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Practice news

As I write this newsletter, the rain is beginning to pour and the temperatures are dropping. I think the beautiful weather we had for the month of March may be behind us and winter is arriving.

We have had some very busy weeks, a combination of short weeks due to Easter and some genuinely sick staff and staff with sick family. Our apologies if you have had a long wait in the urgent clinic or have had your appointments changed, some things we just cannot predict.

New Staff

If you have been in the practice of late you will have seen some new faces. We welcome Dianne and Ariana to the administration team. We also have two new locum nurses, Norma and Tamar to help us get through the busy winter months. Dr Thom Reynolds is with us over the next three weeks as some of our Doctors have leave.

Henri having a holiday

I am also taking three weeks leave, the team however are in good hands. If you have any concerns about anything your initial contact will be Sue and if she can't help you she will find someone who will. I will see you when I get back in early May.

Influenza Vaccinations have now arrived



We have Influenza vaccination clinics two days a week, the days and times vary depending on staff availability, so please ring to make an appointment.

We encourage our patients to make an appointment in advance for their flu vaccination, we do not have a drop-in facility.

Your Doctor in most cases, will not have time to do your vaccination and see to your medical needs in the 15 minutes allowed. Plan ahead and have your influenza vaccination prior to seeing your GP as you are required to wait in our rooms for 20 minutes afterwards anyway.

Funded Vaccine for 65—80 year olds to guard against shingles

From 1 April 2018 the Ministry of Health is also funding zoster vaccine (Zostavax) for the prevention of shingles (herpes zoster). Eligible are those aged 65—80 years.

The Zostavax is not a seasonal vaccination so we recommend that for those eligible, you arrange to have your influenza vaccination now and book to see the nurse for the Zostavax, prior to your next GP check up.

New Policy, we will no longer be sending end of month statements

Payment is expected on the day of consultation here at Te Ngae Medical Centre. Invoices are also incurred for patient requested repeat prescriptions, referral letters that have been written outside of the consultation and some paperwork. In the past we have sent out statements at the end of each month as a reminder to those with outstanding accounts.

With the increase in postage and the administration time required generating and posting these accounts, we have decided that we will no longer send out end of month statements.

We encourage patients to join Accession, our patient portal where you can check your account balance at any time.

Travel advice

As our summer ends, many of our patients are thinking about holidaying in warmer climes! However travel can have its risks and planning beforehand is very important. Here at Te Ngae Medical Centre we have Frances, a nurse experienced in travel medicine.

Some useful information to bring to a travel consultation would include:

- Full final itinerary and trip details
- Current and past health status, present medications and a record of previous vaccinations.

Top tips for travellers

- Visit Frances, the travel nurse for a 30 minute travel consult early (3 to 6 months before leaving!) to check what vaccinations you need. Some vaccinations need to have multiple doses to complete a course and typically take 2 weeks from completion of course to be fully effective
- Bring your itinerary to the consultation so that Frances is able to check for up-to-date health advice for the countries you will be visiting.
- Frances will discuss with you what else you should take (such as anti-diarrhoea medication, altitude medication, insect avoidance).
- Take a travel first-aid kit so you can manage minor ailments yourself.
- Take a list of your current medications, Frances is able to write a letter outlining medical conditions and medications you are taking, it is also sensible to pack spare medication in a separate bag in case one is lost.
- Be safe in all that you do - sun, water, recreation, transport, food and drinks.
- Before you travel check you do not need dental care, this can be expensive in an emergency.
- Write out itinerary and contact details for family and friends.



And for all of our patients who are travelling overseas in the upcoming months, we wish you all a safe holiday away from winter blues.