

September 2018



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**Hello,**

With the memory of summer fading, the light evenings getting shorter and the mornings staying darker for longer, there is no doubt that autumn is fast approaching in Swindon.

And the arrival of cooler weather can only mean one thing: it's time to start thinking about flu.

Every year between October and March, the CCG turns its attention to encouraging as many people as possible to make time to have the flu jab, which experts cite as the most effective form of defence against the winter virus.

Much more than a heavy cold, flu has the potential to keep even the healthiest of people tucked up in bed for a week or more with everything from coughs and chills to aching muscles and severe headaches.

The good news, however, is that all those horrible symptoms can be avoided by having the flu jab.

It's the easy way to ensure you approach winter in the best possible health.

Many groups of people – such as those aged over 65, pregnant women, those with an existing health condition and most primary school children – are eligible for a free flu jab.

Your GP or pharmacist can give you more information, or you can even find out more from the staff in the chemist at your local supermarket.

Staff at Swindon CCG, along with our colleagues at the Great Western Hospital and Swindon Borough Council, will be having the flu jab in the coming weeks and we hope to be able to show you some photos of our teams getting protected in an upcoming edition of News-Bites.

Until next time, stay healthy and happy!

## Stoptober is the perfect time to quit smoking

Smokers are being encouraged to ditch cigarettes for good this autumn with the help of Stoptober.

A month-long campaign designed to give people who have previously struggled to kick the habit the support they need to quit smoking, Stoptober is based on the idea that a person is five times more likely to be successful in quitting if they can go a whole month without a cigarette.

If you or perhaps someone you know is looking to turn over a new leaf this October and stop smoking for good, visit [www.nhs.uk/oneyou](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou) for help, support and expert advice.



## Have your say on Swindon's Carer Strategy

Swindon Carers Centre has produced a strategy that sets out its aims and plans for the next five years and the team would like local people to read the document and share their feedback.

All responses to the new strategy will be read and, where appropriate, taken on board before the document is officially approved.

Feedback can be submitted by sending an email to [feedback@swindoncarers.org.uk](mailto:feedback@swindoncarers.org.uk) before Wednesday 31 October.

To read the strategy, click here or visit [www.swindoncarers.org.uk](http://www.swindoncarers.org.uk).



## Swindon bitten by Beat the Street bug

Adults and children across Swindon have been getting out and exercising more as part of a brand new fitness initiative that has taken the entire town by storm.

Beat the Street involves people walking, running or cycling between designated points across Swindon and using the interactive swipe cards to track their distance as they go.

After just a few days, more than 24,000 people had signed up to take part in the town-wide game.

Swindon CCG has even been getting in on the fun with its own lunchtime walking group altering their usual route to ensure they can pass by one of the digital Beat Boxes, which record how far someone has travelled.

To find out more, visit [www.beatthestreet.me/swindon](http://www.beatthestreet.me/swindon).



## Care closer to home for Swindon cancer patients

A pilot project is supporting people in Swindon with head and neck cancer to be cared for at their local hospital, rather than having to journey across the border into Oxfordshire.

Patients who were previously treated at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford can now be cared for at the Great Western Hospital, saving them from a time-intensive journey.

Nick Crowson-Towers, Project Lead, said: "To avoid the trauma of extended, regular and costly travel to Oxford will be a tonic in itself."



## Learn, laugh and live with Swindon U3A

The Swindon arm of the University of the Third Age has seen its numbers rise in recent weeks following a successful open day at the beginning of September.

A way for the over 55s to learn new skills, make friends and stay active during retirement, the U3A offers people a wide selection of weekly groups that meet to discuss and do everything from ballroom dancing to learning a new language.

Anybody keen to join the U3A can find out more information by calling 01793 614629 or sending an email to [office@swindonu3a.org.uk](mailto:office@swindonu3a.org.uk).



## Become a mental health wellbeing adviser

Swindon and Gloucestershire Mind is recruiting four wellbeing advisers for an exciting new mental health project in the town.

Local people with the right skills and values, as well as the ability to support somebody struggling with poor mental health, are being encouraged to apply for the role.

Successful candidates will be involved in a new out-of-hours service that will provide assistance to people experiencing mental health concerns, with the overall aim of helping people to avoid unnecessary visits to hospital.

Applications for the role must be submitted by Monday 1 October.

To find out more, read the job description and to apply online, visit the Swindon and Gloucestershire Mind website by [clicking here](#).



## For your information and interest

- Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group is calling on adults across the town to find out their heart age and make changes to improve their overall cardiovascular health.

By taking part in the free online [Heart Age Test](#), people can find out if the age of their heart matches their actual age and whether this puts them at an increased risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

- 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](mailto:susan.lambert@swindon.gov.uk) or by calling 07980 933636.

- The government is seeking views from the public on ending the sale of energy drinks to children and young people in England.

Under the proposals, drinks that contain more than 150mg of caffeine per litre would be unable to be sold to anybody under 18.

[Click here](#) to have your say.

- The Primary Care Digital Transformation team is holding a series of webinars aimed at helping people understand more about GP online services and how they can support their local practice in getting more patients to register for the service.

Each webinar is free and will last between 60 and 90 minutes.

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

- The next meeting of the Swindon Group of Diabetes UK will be held on Tuesday 2 October at 7.15pm at the Broadgreen Centre in Salisbury Street.

Speaking at the free event, as well as answering questions, will be Sarah Fitzpatrick, Community Diabetes Specialist Nurse.

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

## Governing Body

The latest Governing Body meeting was held on Thursday 24 August and the papers can be viewed on the CCG's website: <http://www.swindonccg.nhs.uk/list-of-events/2018-governing-body-papers>.

The next meeting will take place at the CCG offices on Thursday 27 September at 9am.

If you would like to submit a question or attend the meeting, please send an email to [communications@swindonccg.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@swindonccg.nhs.uk) by 5pm on Monday 24 September.

## Contact details for the Communications and Engagement Team

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