



WINDRUSH PATIENTS' NEWSLETTER FOR November-December 2022

Welcome to the latest Windrush Patients' Group Newsletter.

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Be ready for the Winter: here are some tips to keep us safe and warm:

- Make sure you have a pair of shoes/boots with good grips on the soles;
- Keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is cold. Leaving it open means you're likely to breathe in cold air which lowers your body temperature and can increase the risk of several conditions;
- Stock up with cold, flu and sore throat remedies;
- Make sure you know where your main stopcock is and check that it is easy to turn. If water pipes freeze, they can burst so you need to be able to turn off the water at the main stopcock.

To contact your Patients' Group e-mail patientgroup.wmp@nhs.net or leave a message in the post-box in the Information area.

Unwanted medication: heard in a local chemist where two friends were picking up their regular medication.

- "My goodness! Are all those packets yours? I thought you had stopped taking some of them"
- "Ah Yes - I don't need them any more - but they are handy to share with the family and I might need them again one day ... And anyway they are free, aren't they?"

Contrary to that statement, the medications are far from free - we pay for them through our National Insurance contribution and our taxes.

So Please remember to hand back any unwanted medicines/pills/etc at the counter when you are picking them up from the chemist. Once you have left the counter, they cannot be returned and will be wasted. This is a Real Problem for the NHS and is costing large amounts of money

The Yellow Card ... How to report suspected side effects of medication to the MHRA

The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency is the body which authorises the use of medication and keeps a close eye on any problems. They are keen for us to report any side effects which we have when we are on our various tablets and medicines. The reporting system is known as the “Yellow Card campaign”. Currently they are focussing on any suspected side effects following vaccinations.

If you feel that you have had any side effects then you can:

- Ask for a Yellow Card reporting form at any Pharmacy;
 - go to their website at [Coronavirus Yellow Card reporting website](#)
 - use Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram or You Tube
- #medsafetyweek #everyreportcounts #patientsafety and #MHRAYellowCard.

And remember that the MHRA investigates problems relating to side effects from the use of any medication or medical devices. Their general reporting site is at <https://www.gov.uk/report-problem-medicine-medical-device>

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NHS Bowel Cancer Screening checks for an earlier age group.

The programme is expanding to make it available to everyone aged 50 to 59 years. This is happening gradually over four years and it started in April 2021 with the 56-year-olds and 58 years olds - so you may get a test before you are 60.

You use a home test kit to collect a small sample of poo and sent it to a lab. This is checked for tiny amounts of blood. Blood can be a sign of polyps or bowel cancer. Polyps are growths in the bowel. They are not cancer, but they may turn into cancer over time. If the test finds anything unusual, you might be asked to go to hospital to have further tests to confirm or to rule out cancer.

Further information is at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening/>

Wheelchairs: we are very aware that a number of patients are experiencing considerable difficulties not only when visiting the Practice for vaccines or visiting the hospitals for appointments. There are simply not enough wheelchairs to go around and the demand seems to be growing.

If you have a wheelchair at home, please remember that you will need it for your appointments. If you don't have one, then if it is at all possible, could you buy your own? You will be amazed at how often it is needed, not only for yourself, but also to lend to friends and relatives.

Breast screening at 70

If you are aged 71 or over, you can still have breast screening if you choose. You will not be invited for this automatically. However, you do have the right to free screening every three years if you ask. All you need to do is to phone the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre on 01865 235621 or write to them at Surgery and Diagnostics Centre, Churchill Hospital, Oxford OX3 7LE.

Research News from the Practice

The Windrush Medical Practice has just started recruiting for the HARMONIE research study. This is a fantastic opportunity. The HARMONIE research study follows on from other research studies which have been completed and is looking at how strongly babies can be protected from serious illness due to RSV infection (respiratory syncytial virus) by giving them a single antibody dose.

It is open to all babies under 1 year old. For more information on how to sign up please visit [HARMONIE Trial \(rsvharmoniestudy.com\)](https://rsvharmoniestudy.com)

In other research news, the RSV vaccine study in the over 60-year-olds that is also running at the Windrush has just announced fantastic results with a 94% reduction in severe RSV disease. Excellent news!

Have you registered for the FREE Utility Priority Service?

All utility companies (electricity, gas, water) hold a list of customers who, in the event of a utility failure, may need additional support – but you need to register.

If you are aged 65+, have a long-term health condition or rely on electricity (eg to keep medicine cool, have home oxygen or have a stair lift) then contact your utility company and ask to be added to their list.

Prescription collection dates November/December

- If the date on your last prescription package was October 7th your next prescriptions are due on November 4th, December 2nd and 30th:
- If the date on your last prescription package was October 14th, your next prescriptions are due on Nov 11th and Dec 9th:
- If the date on your last prescription was October 21st, then your next prescriptions are due on November 18th and December 16th:
- If the date on your last prescription was October 28th your next prescriptions are due on November 25th and December 23rd.

IMPORTANT!!!

**To receive your medication for Christmas order by the
16th December 2022.**

**To receive your medication for the New Year order by the
23rd December 2022.**

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