

Weekly update from the Surgery

The team has been busy catching up with second doses of vaccine for cohorts 1-9 which is pretty much everyone over 50 and those with a long-term condition. We have now been told that the mass vaccination centres will be sole providers for those under 50. The previous surgery at Musgrove Park in Ashford is the most local to us and people will be able to book on-line using the national booking system.

I guess this enables us to focus fully on the day job and is probably beneficial as the team have been pretty full-on vaccinating on top of the normal volume of work. To our dismay, though, it means we are not going to be vaccinating any of the healthy under 50s at the surgery. We will continue to discuss this point and if we can be involved we will be.

The volume of work has certainly been greater as we return to normal as people feel more comfortable presenting with problems that have been simmering along during lockdown. We are also finding that the hospitals are not back to full service yet so we are being a little more inventive with how we manage some conditions. Don't let this stop you from presenting if you have any health concerns and with a bit of enterprise we should get things sorted out.

Seema, our trainee GP, has passed her last set of exams which is great news and she can now relax a bit knowing that she will be qualifying fully in September. Thanks to all those who agreed to have consultations recorded which were really important as a learning tool and also for her exam. For 10 years she was a consultant in Obstetrics and Gynaecology so it has been a brave move to General Practice and it must have been tough to be an adult learner again for the last 3 years.

Life really is getting back to normal and the better weather is helping. Sue in dispensary has her spiky hair back and I'm looking forward to being able to see through my fringe on Thursday. With children playing sports again, hair cuts being shown off and happy people sitting outside the pubs and restaurants in the sunshine it is visible how vital the vaccine program has been. Sadly around the world people aren't so lucky and particularly the news from India is very shocking – perhaps it may encourage people to keep with the program and get vaccinated as there is a concern that younger people may be harder to reach.

The latest news for the UK is that a booster vaccine is planned this year to cover new strains of Covid and that pregnant women should be offered the vaccine too. Quite how the boosters will be delivered is not yet clear but we hope to be fully involved with the process so it can be provided by our team at the surgery. I anticipate this to be along the flu campaign in the Autumn.

Best wishes to all on behalf of Woodchurch Surgery
Dr Jack Hickey - GP