



September 2020

News 296 Health

There will be another ENews arriving shortly with other information

ADVANCE NOTICE

Changes that will affect older people in Enfield

Tuesday 6th October

10.00 am

Your invite to our meeting

Enfield Older Peoples Partnership Board

**and the Enfield Over 50s Forum
have organised a Zoom Webinar on
Tuesday 6 October, 10.30am**

on

Changes that will affect Older People in Enfield

In the week that celebrates International Older Peoples' Day Enfield Older Peoples Partnership Board in conjunction with the Over 50s Forum will look at changes that will affect the lives of all older people in Enfield. Panellists include Jan Shortt, General

Secretary of the National Pensioners Convention (Britain's largest campaigning organisation for pensioners) on the threat to the triple lock; Bindi Nagra (Director of Health & Adult Social Care) on the changes affecting social care in the borough; along with a speaker talking about the continuing National Health Service changes that affect Enfield residents.

Enfield's voluntary organisations, Forum affiliates and members will be sent full details with an invitation to register in order to take part in the Zoom webinar. Questions to the panellists can be submitted on registration and during the presentations.

This meeting is a real opportunity to learn about the health and financial challenges affecting us all. The draft agenda can be found on the Forum's website.

www.enfieldover50sforum.org.uk

You are invited to join this Zoom webinar on: Oct 6, 2020 10:30 AM London.

Topic: **Changes that will affect Older People in Enfield**

Register in advance at:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_V-TSk4P_RBm0wcDH1bEgCw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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If you have not used Zoom before on your computer, tablet or mobile phone you can find our draft instructions on the Forum's website.

Health News

There's no point in beating about the bush, we haven't seen the emergence from Covid that we hoped for, and there's every chance, with the Winter flu season to be got through, that things may get worse before they get better. Another frustration is that it is difficult to pin down the data and to get bang up to date figures for Enfield as the picture can change very quickly if one person infects several others.

The R number

That's R for reproduction, the rate at which one known infected person can spread Covid. At present, the London wide R number is 1.3 and we have no specific figure for Enfield. The number needs to be 1, that's one person with Covid **not** spreading it to anyone else. The higher the figure the more people infected. We don't know yet what impact the return to school has had on the R number here. Children are super spreaders who may not suffer severely, or even be asymptomatic, but they can pass the virus on.

Cases are increasing but the NHS has decided that *diagnostic appointments and elective surgery must carry on* and can assure patients that if they are called in, it is safe. The NHS is insisting that it very much open and intent on catching up with the backlog of non-Covid work. If you have worrying symptoms contact your GP and if you have a hospital appointment, keep it.

The Forum is in dialogue with Enfield clinical commissioning group (CCG) about the difficulties some of our members are having with getting GP appointments,

and with the new systems in place; this is particularly true for those who won't be reading this because they are digitally excluded. We are trying hard to work with the CCG to overcome this exclusion which is more likely to affect the old and frail. The risks attached to Covid rise with every decade as we know, so this really matters. The CCG has undertaken to look at the weaknesses in the e consult system and the rigidity of some of the reception staff acting as gatekeepers.

GP surgeries are being inundated with enquiries about test and trace which they have no responsibility for or power over, so please don't ring for that. Patients wanting documentation to claim for cancelled holidays are also adding to their administrative burdens.

Test & Trace

Our great difficulty has been the lack of a local, consistent track and trace service in Enfield, as in most other parts of the country, and it is a great shame that central government has not opted to resource and use our highly skilled Public Health staff at the council for this.

A good test and trace system, locally available, is vital if we are to control the spread of the virus. At the time of writing there has been a drop of 43% in testing availability across London with its 9 million residents.

Winter flu

By now, if you are over 65, you should have been contacted by your GP to be called in or to make an appointment to get the flu jab. If not, ring your surgery and enquire. The aim is to get all this age group and other vulnerable categories vaccinated and then to move down the age range. If you are over 50 but under 65 you will be contacted later. There isn't a supply problem, all GP surgeries will have their supplies of vaccine and nasal sprays by 1st October but Covid means that the administration of the jab needs to be more spaced out than usual and this is time consuming. Clinicians administering the jab will be in PPE and their premises may

be used differently, depending on the space available. Some may be able to use car parks and marquees.

It is vital that you do get the jab as we're not on top of Covid and a combination of flu and Covid could be deadly serious for ourselves and the NHS. The overall flat target is now 75% coverage for all targeted groups and you may be contacted by text, letter or a phone call. If you get the vaccine from a pharmacy or in a care home or similar, it will be registered with your practice within 24 hours. Priority groups are those clinically assessed to be at the highest risk of both Covid and the flu vulnerability to which overlap. We all share the risk of both Covid and the flu and so we must share the responsibility for avoiding it for our own and other's sake. The CCG is planning for the vaccination of 65,000 residents, make sure that you're one of them.

You must wear a mask unless exempt.

Evidence from Australia and New Zealand that is beginning to emerge seems to indicate that the flu strain Down Under may not be mild (though we can hope it is) but simply that fewer people have fallen foul of it because of actions taken to avoid Covid! Either way, there's a lesson there for us.

See below for a list of vulnerable categories and a notice for those of you registered at Winchmore Hill and Park Lodges practices.

Adults short video <https://youtu.be/iZVuzUtvRI8>

Phlebotomy & diagnostics

Some readers will know to their cost that there have been problems with getting blood tests resulting from the Royal Free withdrawing this service from a quarter of our surgeries thus placing extra pressure on our hospitals then made worse by the spacing on appointments demanded by Covid. Enfield CCG, with recognition from its North Central London management, has recognised the difficulties and the over-extended waiting times this has caused and is working to replace the lost capacity. This is unlikely to happen all at once.

Older Peoples' Day

See page 1

On the 6th of October at 10.30 the Forum in combination with Enfield council is holding a webinar and you are cordially invited to join.

One of the speakers will be Deborah McBeal from our local NHS clinical commissioning group giving you an opportunity to ask questions about NHS services, another Bindi Nagra from Enfield council will talk about social care, a subject you may need reassurance about. The third speaker is Jan Shortt from the National Pensioners Convention with a wider brief.

It is worth noting here that not everyone living in care homes or supported living settings is elderly or even frail, currently there are more than 23,000 people with learning difficulties living in registered care homes, for example.

The Older Persons Assessment Unit (OPAU)

Readers will know or recall what an outstanding unit this has been. Though the Forum has received assurances that our local CCG and GPs favour its return from Barnet to Chase Farm, and the North Central London Integrated Care Partnership has made vague noises of support, nothing has happened to action this. We regard the loss of this excellent unit at this challenging time as very worrying and consider its return vital if we are to face the coming Winter well-prepared, so we continue to press for this to happen quickly. The Forum is pleased that Bambos Charalambous, the Southgate MP, has given this demand his active support.

Changes to children's and young person's services

Those who have grandchildren living in North Central London may want to know that there are closures taking place.

The children and young peoples' emergency services at the **Royal Free** and **University College Hospitals** will be closed.

The **Whittington** and **North Middlesex** children's emergency departments will expand to meet demand.

Barnet Hospital children's emergency department has re-opened following temporary closure and will include child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS).

To ensure maintenance of access to elective services **Great Ormond Street** will provide more room for urgent elective inpatients and some, but not all, day surgery.

The NHS is saying that the closures are temporary for the Winter. I should add that there has been resistance to this and the Forum's position is of active concern that any closures, as with our OPAU, under cover of Covid, may prove permanent.

Those registered with **Park Lodge and Winchmore Hill practices** may be aware that they are going for pop up flu jab sessions in Palace Gardens Enfield Town on the 10th and 17th October from 8.15am to 1.15pm and they are asking for non-clinical voluntary marshalling support. Refreshments and PPE will be provided. Contact the surgery if you are interested and willing.

Groups with clinical vulnerability

Over 65s, especially over 80s,
all those with long term conditions,
2-3 year olds and pregnant women
the housebound and their carers,
those with learning disabilities,

care home residents and those in assisted living accommodation,
certain ethnic minorities in deprived areas

Please find below the links to the English versions of the animations.

I have also included the sub titled versions in case these are helpful.

They are currently being translated into six different languages common to NCL.

Happy to share these too if helpful once they are ready.

Adult flu video: <https://youtu.be/iZVuzUtvRI8>

Parents/children flu video: <https://youtu.be/1VYZCE0wwkk>

Sub titled versions:

Adults: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LeLXek0_xs

Children: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S93ZQbuEBvA&t=5s>

Take care, stay safe and well.

Vivien Giladi

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