**The Sunbury Health Centre Flu Vaccination Programme 2023 has begun …**

Flu is very different from a ‘heavy cold’. Although healthy individuals usually recover within 2 to 7 days, for some hospitalisation, permanent disability or even death are a possibility.

The vaccine helps mitigate against the worst symptoms of the flu and against the main types of flu virus circulating among the population.

The following groups are eligible:

* Everyone aged 65 years and over.
* Those under 65 years of age who are at increased risk from the effects of flu, who have any of the [medical condition](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-who-should-have-it-this-winter-and-why/the-flu-vaccination-who-should-have-it-and-why-winter-2023-to-2024#conditions)s (listed on the NHS website), including children and babies over 6 months of age.
* All pregnant women, at any stage of pregnancy.
* All children 2 and 3 years of age.
* All children in Primary School. The vaccination will take place at school, not at the Practice.
* Some Secondary School-aged children (Years 7-11). The vaccination will take place at school, not at the Practice.
* Everyone living in a residential or nursing home.
* Everyone who receives a Carer’s Allowance or are the main carer for an older or disabled person.
* All those living with someone who has lowered immunity due to disease or treatment.
* All frontline health and social care workers.

Unfortunately, those aged 50-64 years, who do not fall into any of the groups above, are **NOT** eligible for NHS flu vaccines this year.

Housebound and Care Home patients will be supported by the Practice this year and not the North West Surrey Integrated Care Services (NICS).

Please also note that NICS/national booking sites will be carrying out the Autumn COVID vaccination programme and not the Practice.

The focus of vaccine delivery at SHC will be on Saturdays. Invitations have been sent to all eligible patients to book their appointment, and we encourage those invited to have their vaccination.

As an aside, please do attend all scheduled appointments. The number of patients booked in to see health professionals at the Clinic in August, and those who did not attend, can be seen below.

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| Number of appointments booked at the Practice in August ……… | **6,344** |
| Number of appointments not attended (DNA) …………………….. | **236** |

*360 words*