

November 2018



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**Hello,**

We hope at this point in November, you've all had your flu jab and are in the best possible health to face whatever the next few months have in store.

Getting the flu jab is an easy way to keep yourself winter-ready, especially as it's so widely available.

Supermarkets, high street chemists, pharmacies and GP surgeries can all offer the flu jab and, for some people, getting vaccinated does not cost a penny.

If you're pregnant, a carer, over 65 or living with a long-term condition, such as diabetes or heart disease, you're entitled to have your vaccine for free, as catching flu could see you come down with symptoms more severe than the average person.

And if you've got little ones, they can be protected for free, too.

And there's no need to worry about tears in the surgery as the vaccine for children is given as a quick and painless nasal spray – absolutely no needles!

Taking steps to protect yourself against flu is one of the key principles of self-care, something we at the CCG have been shouting about throughout November.

We all know how to take care of ourselves when everything is going to plan and we're feeling good, but sometimes when we get under the weather, it can be tricky to know what to do to make things right again.

Often, a person's first thought after becoming ill will be to call their GP, but having a well-stocked family medicine box can be an equally effective first port of call for tackling minor illnesses and injuries, such as coughs, colds, scrapes, bumps and upset stomachs.

If you've tried managing your condition at home, but still not seeing an improvement, why not try making use of your local pharmacist?

Able to give private consultations and prescribe antibiotics, pharmacists can be your best friend when it comes to getting help quickly, especially as, for the most part, you won't need a pre-booked appointment.

The CCG's website and social media pages are crammed full of helpful tips, advice and information on how to keep well, so if you're ever unsure, log on and take a look!

**Until next time, stay healthy and happy!**

## Transforming Maternity Services Together

Earlier this month, the NHS in Wiltshire launched a consultation to gain views on proposals to make changes to maternity services across the county, Swindon and Bath and North East Somerset.

The proposals have been designed to help address the various challenges facing local maternity services, while allowing staff to begin making improvements that will benefit mothers and families in the future.

By using staff, buildings and other resources differently, the local NHS is confident it will be able to better meet the needs of pregnant women and give existing staff a great place to work.

The consultation launched on Monday 12 November and will be live until mid-February.

Visit the website – [www.transformingmaternity.org.uk](http://www.transformingmaternity.org.uk) – to read the proposals and to have your say by completing the online questionnaire.



## Carer's Assessments

Carers Rights Day is celebrated every November and this year is no exception.

CCG staff will be at the Pilgrim Centre in Regent Circus on Friday 30 November to help raise awareness of the help available to people who do so much for others.

If you look after a friend or relative, it's worth contacting your local council to arrange a Carer's Assessment.

This quick and simple interview could provide you with additional help around the home, as well as financial support for taxi fares, gym memberships and other expenses.

The Carer's Assessment is free, available to anybody aged 18 or over and can make a real difference to somebody struggling to look after themselves, as well as their friend or relative.



## Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

Pancreatic cancer can be incredibly difficult to diagnose, which is why knowing the early signs and symptoms can really make a difference in finding it at the earliest possible opportunity.

Unintentional weight loss, unexplained back or stomach pain, as well as noticing a more yellowish tint to your skin, are all possible symptoms of pancreatic cancer.

If you have been suffering with these problems for three weeks or more, book an appointment with your GP, who will be able to offer advice and, if necessary, arrange further tests and investigations.

As with all types of cancer, finding it early can improve a person's chances of having successful and less-aggressive treatment.



## Bid for a share of £1m to help reduce health inequality for LGBT people

Earlier this month, the government revealed its LGBT Health and Social Care fund, which will provide £1 million to good causes up and down the country that contribute towards ending health inequalities for people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.

Organisations can bid for a share of up to £350,000 in funding, with money going to those submissions that show how their organisation would support better access to healthcare for LGBT people.

Find out more by [clicking here](#).

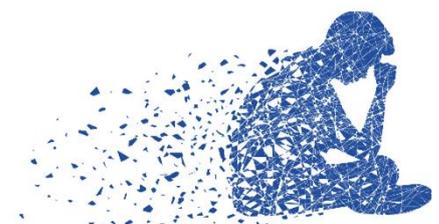


## New male mental health support group launches in Swindon

Men in Swindon can now get support for their mental health with the help of a new group that launched earlier this month.

A chance to talk with others in a similar position, the Men's Only Meet Up and Support Group meet on alternate Thursdays in the Fig Offices in Swindon town centre.

To find out more, visit [www.mindcanyon.co.uk](http://www.mindcanyon.co.uk).



## For your information and interest

- The General Medical Council has announced a public consultation on its revised guidance around decision making and consent, which sets out what doctors should consider when discussing treatment and care with patients.

Public feedback is being sought so that the GMC can be confident its final guidance supports patients to make decisions in partnership with their doctors.

[Click here](#) to find out more and to take part.

- People in Swindon are being given the chance to experience the realities of homelessness as part of Threshold Housing Link's annual Big Sleep Out.

Taking place on Friday 7 December at the Immanuel Church in Upham Road, people can get a feel for what it is like to be a member of Swindon's homeless community by spending an evening under the stars.

Those taking part will be supported throughout the evening by the Threshold team, but will otherwise be exposed to the elements, along with everything else a rough sleeper would go through on a nightly basis.

To find out more, visit [www.thl.org.uk](http://www.thl.org.uk) or email [adminthreshold@thl.org.uk](mailto:adminthreshold@thl.org.uk).

- The next meeting of the Swindon Group of Diabetes UK will be held on Tuesday 4 December at 7.15pm at the Broadgreen Centre in Salisbury Street.

This month's event will focus on how diabetes can affect a person's ability to drive, with a special talk from guest speaker David Douch from Swindon Advanced Motorists.

For further details, contact Matthew Spencer, Group Secretary, on 01793 851229.

## Governing Body

The most recent Governing Body meeting was held on Thursday 22 November and the papers can be viewed on the CCG's website by [clicking here](#).

The next Governing Body meeting will take place at the CCG offices on Thursday 20 December at 9am.

If you would like to attend, please send an email to [communications@swindonccg.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@swindonccg.nhs.uk).

## Contact details for the Communications and Engagement Team

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