



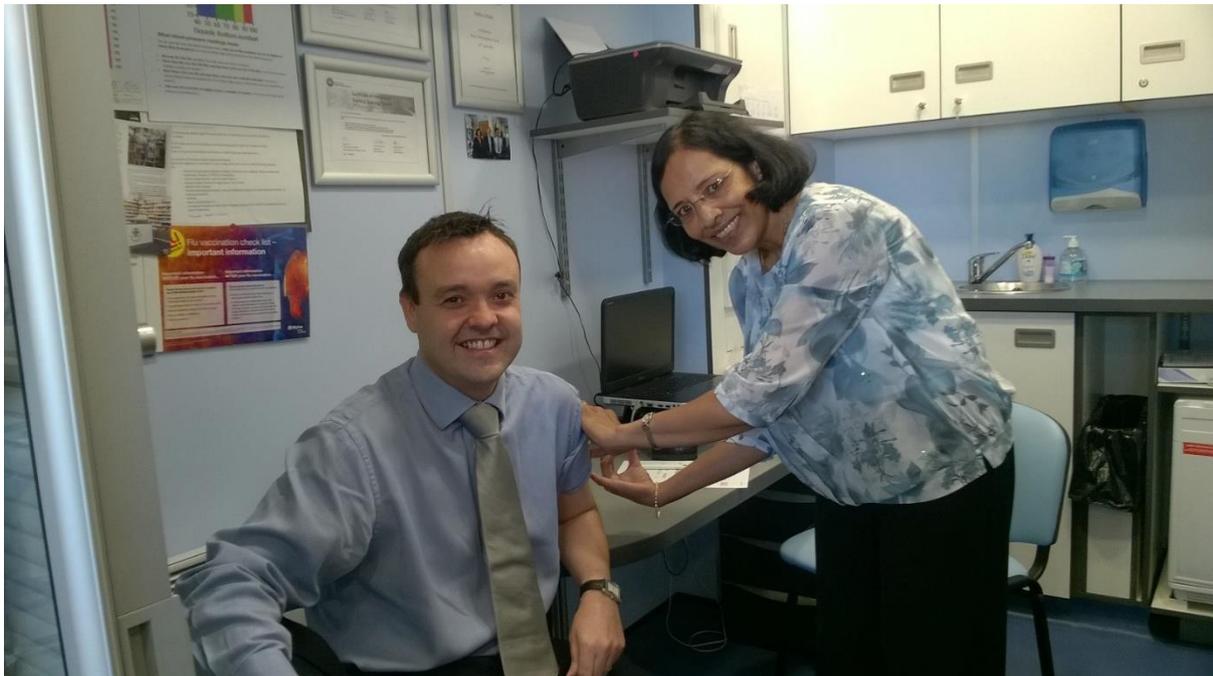
HERTFORDSHIRE LOCAL PHARMACEUTICAL COMMITTEE

Media Release

For Immediate Release

28 September 2016

**LOCAL MP STEPHEN McPARTLAND VISITS VALUED
COMMUNITY ASSET: HIS LOCAL PHARMACY TO SEE
NATIONAL PHARMACY FLU VACCINATION SERVICE**



During Stephen's visit to Oaks Cross Chemist on Friday 23 September he had his flu vaccination undertaken by pharmacist Mrs Shah. He learned more about the national pharmacy flu vaccination service. The service aims to make it easier than ever to get a flu jab and to increase the number of 'at risk' people across England being protected from ill health over the winter months.

Mr and Mrs Shah of Oaks Cross Chemist commented: "The NHS community pharmacy flu vaccination service, which is available in Hertfordshire again this year, is a great opportunity for

more 'at risk' people to have their vaccination, protecting them during the winter. Community pharmacies are the most accessible healthcare locations and this service makes it easier than ever for you to get vaccinated free and without the need for an appointment. This is the second year that the NHS is allowing community pharmacies to participate in flu vaccinations and we look forward to helping the NHS protect more people this year. Customers have commented this service is excellent as it is informal, relaxed and with no appointment. Our loyal regular customers have been very supportive and we would like to thank them for their support”.

The **FREE** national pharmacy flu vaccination service commenced again this year on 1 September 2016. All adult patients who are eligible for NHS flu vaccinations will be able to have them free of charge at local community pharmacies in Hertfordshire.

Flu vaccinations are vital to protect people who would be at risk of health complications if they caught the virus and the NHS aims to vaccinate up to 75% of people who are considered to be in at risk groups. These include pregnant women, people aged 65 years or over, and people with certain medical conditions.

Hertfordshire Pharmacists are trained healthcare professionals and many have been providing flu vaccinations for over five years, both privately and as part of local NHS services.

The introduction of a national community flu vaccination service last year proved to be very popular with patients. Community Pharmacies in Hertfordshire are sure that they will increase those taking advantage of the service this year and protect more vulnerable people from serious illness or early deaths.

Stephen McPartland MP commented: “This is an excellent service and so accessible, with no appointments required. It only takes a few minutes and many patients are loyal to their pharmacy, so everyone knows each other quite well, making it an easy experience. The scheme will help protect people from health complications through the winter months by making sure they have their flu jab.”

End

For further information contact Helen Musson by telephone 01707 390095 or 07738 948220 or email helen.musson@hertslpc.org.uk

Editor Notes

Community Pharmacists are regulated healthcare professionals. Their training includes a four-year degree along with a year working in practice followed by examinations. Pharmacists are experts in medicines and are regulated by the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC).

There are 251 Community Pharmacies in Hertfordshire. Ninety-five percent of the Hertfordshire population live within a 10 minute drive of a Community Pharmacy, and the vast majority of these have private consultation rooms. Pharmacies use them to provide a range of public health and other services including services to help people to get the most benefit from their medicines and to lead healthier lives.

Hertfordshire Local Pharmaceutical Committee provides support, guidance and advice to the 251 pharmacies in Hertfordshire. Full details are available on the LPC website: www.hertslpc.org.uk.

All adults aged 65 years and over, and those aged 18 years or over and in clinical risk groups, can receive a free of charge NHS flu jab at Community Pharmacies across the country, often without the need for an appointment. People in 'at risk' groups include pregnant women and those with certain medical conditions including asthma and diabetes (see the full list at <http://tinyurl.com/WhoGetsFlu>). Pharmacists will be using the same vaccination as those offered by GPs and they will be required to notify GPs when they have vaccinated patients.

Eligible adult patients are people aged 18 years and over at the time of vaccination. They include:

- people aged 65 years and over (including those who will become aged 65 years by 31 March 2016);
- pregnant women;
- carers;
- those in long-stay residential care homes;
- people aged from 18 to less than 65 years of age with one or more of the following medical conditions:
 - chronic (long-term) respiratory disease, such as severe asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or bronchitis;
 - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure;
 - chronic kidney disease at stage three, four or five;
 - chronic liver disease;
 - chronic neurological disease, such as Parkinson's disease or motor neurone disease, or learning disability;
 - diabetes;
 - splenic dysfunction; or
 - a weakened immune system due to disease (such as HIV/AIDS) or treatment (such as cancer treatment).