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| -  SHIFA SURGERY  August 2024 newsletter |  | A blue and green circle with a black globe  Description automatically generated  www.shifasurgery.co.uk  @Shifasurgeryblackburn  @Shifasurgerybangor |
| ONLINE TRIAGE SYSTEM  Did you know Shifa Surgery now offers an online triage system? The online form is a quick and easy way of letting your surgery know what's wrong or raising a query or concern. This can help you get the right care when you need it.  They can also be more convenient for some people, for example, if you do not like to use the phone, or you find it difficult to call the surgery because of work or caring commitments.  **PLEASE DO NOT USE AN ONLINE FORM TO REQUEST HELP IF YOUR MEDICAL PROBLEM IS URGENT.**  Our team will use the information you've provided to make sure you get the help that's right for you.  This could be:  • a face-to-face appointment  • a phone call or video consultation  • a short text or email message, for example to ask for further information.  Consultations by phone, video call or sending a short text or email message can be more flexible and often means the doctor, nurse or another health professional can help you sooner.  **For urgent medical help, go to 111.nhs.uk, or call 111 if you cannot get help online. For emergencies, go to your nearest A&E or call 999 for an ambulance.** |  | WELCOME TO THE LATEST ISSUE OF OUR PRACTICE NEWSLETTER  Your feedback on this newsletter is welcomed, and we would also be delighted to hear of any ideas and content you would like to see in a future edition.  DID NOT ATTEND POLICY  The practice would like to highlight that an increasing number of patients are failing to cancel or attend their appointments, resulting in wasted appointments. If you cannot make an appointment, please ring reception to cancel even if it is the same day as these appointments can be given to patients that desperately need them.  In response to this increase, we have introduced a DNA Policy and Shifa Surgery intends to fully implement its policy pertaining to non-attendance on a strict and consistent basis.  We would like to remind patients that instead of phoning the surgery they can cancel an appointment via the NHS app, or if they have received a reminder text, they can simply reply with the word “cancel”. |

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WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

Tuesday 10th of September is World Suicide Prevention Day. It is estimated that there are currently more than 700,000 suicides per year worldwide, and we know that each suicide profoundly affects many more people. Suicide remains a critical global issue, affecting individuals and communities worldwide. Changing the narrative on suicide aims to inspire individuals, communities, and governments to engage in open and honest discussions about suicide and suicidal behavior. By initiating these vital conversations, we can break down barriers, raise awareness, and create better cultures of understanding and support. Blackburn with Darwen council will be honouring the day by holding a vigil and there is also a planned walk from Darwen to Blackburn to mark the day.

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Shifa Surgery has a Mental Health Practitioner who works in the Practice who you are able to book in and have appointments with. The MHP is a Mental Health professional who works within GP practices. They offer short term support to help you understand and manage your mental health needs, improve your wellbeing and help you to access other services that may also improve your mental and physical health

There are also local Associate Psychological Practitioners working in GP practices across Blackburn with Darwen who can help you to learn techniques to manager your current difficulties and increase your understanding around mental health. Just speak with your Nurse or GP for a referral to their service.

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PERTUSSIS (WHOOPING COUGH) VACCINE

Whooping cough (pertussis) is a bacterial infection of the lungs and breathing tubes. It spreads very easily and can sometimes cause serious problems. Unfortunately, there has been a rise in Whooping Cough cases since December 2023.

Young babies with whooping cough are often very unwell and most will be admitted to hospital because of their illness. When whooping cough is particularly severe, they can die.

Getting vaccinated while you're pregnant is highly effective in protecting your baby from developing whooping cough in the first few weeks of their life.

The immunity you get from the vaccine will pass to your baby through the placenta and provide passive protection for them until they are old enough to be routinely vaccinated against whooping cough at 8 weeks old.

Pregnant women can help protect their babies by getting vaccinated – ideally from 16 weeks up to 32 weeks pregnant. If for any reason you miss having the vaccine, you can still have it up until you go into labour.

The whooping cough vaccine can be given in 1 small appointment with our Practice Nurse. Please contact our reception team who can book you in or answer any questions you may have relating to the vaccine.

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MENOPAUSE SUPPORT GROUP

Menopause and perimenopause symptoms can have a big impact on your daily life, including relationships, social life, family life and work.

Menopause can feel different for everyone. You may have a number of symptoms or none. Symptoms usually start months or years before your periods stop.

Shifa Surgery is introducing menopause support group clinics. Together, with a female clinician, a group of 6 ladies will chat and share their queries and concerns about menopause with each other. We will discuss what is menopause, how it affects women, and helpful ways to manage symptoms.

How do I get involved? Please contact the surgery on 01254 965150 & ask to be booked into our next session. Sessions are once per month on Monday evening, from 17:30pm - 18:30pm.

Before you attend the support group, we will send you a welcome booklet to read. We will also ask you to complete the symptom checker & pre questionnaire to bring along to the session.

A poster with different signs

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UPCOMING HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS! WEEK

2nd – 8th September is Know Your Numbers! Week. This is the UK's biggest blood pressure testing and awareness event. Did you know that getting a blood pressure check is the first step to preventing heart attacks and strokes? High blood pressure is a major cause of these diseases but usually has no symptoms until it’s too late, which is why it’s known as ‘the silent killer’. Knowing your numbers means you can start making healthy lifestyle changes or start taking medicines if you need them to bring your blood pressure down to a healthy level.

STOPTOBER

Stoptober is back this October to encourage and support smokers to quit for good. Since it first launched in 2012, Stoptober has helped over 2.5 million people make a quit smoking attempt. If you stop smoking for the 28 days of Stoptober and you’re five times more likely to quit for good. It’s never too late to quit smoking. Even if you’ve tried quitting before, give it another go this Stoptober. Quitting smoking is the best thing you can do for your health.

When you stop there are almost immediate improvements to your health. To make it easier to stop there is now an **NHS Quit Smoking app** which is available to download for free on the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Based on a 28-day quit programme, the app allows you to:

* track your progress
* • see how much money you’re saving
* • get daily support



MENOPAUSE SUPPORT CLINIC

We are now hosting Menipause Group Support clinics at the surgery. This clinic has been set up to discuss the worries around menopause. The sessions are once a month on a Monday evening from 5.30pm – 6.30pm.

To be booked in, please contact the surgery and ask to be booked in to our next session. You can also ask our admin staff for further information about the group and what you can expect in a session.

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AWARDS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We would like to give our sincerest congratulations to Dr Gbenga who recently passed his exams and has completed his placement with us.

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COVID VACCINE

The following groups will be able to have an NHS Covid booster from October:

* over-64s
* people aged between six months and 64 years with health conditions that make them more vulnerable
* people living in care homes for older people
* front-line health and social-care staff, including in care homes for older people

The NHS will contact eligible patients directly, but they can also book their own appointments from 23 September via the NHS App, external, GPs, pharmacies, drop-in clinics, external or by calling 119.

CERVICAL SCREENING

You will receive a text message invitation for a smear test up to 6 months before you turn 25. We do also contact patients by letter and telephone. If you think you may be due for a smear test, please contact the surgery and we can check this for you and book appropriately.

Cervical screening (a smear test) is a test to check the health of the cervix and help to prevent cervical cancer. Cervical screening is one of the best ways to protect yourself from cervical cancer. Cervical screening checks the health of your cervix and helps find any abnormal changes before they can turn into cancer. It is not a test for cancer, it is a test to help prevent cancer. People aged 25 to 49 receive invitations every 3 years. People aged 50 to 64 receive invitations every 5 years.

SHINGLES VACCINE

Shingles is a common condition that causes a painful rash. It can sometimes lead to serious problems such as long-lasting pain, hearing loss or blindness. You're more likely to get shingles, and it's more likely to cause serious problems, as you get older or if you have a severely weakened immune system.

The shingles vaccine helps protect against shingles. It's recommended for all adults turning 65, those aged 70 to 79 and those aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system.

RSV VACCINE

RSV is a common respiratory virus which can cause mild, cold-like symptoms but can cause serious lung infections. While RSV infection can occur at any age, the risk and severity of RSV and its complications are increased in older adults and in neonates and small babies. In small babies this condition can make it hard to breathe and to feed.

All adults turning **75 years old on or after 1 September 2024** will be eligible for the routine programme and should be offered a single dose of the RSV vaccine **on or after their 75th birthday.** **All women who are at least 28 weeks pregnant on 1 September 2024**, should be offered a single dose of the RSV vaccine. After that, pregnant women will become eligible for the vaccine as they reach 28 weeks gestation and will remain eligible up to birth.

FLU VACCINE

The flu vaccine helps protect against flu, which can be a serious or life-threatening illness. It's offered on the NHS every year in autumn or early winter to people at higher risk of getting seriously ill from flu. The flu vaccine aims to protect you against the most common types of flu viruses. There's still a chance you might get flu after getting vaccinated, but it's likely to be milder and not last as long. The vaccine usually takes up to 14 days to work.

Children and Pregnant women will be able to receive the vaccine from **September 2024.** Most eligible adults will be able to get the flu vaccine from the beginning of **October 2024**.