

**February 2016**

### **Developing mental health services for veterans**

The NHS has launched a national engagement on mental health services for veterans.

The engagement will run until 31 March 2016 and aims to capture views and experiences of these services from a range of stakeholders, including veterans who have or have had a mental health illness, their families and carers, service charities, commissioners and providers offering treatment and support in this area.

Findings from the engagement will help to ensure that future mental health services for veterans are accessible, provide high-quality and sensitive care, treatment and support, and best meet the needs of veterans, regardless of when they leave the armed forces.

Currently, the NHS commissions 12 mental health services across England for veterans. These were set up in 2010 following publication of "Fighting Fit: a mental health plan for servicemen and veterans". The contract on these services are due in 2016/17 and this provides the NHS with a significant opportunity to ask people about their views and experiences of the current services. This will also allow the NHS to explore why some veterans have not sought or received support and treatment.

The NHS wants to hear from people who have served in the armed forces and have used or are currently using NHS veterans' mental health services. We also want to hear from family members and carers of veterans who have or have had mental health difficulties, as well as staff and organisations that are providing mental health care, treatment and support for veterans and their families.

To take part in the engagement and share your views, which runs from 25 January to 31 March 2016, please visit: <https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/veterans-mental-health-services>.

For further information on the engagement exercise or veterans' mental health services in your area, please email [ENGLAND.VMH-Engagementhub@nhs.net](mailto:ENGLAND.VMH-Engagementhub@nhs.net)

### **New provider for adult community health services in Wiltshire**

Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group has awarded Wiltshire Health & Care the contract to provide adult community health services in Wiltshire for the next five years.

Wiltshire Health & Care is a new organisation formed by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust and Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust.

The new contract is due to start in July 2016, and will mark the start of an exciting period of change, where more care will be delivered closer to local communities, people will be supported to maintain independence and reliance on hospital services will be reduce.

As part of the CCG's five year plan to bring health care closer to home, the changes to adult community health services will ensure that the focus is very much on patient centred care with GP

practices firmly at the heart of community provision. Delivered through integrated community teams across the county, Wiltshire Health & Care will support Wiltshire CCG to meet the challenges of an ageing population and to enhance partner working across the health economy to provide a health service fit for tomorrow.

### **Pilot out of hours service for unwell children**

A new pilot service for an out of hours GP service for children has been launched with the aim of avoiding unnecessary A&E attendances. Parents of children aged 0-10 can now book a same day appointment to see a GP at the Salisbury Walk In Health Centre.

The extended service provides health advice and treatment for minor illnesses and injuries and provides parents with a local alternative to A&E when their child is ill and their surgery is closed.

The pilot service, which is already helping to reduce some of the pressure seen at our A&E departments over the winter months, will run until the end of March 2016. It is available for children under the age of 10, and is open Monday to Friday 18:00 – 22:00 and Saturday and Sunday 16:00 – 20:00 by contacting the 111 telephone number.

If necessary, the call handler will advise parents to contact the Walk In centre to make a same day appointment. If however, the child has an obvious serious or life threatening condition; parents are advised to call 999.

### **Stay well this Winter campaign**

Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group are part of the **Stay Well This Winter** national campaign to raise awareness of what you can do to stay healthy this winter and what services are available if you need additional help.

The national **Stay Well This Winter** campaign started on 5 October 2015 and will run until 27 March 2016 and will also be providing advice to those with long-term health conditions, over 65s, pregnant women and parents of under-sevens.

### **Get the jab, get Flu Safe**

NHS Wiltshire CCG is encouraging people to have their flu jab. Flu is a highly contagious infection that anyone can catch, but it can be very serious for some. For most people flu is a relatively mild illness from which they recover within a week or two – yet every year people, especially those at risk, become seriously ill because they don't get their free flu jab.

Flu is not the same as a cold and it affects people of all ages. If you or someone you care for is in any of the at-risk groups listed below you can get a free flu jab from your GP.

- everyone aged 65 years and over
- all pregnant women irrespective of their stage of pregnancy
- Adults and children over six months with long term heart, lung, kidney, liver or neurological conditions
- people with diabetes
- anyone who has a reduced immunity because of an illness or medical condition
- people with asthma
- anyone in long-stay residential care
- carers of disabled or elderly people and healthcare workers that are in direct contact with patients

Get the best protection for yourself and your family by being flu free this winter and book your appointment today.

## Staying Healthy this winter

NHS Wiltshire CCG is urging people to keep warm and well this winter, especially as the nights are starting to draw in and the temperature is dropping.

The cold can have serious consequences as it can increase the risk of strokes and heart attacks as well as causing people to catch colds and flu. Wrapping up warm, keeping the heating turned up, making sure you have enough winter food supplies and keeping a well-stocked medical cabinet in case you do catch a cold or flu are all sensible steps to take.

Some top tips on staying warm and well this winter.

1. Keep your home warm – set your central heating to between 65 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit (18-21 degrees centigrade). Heat the room you sit in during the day to 70 degrees, and your bedroom to 65 degrees. When it's very cold, set the heating to come on earlier so that you're not waiting for your home to warm up.
2. Have your flu jab. Everyone over 65, or with a wide variety of health conditions, is entitled to one free of charge. Immunity takes effect almost immediately, so even though a flu outbreak is currently well underway, you can still protect yourself by getting the jab – just call your GP to make an appointment.
3. If you do fall ill with flu, it's best to stay at home. Flu is caused by a virus, and cannot be treated with antibiotics – so a visit to your GP is not necessarily the best course of action.
4. Vomiting and diarrhoea bugs caused by norovirus are common and very infectious. This can be a very unpleasant condition, but the best advice is to stay at home and drink plenty of fluids until the symptoms pass. Norovirus is highly infectious, with an incubation period of between one and three days. For that reason, you should wait 48 hours after symptoms have stopped before going back to work or your children go back to school.
5. Make sure you have enough winter supplies and keep a well-stocked medicine cabinet, with supplies of ibuprofen, paracetamol and your favourite cold remedy at hand.

Where to go when you're ill - The following points should be helpful when deciding who to contact.

- Pharmacies offer over-the-counter medicines and advice. As well as being open during regular retail hours, they operate an out-of-hours service on a rota basis;
- Call NHS 111 for advice or go to NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). They can give a wide range of advice and information about many conditions;
- Use the minor injuries units at Chippenham and Trowbridge or the walk-in centres in Swindon and Salisbury for cuts, burns and other injuries – but not for colds, flu or vomiting;
- Make an appointment with your own GP - an out-of-hours service is also available;
- If it is a genuine emergency, go to your local A&E department or call 999 for an ambulance

Keep an eye on elderly or frail friends, neighbours and relatives this winter and join us in helping Wiltshire stay well this winter.