

Kingstone May Newsletter 2024

May brings sunshine, news and politics. Plus some plant updates.

Covid vaccines: We vaccinated over 440 people in one weekend last month (>75 years or immunosuppressed patients). We are unable to run any further clinics at the surgery but you can still book to have a vaccine in town, if you are eligible. <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/covid-19-services/covid-19-vaccination-services/book-covid-19-vaccination/>. It was lovely to see so many of you, and special thanks to those who brought us some (delicious, almond) cupcakes to keep us going!

Measles Outbreak: From October to December 2023, England had 212 laboratory cases of measles, up from 21 the previous quarter, bringing last years total number to 362 (UK Health security Agency). Catching measles can lead to life changing issues for adults and children, such as blindness, deafness and swelling of the brain (encephalitis). Measles can also have a serious impact on pregnant women, potentially leading to premature birth, low birth weight and still birth. Health chiefs are urging anyone thinking about becoming pregnant to ensure their MMR vaccination status is up to date because the vaccine can't be given during pregnancy.

Two doses of the MMR vaccine are needed for maximum life-long protection, with the first dose given around a person's first birthday, and the second dose given at around three years and four months. However, anyone can catch up at any age on any missed doses and it's never too late to protect yourself. The vaccine doses are typically given via a single injection into the muscle of the thigh or upper arm and are usually delivered with their other one year and preschool vaccinations.

Politics: The BMA have announced that General practice is in crisis. I am sharing their figures which are very revealing...

- 1.9% (£178m) - national GP contract uplift for 2024/25 on offer from Government (way below inflation, again)
- £800m – value lost from the contract since 2019 due to cost inflation
- 1,900 - fewer full time, qualified GPs since September 2015 when....
- 6,000 - additional GPs were promised by this government in 2019
- 6.25 million - extra NHS general practice patients in Jan 2024 compared to 2015
- £107 – practice payment per patient per year (excluding PCN and COVID payments)

As our GP contract involves payment per patient (no matter how many times they visit the GP) then our healthy registered population cross-fund those who need healthcare more regularly. This is where you come in. If you know someone local who is NOT registered because they are well, - please ask them to join us, not to leave it until they become unwell and need our service!

Breast screening: This national program happens every 3 years for our women aged between 50 and 71 years. The Hereford and Worcester Breast Screening Service has told us they are due to target Kingstone patients for the 12th round of screening from June to August 2024. You will get a letter in the post from this external screening service inviting you.

Green fingers: Finally, one of our lovely patients noticed recently we are better at looking after people than plants. She has rescued and resurrected our reception desk succulent, and brought us a glorious companion for it (see below). And I have learnt a new word: Aeonium



Thank you to all of you who look after us.