

Dear Patient

We hope you've been enjoying the warm sunny days as much as we have this summer! Our IncrEdible garden has been blooming and bursting with fresh vegetables for everyone to enjoy.

As a Practice we have been reviewing our [waste management](#) approach to ensure we are segregating properly in our efforts to reduce the amount of waste that reaches landfills. We are pleased to share ideas on how our patients can prevent medicines waste in this edition.

The way our patients will receive their annual Winter Flu and Covid-19 vaccinations has changed. This will no longer be administered in the Practice – please see over the page for more information.

Please remember to check our website <https://cairnmedical.gp.scot/> and [FaceBook](#) page for important Practice updates!

Team Cairn

Reducing Unnecessary Medicines Waste

Although prescriptions are free to patients at the point of access, medicine costs are charged to the NHS. This is money that could be used in other parts of health and social care services. It is therefore important to ensure that we are as cost-effective as possible, and minimise any waste.

Each year it is estimated that £20 million worth of medicines are wasted across NHS Scotland. Any medication that has left a pharmacy, even if it is unopened, cannot be reused. Instead, it has to be incinerated. This then has an adverse impact on our environment, so it is something we want to keep to a minimum. It is also important to be aware that any unwanted medicines should never be flushed down the toilet, or thrown into the refuse. This is because medication can have a serious impact on local wildlife, both on land, and in the water systems.

Please therefore always return unwanted medicines to your pharmacy.

There are many reasons why medicines are wasted and some are unavoidable e.g. you have a bad reaction to a medicine and have to stop it. However, there are some simple things that we can all do to reduce unnecessary waste if we are prescribed medicines:

- Check your medicine(s) supply before you order so that you only order what you need.
- When you go to your pharmacy for your medicines, CHECK THE BAG BEFORE YOU LEAVE to ensure it is all correct - medicines can be reused if they have not left the pharmacy.
- If you find that you are receiving too much medicine each month, or are still receiving medicine that has stopped, please email nhsh.gp56006-prescriptions@nhs.scot or phone our pharmacy team (01463 725453) between 9am and 1pm.
- If you are unsure if you need to be taking all your medicines, please phone and book a non-urgent telephone review with one of our pharmacists or GPs.

Dr Alan Cuthbert officially joins Team Cairn!



We are delighted to share that Dr Alan Cuthbert will become a permanent member of Team Cairn as a salaried GP. Alan has worked with us for a couple of years as a locum GP and more recently on a fixed term contract. As such many of our patients will already know Alan and be familiar with his excellent patient care!

Dedicated Mental Health Support

From September our Practice will benefit from a team of Primary Care Mental Health Workers (PCMHW).

Our onsite PCMHW team will support our patients in identifying, treating and managing mental health problems and disorders. Initially patients will be referred to our PCMHW team by one of our clinicians.

If you have concerns about your mental health or depression, you can call the Practice to make an appointment with one of our GPs. Where appropriate you may then be referred to a PCMHW.

Remember there are a range of [mental health self-help guides](#) available on the NHS Inform website.

Covid-19 & Flu Vaccination Update

Nationally, your GP will not offer winter vaccinations going forward.

How will I get my vaccine? All vaccinations will be Board run clinics held in the community – please do not contact your GP Practice. All information on vaccine clinics is available on the NHS Highland [website](#).

How do I book my vaccine? Everyone over the age of 65 and those aged 5-64 who are at risk will be invited by letter to attend for their vaccine.

How are flu vaccinations being delivered to school-age children? This vaccine is being delivered at schools. You will receive notification from your school.

Are 16-17 year olds eligible for flu vaccination? If you are still in school then you can receive this vaccine in school. If you have left school this age group is not eligible for the flu vaccine unless you have one of the eligible health conditions.

What about children under the age of 5 who are not in school? Children not at school (aged 2-5yrs) will be offered their flu vaccination at a community clinic, as will children aged 6mths – 2yrs who are at risk.

What if I can't make the appointment? If you received an appointment letter you can reschedule your appointment by emailing nhsh.covidvaccine@nhs.scot or by contacting the National Vaccination Helpline on 0800 030 8013 or the local Service Delivery Centre Helpline on 08000 320 339. If you booked via the portal, log back in to the portal and follow the instructions to change your appointment.

How can people who are housebound access vaccination? People who are registered with their GP as being housebound will be contacted and vaccinated at home. If you receive an appointment to attend a clinic and cannot attend because you are housebound, please email nhsh.covidvaccine@nhs.scot or call our local Service Delivery Centre Helpline on 08000 320 339.

Why aren't you sending appointment letters to people under 65? The national portal provides the flexibility for people to self-appoint. Anyone in this age group who does not use the portal will still be contacted and offered an appointment, but not until later in the programme.

Clinic Locations for our patients are likely to be at one of the following venues: Inverness Vaccination Centre; Culduthel Christian Centre; Smithton Church; Merkinch Community Centre. You can access the [scheduled clinics list](#) on the NHS Highland website.

The following groups will be offered an additional **COVID-19 vaccination**:

- Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults
- Frontline health and social care workers
- All adults aged 50 years and over
- Those aged 5 to 49 years in a clinical risk group, including pregnant people
- Those aged 5 to 49 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression
- Carers aged 16-49 years

Those eligible for a **free flu vaccination** are:

- Residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults
- Those aged 50 years and over
- Those aged 6 months to 49 years in a clinical risk group for flu
- Health and social care workers (NHS Highland Employees)
- Pregnant people
- Children aged 2 to 5 years (and not yet in school)
- Primary school children (P1 to P7)
- Secondary school pupils under 18 (S1 to S6)
- Unpaid and young carers
- Household contacts of people with immunosuppression or carers
- Primary, Secondary, and Nursery teachers and pupil-facing support staff
- Prison population and prison officers who deliver direct front-facing detention services and support staff

Making an Appointment

Routine appointments can now be booked up to 6 weeks in advance.

This means all patients should be able to get an appointment even where your preferred clinician is unavailable.

We offer phone, 'Near Me' (video) and face-to-face (F2F) appointments. F2F are to be used for medical concerns that cannot be dealt with over the phone or video call. Our receptionist team will guide you; please answer their questions as they can direct you to the most appropriate service.

This can include visiting your local pharmacy, a physiotherapist appointment or speaking to one of our nurse or pharmacist practitioners.

