

# SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

## SURGERY UPDATE



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### 2022 Flu Vaccine - latest updates

We are delighted to announce that we have sent the first invites to our patients for flu vaccination, and have started booking in for clinics beginning in early October.

At the moment we are inviting patients aged 65 and over, but soon we will extend the invitation to those under 65. If you have a mobile number on your patient record, you will get a text message inviting you to book the appointment yourself by following the link inside. Please do not worry if you aren't able to use this text; you are still welcome to call the surgery (**01626 334411**) between 14:00 and 16:00 and choose option 6 book an appointment with our Reception team.

If you are happy to book the vaccine through text message, please make sure we have the right mobile number on your record. If you aren't sure if your mobile number is up to date, you can check this by speaking to a member of Reception at our front desk or by phone (**01626 334411**).

If you don't have a mobile number on your record, we will send an invite by email if you have your email address on your record. If you don't have a mobile number or an email address recorded with us, we will send a letter to your registered address.

Please be aware that a different vaccine will be given to people over 65 years old, and a different vaccine to people under this age. This means clinics will be booked based on your age, so if you're planning to come with family, this may affect you. We have to keep strictly to the clinics and will not be able to make any exceptions for family members who fall into a different clinic due to their age. Please keep this information in mind when booking the flu jab with us and making plans to accompany family members.

Flu clinics will be held on the lowest floor of the surgery, so on the day, please come straight to the bottom entrance off East Street. As this will be a walk-through clinic, please come as close to your appointment time as you possibly can - note that the disabled parking will not be available on that day. Please wear clothing that exposes your arm (if it is a cold day, a short-sleeved shirt and a coat may be a good idea).

### THE DEVON AND CORNWALL CARE RECORD - WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Up until now, all healthcare organisations in the region have kept completely separate patient records. This meant that if one organisation, such as Albany, needed information on a recent hospital visit to meet your health needs, they would have to contact the hospital and ask for the information to be sent. This would cost time which could have been spent caring for our patients.

The Devon and Cornwall Care Record (DCCR) takes the records from multiple healthcare providers in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and combines them into a single record of your care. This means that if you need your consultant to see a letter from your GP, or important test results, your consultant would have access to these letters and results straight away.

As well as making treatment safer, the care you receive will be more co-ordinated, giving you a smoother journey through the health system and saving you the frustration of having to answer the same questions, or having duplicate or unnecessary tests.

We take every measure possible to keep your personal data secure and confidential. Shared care records (including the DCCR) are subject to UK data protections laws, and can only be accessed by people involved in your care. However, if you would rather your information was not used in this way, you can tell the shared care organisation by filling out an objection form on their website: [www.devonandcornwallcarerecord.nhs.uk](http://www.devonandcornwallcarerecord.nhs.uk).

### FEEDBACK

We welcome feedback of any kind - this is used to improve the service we provide for our patients and to identify what works well.

If you would like to leave any feedback, you can speak to any member of staff in the surgery - or speak to a member of our Reception team on the phone. If you would prefer, you can also write a few words and pop them through our letterbox, or send us an email

([enquiriesatalbany.L83034@nhs.net](mailto:enquiriesatalbany.L83034@nhs.net)).

Additionally, anonymous feedback can be given via the Friends and Family Test. To complete this, please visit our website ([www.albanysurgery.co.uk](http://www.albanysurgery.co.uk)) or fill out a Friends and Family test card at our front desk.

### THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

The PPG welcomes new members who are passionate about improving the care their surgery provides. Current patients of all ages and backgrounds are invited to apply.

If you would like to apply, please ask for an application form at our front desk, or visit [www.albanysurgery.co.uk/patient-participation-group](http://www.albanysurgery.co.uk/patient-participation-group) for more information or to complete the form online.

## REMINDER ABOUT ECONSULT SERVICE

eConsult is a valuable tool for contacting your GP about routine medical matters if you cannot call at the necessary time to make an appointment. It is ideal if you need more information about test results, to request a sick note, or to ask for advice about your health concerns.

Please be aware of the eConsult opening hours as outside these times, you will not be able to start or submit a form:

**Monday-Thursday: 08:30 - 17:00**

**Friday: 08:30 - 18:00**

To complete an eConsult please visit:

<https://albanysurgery.webgp.com>



facebook.

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## HOW WE USE YOUR DATA

We take the security of patients' personal data very seriously, and operate under laws which tell us how we can use or keep it, and what we aren't allowed to do.

These laws are long and complex, and you are not expected to have to read them to understand how your data is being used. Instead, patients are to be given access to Privacy Notices, which sum up our responsibilities to your data in writing that everyone can understand.

If you want to read these, please visit [www.albanysurgery.co.uk/fair-processing-privacy-notice](http://www.albanysurgery.co.uk/fair-processing-privacy-notice), or speak to any member of staff for a copy of this information.

## LUNG CANCER - DON'T IGNORE THE SYMPTOMS

Lung cancer is one of the biggest causes of deaths in England due to cancer. In 2021, it was responsible for 26,410 deaths. However if it is diagnosed early, the chances of surviving it are much higher.

The NHS has launched the "Help Us, Help You" campaign across TV, on-demand services, radio and social media to raise awareness of the symptoms of lung cancer, and how important it is to catch the illness early.

Common symptoms to look out for include a persistent cough (lasting for three weeks or more) and breathlessness. It probably won't be cancer, but it's always better to get it checked out. If you have had a cough that doesn't seem to be going away, please speak to your GP about it.

To see the campaign's video, please scan the barcode to the right.



## SUMMER HOLIDAYS AND OUR SERVICES

The summer holidays are one of the most difficult times of the year for the surgery. This is due to many members of our clinical and non-clinical teams needing to take leave to look after their children, meaning there will be less staff working at the surgery during this time.

We are doing all we can to keep the surgery running as normally as possible, however there is only so much we can do at once. This unfortunately means that there will be delays in the normal service we provide; when calling you may need to wait longer to speak to someone as there are fewer people to answer incoming calls. It may be harder to secure an appointment with a GP or Advance Nurse Practitioner as there might be fewer clinicians working that day.

We understand that these delays are a cause of great frustration, and we apologise for the inconvenience. We thank you for your patience during this time, and would like to reassure you that the service will soon return to normal.

If you would like a copy of any previous newsletters, please see our website ([www.albanysurgery.co.uk](http://www.albanysurgery.co.uk)) or ask a member of Reception