

# Highfield News

*Friendly, Comprehensive Patient Care in Blackpool*

## Don't be floored by 'flu

Please book your flu jab as soon as you receive our letter or if any of the conditions listed below apply to you.

**Isn't the flu pandemic over?** Flu is seasonal. In the UK flu season starts in September, peaks from the end of November to January, and can last until spring. The NHS works out which flu strains to prepare for and the risk they pose by monitoring Australia's flu season. This year, indications are that swine flu could be worse than in 2010.

### Which jab do you give?

The jab is for both regular flu and H1N1 swine flu. Swine flu is very like a type of flu that was prevalent in the 1960s, so it is especially dangerous for people under 50 who will not have been exposed to it before. Both types of flu can cause serious complications such as lung infections and pneumonia.



**Indications are 2011's flu season will be worse than last year's**

**You should have a flu jab if you have:** heart disease, COPD, diabetes or asthma. Patients with long-standing liver, kidney, lung or neurological disease as well as patients over 65; or who have suppressed immunity; or who are pregnant (any stage); or who care for a sick or disabled family member; or who work with poultry should also have it. If you

don't meet the criteria but still want a jab, you can ring the surgery toward the end of December and if we have any spare vaccines we will gladly give you an injection. Flu vaccines must be ordered a year in advance—before we get our forecasts—but they have a very short shelf-life, so supplies have to be managed to avoid shortages.

## Patients take the lead

In July, Highfield Surgery established a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Ten patients now meet every few weeks with members of the Practice management team to support the Practice and help improve patient services.

The Group's first project has

been to set up a patient survey, which you may have seen at flu clinics or on the Practice website. The survey aims to find out what patients think of things like the new building, the improved telephone service and appointment waiting times. If you would like to receive a

copy of the research report, or take part in future surveys, or support the work of the PPG, or just stay up to date with Practice news, please send an email stating your interest to  
:highfieldsurgeryblackpool@gmail.com

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facebook

The Practice now has a Facebook page. You can find us at:

<http://on.fb.me/HighfieldSurgery>

Check out our page for useful links and Practice news, as well as more photos of our fantastic new building!

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# Patient facilities fit for the future

Back in the Spring, Highfield surgery finally moved into its new home in Lytham Road. South Shore Primary Care Centre is a purpose-built facility, and is on the site of the old South Shore Hospital. Highfield Surgery is on the top (second) floor.

The centre houses three GP practices and a large, modern pharmacy, as well as district nursing and health visiting services and some dentistry and outpatient services.

## Modern and efficient

The aim of the Centre is to provide the residents and GPs of south Blackpool



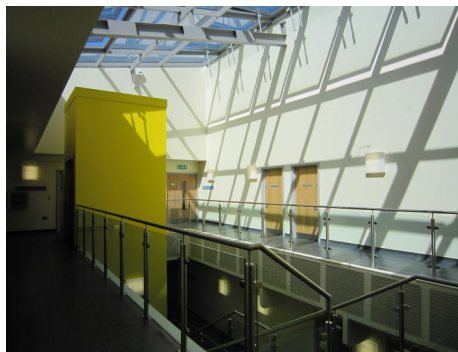
with modern facilities and improved services as well as comfortable, modern working conditions.

For the Highfield Practice, the most immediate benefit is much more space and better equipped rooms. The Highfield Practice offers extensive services with nine GPs (three female, six male), regular extended opening hours, and specialist small surgery, contraceptive and full travel vaccination services.

The new facilities mean all these services can now be provided in well-lit, accessible modern rooms with up-to-date equipment.

## Getting there

Patients will notice the difference from the moment they arrive. Unlike Garton Avenue, the new surgery building is well-served by the 11 bus on Lytham Road and the 5, 7 and 16 services close by. There is a facility for secure bicycle parking as well as far better car access



and parking facilities. There are 12 disabled bays, and the car park area has ample dropped kerbs for wheelchairs as well as tactile paving for sight-impaired patients.

The car park area has been planted with a range of decorative hedging and young trees which will fill out in time, softening the hard edges.

Inside, the entire building is wheelchair accessible, with automatic entryway doors, lifts to all floors, and comfortably wide corridors and internal doorways.

Patients can still check themselves in using the wall-mounted touch screens in the waiting room. There is now a reception desk that is treble the length of the one at Garton Avenue, making it much easier to deal with queues. The Patient Participation Group is actively asking patients what else the Practice could do to improve their waiting room experience, so please leave your suggestions at reception.

## By appointment

One of the smoothest elements of the move was the systems changeover. Staff and patient systems were moved over a weekend, minimising patient impact. While the popular EMIS system for online bookings and prescriptions ordering hasn't changed, the much-loathed telephone system most definitely has.

The new telephone system is equipped with a digitally-controlled switchboard which can manage multiple calls as well as a much improved call handling system. Patients may still have to wait for a few

minutes at peak times, but they now know where they are in the queue and can be certain their call is still 'live'. The new system automatically pulls in extra staff as call levels rise, so call queues never become unreasonably long.

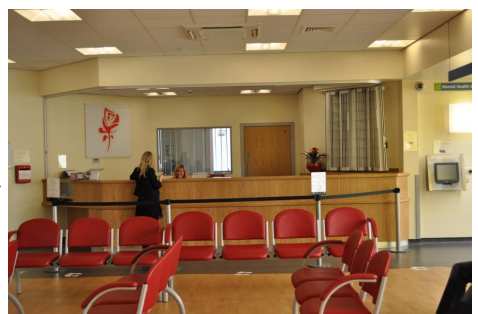
## Efficiency on prescription

There are now several ways to get your repeat prescriptions filled. You can order a prescription online via EMIS ask at reception for details, or drop your repeat prescription slip into the letterbox by the reception desk or use the letterbox by the main front doors of the Centre. Use this letterbox for letters, and for discharge paperwork if you have been discharged from hospital.

If you would like to use the pharmacy on the ground floor of the Centre, you can drop your prescription request into their letterbox, which is beside their main door. Pharmacy staff will bring it up to us to process, then dispense the prescription ready for you to collect.

If you have any prescription problems our prescription line is open daily from 10.00am to 1.00pm

We hope you like our new surroundings at the Primary Care Centre, and look forward to seeing you there!



## Highfield Surgery

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