

October 2018



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Hello,

At this point in October, you'll have no doubt noticed the nights beginning to draw in and the early morning sun taking longer and longer to put in its daily appearance.

The arrival of colder conditions, coupled with the absence of the sunshine that we all enjoyed so much during the long summer, can affect people in different ways.

While nearly all of us will catch some sort of seasonal illness – be it a cold, stomach bug or the dreaded flu – during winter, some people will suffer in a way that is not always clear to see.

World Mental Health Day – which aims to increase awareness of, and remove the stigma attached to, conditions such as anxiety, depression and bipolar disorder – took place earlier this month and was accompanied by a startling statistic that around one in four adults will, at some point in their life, suffer from poor mental health.

The problem of mental health can be made worse by the time of year but, in Swindon, it is reassuring to know that, should somebody need support, there are plenty of local services ready to provide help.

Many of these organisations, along with staff from the CCG, were present at Sandalwood Court's World Mental Health Day celebrations on Wednesday 10 October.

It was a fantastic event, in which local people were able to find out more about the invaluable work taking place locally by groups such as Swindon and Gloucestershire Mind, The Nelson Trust, Rethink Mental Illness and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.

If you are suffering from poor mental health, or just beginning to feel more blue than usual, the important thing to do is tell somebody.

Speak to your GP about how you are feeling, and they could recommend some ways of managing your condition at home or point you in the direction of a service that could help to make you feel more like your old self.

Remember, support is only ever one conversation away.

Until next time, stay healthy and happy!

Help Us Help You

The NHS is stepping up its efforts to keep people as healthy as possible during the colder months with the introduction of its new winter campaign, Help Us Help You.

Based on the principle of reciprocity, it aims to increase peoples' understanding of the actions they can take to help the NHS to help them.

Whether it is just having the flu jab, restocking the family medicine cabinet or visiting a pharmacist before calling for a GP appointment, helping people to become more resilient with their own health will enable the NHS to focus its attention on patients most in need of help and support.

Over the coming weeks, the Help Us Help You message will become more visible across TV, radio, online and, of course, through the CCG's Facebook and Twitter pages.

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



Check Before You Tick

Wrongly claiming for a free prescription could leave some patients with a fine of £100.

That's the message behind Check Before You Tick, a new initiative encouraging people who get their medicine for free to take five minutes to find out if they are legally entitled to do so.

While many groups of patients, such as pregnant women, children under 16 and people receiving certain benefits, can get their prescriptions for free, not everyone in these categories will automatically qualify.

Patients can find out if they need to begin paying for prescriptions by using the online eligibility checker, which can be reached by [clicking here](#).



More smokers quit for good with the help of Stoptober

A massive well done to everybody in Swindon who has used this Stoptober to take the first steps to a life without cigarettes.

Every October, hundreds of thousands of people across the country set themselves the difficult goal of going a whole month without smoking, in the hope they will then be able to kick the habit for good.

Those taking part in Stoptober 2018 have been able to benefit from the new Personal Quit Plans, which allow people to set small milestones and track their progress towards becoming smoke free.

To find out more about quitting smoking, take a look at the Stoptober website, by [clicking here](#).



Transforming Maternity Services Together

People across Wiltshire will soon be asked to share their views on proposals to make changes to the maternity services on offer to mothers and families in the county.

For 14 weeks from Monday 12 November, Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group will be running a public consultation on the best ways to make the most of the county's limited maternity resources.

Although there is no intention of making changes to what is currently available at the Great Western Hospital, the proposals do affect some community services, such as the birthing centres located in more rural parts of Wiltshire.

More details about the consultation will be shared over the coming weeks, so keep checking future editions of News-Bites, as well as the CCG's website and social media channels.



Carers Rights Day 2018

Put an asterisk next to Friday 30 November in your diaries to ensure you don't miss Carers Rights Day 2018.

The annual event, which highlights the help and support available for people who look after others, is being marked with an event at the Pilgrim Centre in Swindon town centre.

Come along to find out more about the invaluable work they do.



For your information and interest

- The government is asking people to give feedback on its plans to make restaurants and other food establishments display calorie information on their menus.

Introducing easily viewable calorie information would, according to the government, allow families dining out to make more informed choices about what they and their children are eating.

The consultation is live until Friday 7 December 2018.

[Click here](#) to take part.

- Relive the glory days of Swindon Town Football Club at a special sporting memories event taking place at the County Ground in November.

Organised by Dementia Friendly Communities in Swindon, guests can come along on Wednesday 14 November between 10.30am and 12.15pm and not only meet STFC legends Don Rogers, John Trollope and Gary Herbert but have an exclusive tour of the stadium.

The event is free to attend but guests must register beforehand by contacting Susan Lambert using susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk or by calling 07980 933636.

- The next meeting of the Swindon Group of Diabetes UK will be held on Tuesday 6 November at 7.15pm at the Broadgreen Centre in Salisbury Street.

This month's event will see attendants treated to a presentation from local Bollywood teacher Priya Singhal on how Indian dancing can be a fun and alternative way of getting active.

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

Governing Body

The most recent Governing Body meeting was held on Thursday 27 September 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 25 October at 9am.

If you would like to attend, please send an email to communications@swindonccg.nhs.uk.

Contact details for the Communications and Engagement Team

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