



Jan's Weekly Update

Issue 2 - 11.10.13



Fighting Flu – protecting patients

On Wednesday, Tessa Norris and I took part in an important meeting regarding urgent care planning for the region, Shropshire included. We looked at arrangements for how we would cope with an increase in demand across the region - particularly as we head towards the busy winter period. One of the most important elements we need to concentrate on is flu prevention and a key way we can ensure we cope to make sure we have our flu jabs.

There will be a big campaign in the Trust to make it easy for staff to get vaccinated so I won't go into that. However, I have a personal interest in this and would quickly like to share that story with you.

I have always believed that prevention is better than cure – a philosophy shared by many community staff and part of your daily working lives with patients and their families. I also believe that one of the best things we can do for our patients to protect them this winter is ensure that we don't get sick with flu and very importantly don't risk giving them flu. As you know flu is a nasty virus that in the elderly and the young can quickly turn into something very serious.

A few years ago I was one of the unlucky people to get Swine Flu (before a vaccine was available) and spent six weeks away from work, my family and friends and scared myself silly. Until that point I'd never had more than a cold and certainly only a couple of days off sick in my career. I was fit, healthy and relatively young with no risk factors - there was no reason why I should catch the flu! I really did lose six weeks of my life because of that virus.

Some of you have told me that you're not keen to have the 'jab' because it makes your arm sore and or gives you a few cold like symptoms for a day or two – all I ask is that you think again – none of us are invincible and all of us are capable of passing disease on to others if we are infected. Having the flu jab is one of the easiest ways to keep yourselves healthy, support your team because you will be able to come to work and ensure that you protect your family and patients. Only 45% of us had the jab last winter – we were lucky that there wasn't a big flu outbreak. There is a good chance there will be this year. Children's services traditionally achieve 90% upwards, I'm sure the rest of us could do the same.

You go the extra mile for your patients every day – please get vaccinated this winter.

Look out for dates/ times of staff flu clinics in future editions of Inform and Team Brief.

Out and about this week...

During this, my second week in Shropshire, I have continued to meet as many of you as possible – finding out about what you do and being around for you to ask me any questions that you have. I have met with the Quality and Safety and HR teams at William Farr House as well as community nursing staff in North Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin.

This week I have also had positive meetings with the NHS Trust Development Authority (TDA) and the Local Area Team (LAT) which are the organisations that have responsibility for supporting us and keeping us on the right track as we move forward.

Information Governance

Whilst I wasn't able to attend the Information Governance workshop that took place at Shrewsbury Town Football Club on Tuesday, I have heard some really good feedback about how useful it has been. It particularly focussed on the importance of data protection and security, and the important role of the Freedom of Information Act – two areas that are absolutely vital in helping to keep our patients and ourselves safe. So thank you to all that arranged and attended this event.

I would encourage everyone to make sure that your IG training is up-to-date and make sure you ask one of the Trust's specialists if you have any IG concerns.

Let me know

As always, please do drop me an email if you have any questions, concerns or comments you would like me to know about – simply email me at jan.ditheridge@shropcom.nhs.uk.

Jan Ditheridge
Interim Chief Executive