

# NHSGG and CLYDE NEWSLETTER

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Pre-travel vaccinations
- E-learning immunisation course
- *C. difficile* outbreak in Vol
- Summer Eating
- Immunisation training
- Safer sex guidelines (MSM)

Public Health Protection Unit (PHPU) 0141 201 4917 [www.nhsggc.org.uk/phpu](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk/phpu)

Volume 7 Issue 5

June/July 2008

## Pre-travel vaccinations

As the holiday period draws nearer, practices are likely to be approached for travel advice and vaccinations.

The number of travellers from Scotland increases year-on-year and people are travelling to more remote areas, frequently spending long periods of time abroad. As a result, they may be increasingly at risk of travel-associated diseases.

The main source of travel health advice in the U.K. is Primary Care. Within Scotland, 215 GP practices are designated yellow fever centres. Details of all YF centres in Scotland can be found on the HPS website: <http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/yellowfever/index.aspx>.

These centres are committed to receiving training on the administration of yellow fever vaccine and other aspects of travel medicine.

While not all practice staff can be expected to be travel health experts, GPs are, nonetheless, contracted to supply and administer NHS travel vaccines as previously set out in the \*Red Book - unless the practice has opted out of the vaccinations and immunisations additional service. These vaccines are Cholera; Diphtheria/Tetanus/Polio; Hepatitis A; MMR/Rubella; Typhoid. To ensure good provision of this service, practices may wish to inform patients, e.g. via the practice leaflet, of the need to make an appointment for travel vaccines well ahead of planned departure date. In instances where patients request travel vaccines that are not in the Red Book, e.g. rabies and Japanese B encephalitis, a private script can be issued and GPs/practices may charge for both script and vaccine administration at their discretion. **Since no vaccine is blacklisted, vaccine can be prescribed on the NHS if the GP feels that the patient genuinely cannot or will not pay for the script or service.** If supplied on a GP10, no charge can be made except the usual prescription charge at the pharmacy. A fee cannot be charged for advice alone.

The administration of vaccines should be accompanied by general travel health advice, aimed at reducing the risk of travel-related health issues. If the GP or practice nurse does not feel that they have sufficient expertise to provide this information, they can direct their patients to some of the travel websites available, such as [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) produced by Health Protection Scotland (HPS).

\*The 'Red Book' listed fees and allowances payable to GPs from 1 April 1990 under the 1990 contract.

## E-learning Immunisation Course

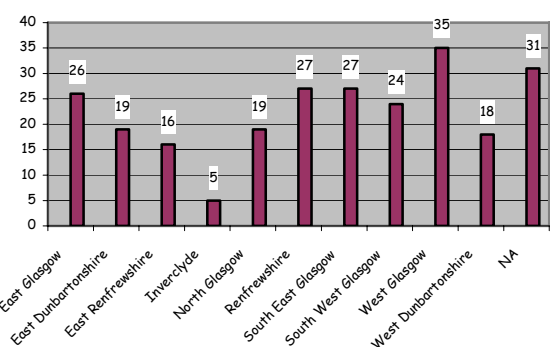
The self-directed e-learning training package, 'Promoting Effective Immunisation Practice' is intended for all staff (nurses and doctors) involved in immunisation or who may become more involved in immunisation in the near future.

A grant scheme has been introduced to facilitate the take-up and completion of the course and is available to fund study time for individuals who register and fully complete the course within 6 months. It is also available to individuals who registered before April 2008 if they complete the course by 30th September 2008. A training grant of £360 will be made to the individual's employer as a contribution to backfilling or to pay the individual directly for taking the course in their own time. All funds will be paid through employers to ensure tax and NI contributions.

E-mail Dr Gillian Penrice, CPHM, PHPU, for an application form. [Gillian.Penrice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Gillian.Penrice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

So far, 36 have completed the course and a further 247 people across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde are currently taking the course.

Registered participants by CH(C)P June 2008



## *C. difficile* outbreak in hospital

To date, 55 cases of *Clostridium difficile* have been identified in a 'retrospective' outbreak identified at the Vale of Leven hospital between Dec 07 and May 08. The number of patients with *C. difficile* as their **main cause** of death is nine as is the number of patients with *C. difficile* as a **contributory** factor in their death. Of the 3 hospital patients affected, one has recovered and has been discharged while two other patients are stable.

## Summer eating

During the summer months, the number of food poisoning cases increases, therefore it is important to reiterate food safety information for those planning barbecues, picnics and open buffets.

### Barbecues

- Light the barbecue well in advance, using sufficient charcoal which should glow red before you commence cooking
- Always keep raw meat and ready-to-eat food separate to avoid cross contamination
- Defrost frozen meats thoroughly in your fridge for 24 hours before the barbecue or use a microwave for the same purpose
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food, after touching raw meat and before eating
- Don't use the same utensils for raw and cooked foods
- Don't place cooked foods on plates that have held raw meats
- Keep food covered to prevent insects and pets getting to it
- Do not use left-over marinade of raw meats as a sauce
- If cooking for a large number of people, consider pre-cooking poultry and other meats in an oven beforehand before finishing off on the barbecue
- Cook poultry, burgers, sausages and other meat products until there are no pink bits in the middle and the juices run clear
- Don't assume the meat is cooked all the way through just because the outside surface looks well charred
- Cross-contamination can take place on the grill itself so keep cooked meats away from partially cooked or newly introduced raw meats
- Avoid drinking excess alcohol if you are cooking as this can impair awareness of good food hygiene measures

### Picnics

- Use a cool bag with ice packs to keep food cool during the journey
- Keep the cool bag in the coolest part of the car away from direct sunlight
- On arrival keep the lid of the cool box on and away from direct sunlight
- Leave food in the fridge until the last moment
- Wash hands or use antiseptic wipes before eating
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly before eating
- In visits to farms or zoo parks, do not eat food in areas allocated to animal contact or petting animals
- Always wash hands or use antiseptic wipes immediately after contact with animals.
- Use only safe drinking water for washing food and dishes

## Immunisation training

The PHPU will be holding two half-day training sessions in September in the Boardroom at Dalian House. These sessions are for staff who are new to childhood immunisation or who may become involved with the childhood immunisation programme in the future. They are **not** designed for staff currently running childhood immunisation clinics.

### Dates/Times/Venues

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008, 9.30 am - 12.30 pm  
Boardroom, Dalian House (40 places)

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2008, 1.30 pm - 4.30 pm  
Boardroom, Dalian House (40 places)

The following topics will be covered :-

- Current childhood immunisation schedule
- Contraindications and adverse reactions
- SIRS, GPASS and record keeping
- Incomplete vaccination
- Consent
- Needle size
- Cold chain
- Children coming from abroad
- Vaccine ordering

Booking forms have been circulated to all relevant lead staff for distribution. Places are limited so early returns are advised. Please note that the PHPU will confirm all bookings by e-mail.

## Safer-Sex Guidelines (MSM)

There have been increasing rates of HIV and STIs - particularly syphilis - amongst men who have sex with men, (MSM) but there is often limited understanding amongst both men and the professionals offering sexual health services, about the risks associated with different sexual practices. This is complicated by the fact that the risk varies depending on the activity undertaken and the infection present.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has recently produced 'Gay Men's Safer Sex Guidelines'. These guidelines are for use by healthcare professionals, as well as staff in organisations that work with gay men. The guidance outlines what advice to give gay men (and also bisexual men and men who have sex with men) on how they can best reduce the risk from various STIs, including HIV, to which they might be exposed. Safer sex is defined as the physical, behavioural and practical steps that individuals can take to reduce their risk of infection.

These new safer sex guidelines give instances where arranging prophylaxis for a man who may have been at risk of sexual exposure to bloodborne viruses would be clinically appropriate. Copies of the 'Gay Men's Safer Sex Guideline' are available online at [www.nhsqgc.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s843\\_2](http://www.nhsqgc.org.uk/content/default.asp?page=s843_2)

NHSGG&C has also produced guidance on managing sexual exposure to bloodborne viruses, contained within "Management of Occupational and Non-Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Viruses" and available at [www.nhsqgc.org.uk/phpu](http://www.nhsqgc.org.uk/phpu).