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COVID-19 Vaccine Update – please read this document carefully

We are delighted to announce that The Devereux Centre in Tewkesbury has been approved as the hub to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to patients in our Primary Care Network (Mythe Medical Practice, Church Street Medical, Staunton Surgery and Newent Doctors).

As most of you will already know, the Pfizer vaccine has been approved by the MHRA and is now available to general practice and this is the vaccine that we will initially be using.

Pfizer Vaccine

- In clinical trials the vaccine has been found to be 95% effective at preventing COVID-19 disease.
- Clinical trials involved over 44,000 people in six different countries prior to authorisation and no safety concerns were identified.
- The vaccine works by stimulating the cells of the body to produce antigen which resembles the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2. The presence of the antigen then stimulates the immune system to produce antibodies and activate T-cells.
- To gain full coverage from this vaccine you will need to have two doses 21 days apart.
- This is not a “live” COVID-19 virus so you cannot get the disease from this vaccine.
- Like all vaccinations you may get some mild and short-lived reactions such as a headache, chills, muscle aches, fever, joint pain or discomfort around the site of the injection.

How we plan to deliver the vaccine to our patients

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will be managed in Cohorts (groups of patients) as directed by NHS England. The first Cohort will be mobile patients aged 80 years and over as well as Care Home Staff, Carers and frontline NHS staff. This vaccine requires specific storage and limited movement from site to site. It cannot therefore be used for housebound or nursing home patients. Patients will be contacted by the surgeries to arrange a time for them to attend. **We will be contacting each group of patients in time order, so please do not contact the surgery, we will call you.**

Due to the nature of this vaccine which requires reconstituting, drawing up and using within six hours, we will only be able to offer to vaccinate patients during set clinics on specific days. **Appointments are pre-bookable only – we will not be vaccinating patients without an appointment.** At the moment the vaccination days will be Wednesdays and Thursdays from 08.30 – 20.00. Vaccinating will take place on the ground floor of The Devereux Centre using rooms at Church Street Surgery.

If you have received a letter from the NHS offering you a COVID-19 vaccination **Please bring it to your appointment.**

This is a huge and unprecedented campaign for general practice. Patients will still need to be seen and their long term conditions managed. COVID-19 vaccinations will be ongoing for many months. The Practices ask for your understanding as we enter a new phase in the fight against Coronavirus. We will continue to keep you updated.