

Health Promotion Campaign Update

Congratulations on your efforts with the last campaign – Stay Well This Winter. To date we have had responses from 98 pharmacies. Although we recognise that some pharmacies had problems obtaining show material, the overall feedback was positive. Pharmacy staff provided lots of advice to patients which resulted in some of the following:-

Referral to the Pharmacy First Minor Ailments Service

Referral to purchase GSL/P medicines

Referral into smoking cessation services.

Referral to local GPs for childrens flu vaccinations.

The next campaign, which starts on **Monday 15th January** and runs for 4 weeks is 'Know Your Heart Age.' This will be a slightly different, more low key campaign.

The aim is to make patients aware of the risks of having high blood pressure, and what they can do to reduce it.

Background

High blood pressure, or hypertension, rarely has noticeable symptoms. But if untreated, it increases your risk of serious problems such as heart attacks and strokes. More than one in four adults in the UK have high blood pressure, although many won't realise it. High Blood Pressure and Cardiovascular Disease is a major target for the NHS nationally. As a general guide:

- **high blood pressure** is considered to be 140/90mmHg or higher
- **ideal blood pressure** is considered to be between 90/60mmHg and 120/80mmHg
- **low blood pressure** is considered to be 90/60mmHg or lower

A blood pressure reading between 120/80mmHg and 140/90mmHg could mean you're at risk of developing high blood pressure if you don't take steps to keep your blood pressure under control.

If your blood pressure is too high, it puts extra strain on your blood vessels, heart and other organs, such as the brain, kidneys and eyes. If you have high blood pressure, reducing it even a small amount can help lower your risk of these conditions.

It's not always clear what causes high blood pressure, but certain things can increase your risk.

You're at an increased risk of high blood pressure if you:

- are over the age of 65
- are overweight or obese
- are of African or Caribbean descent
- have a relative with high blood pressure
- eat too much salt and don't eat enough fruit and vegetables
- don't do enough exercise
- drink too much alcohol or coffee (or other caffeine-based drinks)
- smoke
- don't get much sleep or have disturbed sleep



Making healthy lifestyle changes can help reduce your chances of getting high blood pressure and help lower your blood pressure if it's already high. The following lifestyle changes can help prevent and lower high blood pressure:

- reduce the amount of salt you eat and have a generally healthy diet
- cutting back on alcohol if you drink too much
- losing weight if you're overweight
- exercising regularly
- cutting down on caffeine
- stop smoking
- Getting at least six hours of sleep a night

What We Would Like You To Do

NHS Choices has a very useful test that patients can take to work out whether they are at risk, and if so, what they can do to reduce their risk.

This can be found at [NHS Choices > Live Well > Health Check Tools > Heart Age](#).

We want to understand if patients like going onto the internet and trying simple tools like this. If you can encourage patients to access this tool, we can track the number of tests taken from the postcode question in the Heart Age Tool.

There are no specific leaflets and posters which are available for free from the Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre. However, there are other sources of leaflets which you could order to help to explain to patients the possible dangers of high blood pressure, and steps they can take to reduce it.

Go to the British Heart Foundation website and search for Healthy Heart then Booklets and Free Guides. The 10 Minute Series has a booklet on High Blood pressure but there are other booklets which would be useful too.

Also, Blood Pressure UK have a range of booklets priced at 60p which could be used as reference sources. Go to Blood Pressure UK> Health Professionals> Resources for Health Professionals. They also have short leaflets in other languages which can be downloaded.

Finally, this campaign runs until **10th February** and pharmacies have until **Sat 17th February** to enter the results into PharmOutcomes.

The next campaign will be a national NHS Public Health campaign on Health in the under 5's and at this moment in time we are waiting for more details from the NHS. We also intend to prepare a calendar for the whole of 2018-19 and circulate this before Easter.

As always, if you have any major success stories or want to share photos of your Health Promotion Zone displays, please send them in to the LPC simonhay@northstaffslpc.co.uk

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