordshire, and also to be able to provide back up when there is unexpected illness in a surgery. When this happens we 'borrow' slots from other surgeries. As staff start getting ill with COVID this is helpful back-up for us, and allows us in turn to support our sister surgeries within our local 'Primary Care network' when emergencies arise. However, there are sometimes some teething issues, and so please feedback if there is anything we can do to improve the service.

Over the next few months you may also be offered appointments with Elaine Macguire and Sarah Ridley. They are 'Advance Nurse Practitioners' (or 'ANPs' - **more** NHS three letter acronyms). Kingstone has been very unusual in not having these clinicians on the team until now. They are experts in acute and short-term illness and provide excellent care and advice for on-the-day-emergencies.

Below is a photo of the used vaccine boxes from Saturday's clinic- each vial does 5-6 vaccines!



