

Improving health care for our communities

Eva comes from a Gypsy Roma background and wants everyone to have access to good healthcare:

"Everyone is entitled to have a GP and I strongly recommend you register with a surgery, especially if you're vulnerable or have health conditions. This will help you to focus on preventing ill or worsening health."

"We should all be able to access care in an equal, safe and effective way. We want to make sure every contact a person has with health professionals builds trust and understanding."

"Breaking down barriers people may face and education around what's available, can empower people to make decisions that are right for them and their loved ones."



Eva Bangova
Equity Development
Manager at Alliance for
Better Care



Looking after our family's health



Register with a GP surgery

You can register free of charge with any GP surgery if you or your family have never registered with a GP surgery or have moved to a new area. Even if you don't have ID, proof of address or immigration status.

You can register as a temporary resident with a GP surgery, if you expect to live in an area that is different to your GP surgery, for up-to-three months.

You can find out more about registering with a GP surgery by phoning the NHS England contact centre on 0300 311 2233.

If you need help and don't know how to access it, you can call NHS 111 or go to NHS 111 online (111.nhs.uk) If you need help in an emergency call 999.

Three serious illnesses to be aware of



Whooping cough

Whooping cough causes long bouts of coughing, which can cause a 'whoop' sound (gasping for breath) that may last for weeks or months. You might also have a runny nose and sore throat and cough up a thick mucus which can make you vomit.

In babies under 12 months old, whooping cough can be dangerous, increasing chances of dehydration, breathing difficulties, pneumonia and seizures. In rare cases whooping cough can be fatal.

Measles

Measles is a severe illness that can cause lifelong complications with young children and pregnant people at high risk.

It often starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash of flat or slightly raised spots a few days later. They start on the face before spreading down the body and can join together to make blotchy patches.



Images from www.swLondon-healthiertogether.nhs.uk

On paler skin, the rash can look red or reddish-brown and on darker skin, the rash might look browner and be harder to see. It might be very pigmented and feel bumpy.

Until 1963, measles was the leading cause of death in children.

Thankfully things have changed since then due to vaccination, but 1 in 5 people may still need a hospital visit.

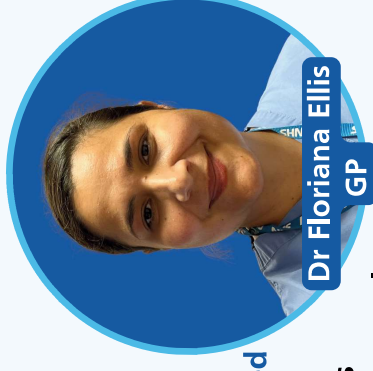
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

Symptoms include a cough, sneezing and a runny or blocked nose. It usually gets better by itself, but in babies it can cause a lchest infection called bronchiolitis, which can make it hard to breathe or feed.

Around 20,000 babies are admitted to hospital with bronchiolitis each year, it can be fatal with some babies needing intensive care.

Protecting our families

Dr Ellis says: Vaccines aren't mandatory, but please consider the potential complications if you or your family aren't protected. If you're unsure about which vaccines you've had or need – we're here to help."



Two doses of the **MMR vaccine** provides effective and life-long protection against measles as well as mumps and rubella. Adults and children who have not had one or both doses of the MMR vaccine can catch up anytime at their GP surgery.

If you are pregnant, you will be offered the **whooping cough vaccine** around the time of your mid-pregnancy scan (usually between 20 to 32 weeks of pregnancy). The vaccine is offered in each pregnancy as the immunity from the vaccine passes to your baby.

You will also be offered the **RSV vaccine** in each pregnancy. Getting vaccinated as soon as possible from 28 weeks will provide the best protection for your baby.

Dr Ellis adds: "I have seen many children with infections, some extremely unwell. And even with all possible treatments, nothing could be done. However, these outcomes could have been prevented if the child had been immunised. It's easier to prevent an infection than it is to treat it."



www.nhs.uk/vaccinations

