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## Focus On Pertussis

Cases of whooping cough are continuing to rise across England for all age groups, including the under 1-year olds, the group at greatest risk of severe outcomes.

Jan-March 2024 had a total of 2793 cases of pertussis compared to 858 cases in all of 2023. Sadly, there have been 5 reported deaths in infants who developed pertussis in the first quarter of this year. The rise is due to a combination of factors including the cyclical nature of the disease, the impact of the pandemic causing reduced immunity and the uptake of pertussis vaccination falling. Vaccinations are available for pregnant women after 16weeks and should ideally be administered before 32w to ensure that high levels of antibodies against pertussis cross the placenta to protect the baby after birth. It can also be administered to mothers with an infant less than 2 months of age who didn't receive the vaccine in pregnancy. Maternal vaccination provides 97% protection against fatal pertussis in infants under 3 months old.

If you are a patient who fits the criteria and would like a vaccination, please contact the surgery to book an appointment with a nurse.

## Patient Participation Group

The purpose of the patient participation group (PPG) is to ensure that patients and carers are involved in decisions about the range, shape and quality of services provided by the practice.

- Carrying out research into the views of those who use the practice.
- Ongoing communication with the patient population
- Organising health promotion events and health literacy
- Encouraging patients to take greater responsibility for their own and their family's health.
- Advising the practice on the patient perspective and providing insight into the responsiveness and quality of services
- Being a critical friend to the practice

Meetings are held three or four times a year at the surgery when current issues are discussed and often invite a guest speaker. If you are interested in joining the group you can speak to Anne Fellowes, Administrator, collect an application form from reception or complete one online on our website.

## Enhanced Access Clinics

Appointments are available every evening from 6.30-8pm, either remotely or at one of the sites in the partnership.

Enhanced Access appointments are also available for Colte patients on Saturdays in August as follows:

3<sup>rd</sup> – Colne Medical Centre

10<sup>th</sup> – Ambrose Avenue Group Practice, Colchester

17<sup>th</sup> - Riverside Health Centre, Manningtree

24<sup>th</sup> - Rowhedge Surgery, Colchester

31<sup>st</sup> - Tiptree Medical Centre

Please contact reception to book an appointment in any of these clinics.

Thank you for reading.

*Katie Pirie*

*Practice Manager*