

## MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

### NHS Care at the Chemist

In Rainford, we are fortunate to have local pharmacies which can provide treatment for a wide range of minor illnesses. If you do not pay for prescriptions, you can register for Care at the Chemist and required medication can be issued free of charge. This helps reduce the practice's drug expenditure. Please ask for details either at the practice or a participating pharmacy and also look in the 'Choose Well' section of the website. You can be seen twice per month for each condition.

### Reducing Prescription Costs

The CCG Medicines Management Team is also asking patients to buy over the counter medication where possible rather than request it on a prescription. This will include drugs such as paracetamol, co-codamol, gaviscon, ibuprofen, emollients, wax softening drops, dry eye drops, anti-histamines, nasal sprays etc. If you are in a position to be able to purchase such medication rather than request a script this would also help with the prescribing budget.

### e-consultation form

I hope I am not shooting myself in the foot here but I hope to have the e-consultation form up and running by April to improve patient access to the practice. I stress this is NOT for patients who think they definitely need to be seen but for those who think they probably do not need to be seen but need some advice. I will try this out on the Patient Participation Group first and tweak it as we go along.

### Meningitis Vaccination

Please be aware that we are not allowed to vaccinate children against meningitis B if born before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015. This directive has come directly from Public Health England. There is only enough vaccine produced for the age group specified. Younger children are the most at risk and must be vaccinated first. We have no choice in this. There is not enough vaccine for everyone – even private providers are likely to struggle to obtain the vaccine.

### Junior Doctors Contract

Strike action is about safety in the NHS and is not about the money. It will be impossible to attract young people into medicine if the job is considered unsafe by those doing it. There is already a major crisis in GP recruitment and this will only worsen if youngsters are not applying to study medicine. When junior doctors qualify, they are already about £70k in debt from tuition fees in addition to having worked many unpaid hours as students during their training. It can be a terrifying job at the best of times and we ask that you support the junior doctors – they will be looking after us all one day soon.

### Booking Appointments

If making an appointment on behalf of a family member, please make sure you tell that family member. A number of missed appointments apparently are due to patients not being informed – even about emergency appointments!

### Chronic Disease Management

We will be working hard in March to achieve our targets. Please help!

### Emergency Appointments

Gentle reminder – if booking an emergency appointment, we will only be able to deal with the urgent condition.