

Russell House Surgery

COVID-19

NEWSletter

Issue 15 August 2020

Local cancer services are there for you

Black Country Cancer Alliance

The Black County Cancer Alliance chose to create coronavirus free hubs for patients from any Cancer Centre in the Black Country which could not accommodate a patient, so cancer patients could be diagnosed, tested and have treatments at some of these centres. While they maybe not local to all patients, the service was able to pick up again.



You may have read that cancer services have a lot of catching up to do following Corona virus, cancer staff were diverted to Corona virus duty at hospitals leaving only a skeleton cancer staff to cope with the day job.

There was also a fear that the virus was more dangerous than cancer, and cancer patients visiting hospital for treatment were put on hold although many patients did continue to have tests and treatment together with phone consultations with the cancer team at New Cross and Cannock hospitals.

Other avenues are also available - for example - the Bowel Cancer Prevention service is still running, and you may phone for a sample kit in the mail if you are over 75 years of age and have problems which are concerning to you.

Local hospitals are now restoring services and clinic space, by phasing in treatments for patients, using telephone consultations and verbal consents. The hospital needs patients to be referred to the service.

Free bowel cancer screening help line –
0800 707 60 60

Your personal health is extremely important, not only to you but those around you, you family and friends, do not put off a visit to the GP which can help to put your mind at rest. If you have symptoms which need to be tested, you should urgently contact your GP surgery in to be referred to the service.

Flu jabs - September / October at TRINITY COMMUNITY CENTRE

Due to current social distancing requirements and the number of vaccines we need to offer we have made the decision to carry out the sessions at a different location.

Three clinics are being arranged for 2020:

- 12th September
- 26th September
- 10th October

Appointments will be available for booking on patient access and via telephone at the beginning of August.



Located at the side of :
Trinity Methodist Church,
Histons Hill, Codsall, WV82ER

Hospital Special Measures - Covid 19



Hospitals have had to implement special measures to keep patients, staff and visitors safe during the pandemic. But that doesn't mean that you won't be able to support your loved ones if they have to go into hospital.

It's worth checking the advice on visiting and contact with patients on the hospital's website. There you'll be able to find out if you can drop off items to make your loved one's stay more comfortable or if you can ask for a phone or tablet for them to keep in touch.

And if you have difficulty getting in touch with your loved one, **contact your local PALS team for advice.**

**Newcross Patient Advice
and Listening Service
01902 695362**

**Cannock Chase Patient
Advice and Listening
Service
08000 407060**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service, known as PALS, has been introduced to ensure that the NHS listens to patients, their relatives, carers and friends, and answers their questions and resolves their concerns as quickly as possible. PALS also helps the NHS to improve services by listening to what matters to patients and their loved ones and making changes, when appropriate.

Visiting the New Cross Outpatient Department during lock-down

"I have Wet Macular Degeneration, and I have been having Lucentis eye injections at New Cross Eye Hospital for the past 10 yrs, to stabilise and save my sight in both eyes.

"I understood that the clinics were still taking place and decided to go because if the injections are not performed at the allocated time this could be detrimental to my sight.

Only the patient is allowed into the clinic so my wife waited in the car and fortunately there has been no car park charge for the last few weeks, although I hear that this may change soon. My wife then drove me home because I cannot see well after treatment.

I was impressed with the arrangements at the hospital. I wore a face mask and at the entrance I was met by an orderly who checked my appointment asked me to use the hand gel and took my temperature, then I was escorted to a seating area and told which seat to sit in, there were only two other people in a very large area.

They escorted me to the operational area, I was told where to sit, called in and then went through the safety and personal details.



A Russell House patient's first hand experience

"I had a treatment due on the second Monday of lock-down."

I was then given the medication drops. The person doing the injection called me in and went through details again and carried out the injection with my mask on.

The nursing staff all wore appropriate Personal Protective Equipment and used disposable gloves in addition to hand gel at all times. I have undergone four injections in total during the lock-down so far and have felt safe every time. I understand that many patients did cancel their appointments in the beginning which can put them at risk of endangering their sight.

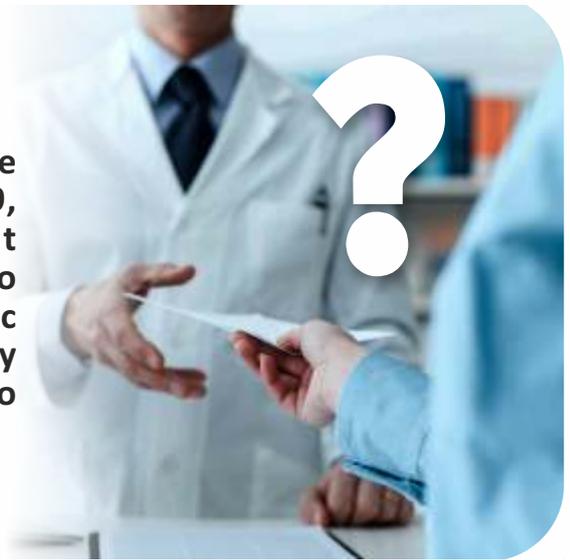
The staff now phone me before an appointment to ensure I am attending which helps them to backfill appointments to try and catch up with the many cancellations."



Getting repeat prescriptions safely in uncertain times



For those needing help, especially those having to self-isolate from COVID19, Russell House surgery suggests that patients nominate a specific pharmacy so that doctors can send electronic prescriptions direct to the pharmacy without the need for anyone having to collect a paper copy.



- **You can also request a prescription from the surgery electronically** and then collect the medication directly from the chosen pharmacy. Simply use the surgery's email address to activate the process:- russell.house@nhs.net
- **Your chosen pharmacy can also request repeat prescriptions** from the surgery on your behalf and may also be able to deliver the medication to your home. **Ask at your chosen pharmacy.**
- **Lloyds have an online version known as Echo.** You register yourself by entering your name, address and medication(s) and then log in when you need to request a prescription. It's a fairly simple process, just go to the Lloyds website to access it.

Requesting a prescription from the surgery and collecting medication from the pharmacy without going to Russell House can save valuable staff time, reduce unnecessary visits to the practice and ease the pressure on the system, making the service more streamlined for us patients. It is worth looking at these options as they may help you and at the same time, help the practice and the NHS.

Routine smears were cancelled due to Covid 19 pandemic but now Cervical screening services are slowly restarting after disruption during lock down.

A survey by Jo's cervical Cancer Trust has revealed that tens of thousand of women in the Black Country and Staffordshire have missed their smear tests. In Staffordshire only 76% of eligible women had been screened by the end of 2019.

There are around 850 cervical cancer deaths in the UK every year(2015-2017) and account for 1% of all cancer deaths in females in UK(2017).

That is why cervical screening is essential in order to detect changes which can be treated and prevent these deaths.

www.cancerresearchuk.

Ladies, it is now important to make sure you book your appointment.



Vaccination for young children - *the schedule is still on track*

“As a new mom with a child born two months before lockdown started, I expected there would be some disruption to the regular services offered to parents. With more telephone consultations than face-to-face appointments and regular clinic drop-in sessions paused for the time being, one of the most vital services has remained on track – the vaccination schedule. And, over the last few months Russell House has been providing these lifesaving injections as normal.”

Extra precautions have been taken, such as a face covering for me and PPE for the nurse, a much quieter waiting area and lots of hand sanitiser but the need to attend the regular timetable has never been more important.



The injections protect against a whole host of unpleasant and serious infections and it is important that these are maintained and take place at the regular intervals (8 weeks, 12 weeks & 16 weeks).

“Although I was initially nervous about attending the surgery, the benefits of inoculation and the precautions the team at Russell House have taken, made me feel safe and was the right choice for my baby.” Mrs.S.A.

For further information on immunisations, please see your baby's Red Book.



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Russell House Surgery@codsalldoctors

We are using this page to share health, surgery and locality information with our patients, We use information collected from various sources including NHS, Public Health England, UK Government, & South Staffordshire Council.

If you click 'like'  on our page, new items will appear on your facebook feed when we post them.

Please do not use Facebook as a way of contacting the surgery or discussing your or another person's personal or medical information.

Lets go on holiday! Or should we?

Given the problems of Covid-19 over the last few months it would be true to say that all of our lives have been affected in some way, which is all the more reason to take care when going abroad on holiday. As well as suitcase and tickets etc you may wish consider these questions:

- **Is my passport up to date, (there are currently delays in renewal times)**
- **Is the country I plan to visit safe? Am I medically fit to go away?**
- **If I need a vaccine, have I contacted the surgery at least 8 weeks in advance? There are travel forms on the website to complete and a call approximately a week after completion will determine if anything is needed.**
- **Does my Travel Insurance cover me for pre-existing medical conditions, and just as important will I get cover for medical bills should I be unfortunate enough to contract Covid-19 or any other medical need? Be smart and phone your Insurance Company before you go!**
- **Is my European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) still current and does it provide sufficient cover or even, should I apply for one at no cost? [Cards are still essential until December 31st 2020]**
- **Have I made reference to government Foreign Travel Advice? <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>**



(This feature only covers the basics and should not be the sole point of reference, you should always investigate fully and satisfy yourself that you have covered all eventualities.)

