

# Media Release

## For Immediate Release

17<sup>th</sup> November 2017

### **OUTER YORK MP JULIAN STURDY VISITS HIS LOCAL PHARMACY TO SEE AND PROMOTE THE “STAY WELL THIS WINTER” AND “THINK PHARMACY FIRST” CAMPAIGNS**

2pm, Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017, Copmanthorpe Pharmacy, 8 Copmanthorpe Shopping Centre, Copmanthorpe, York, YO23 3GG

During Julian’s visit, he learned more about how North Yorkshire Community Pharmacies are supporting the NHS England and Public Health England national campaign to help people prepare for winter weather. The message is to “**Stay Well This Winter**” and to encourage people most at risk from cold weather, including those with long-term health conditions and the over 65s, to prepare for the lower temperatures.

He will also be informed about the “**Think Pharmacy First**” campaign. This aims to encourage the public to contact their pharmacy first when suffering with colds/coughs and minor ailments, rather than making an appointment to see their GP or attending A&E.



Photo - Julian Sturdy MP with Pharmacist Tracey Chambers and Lucy Bond Health Champion of Copmanthorpe Pharmacy, York

All Pharmacists have trained for five years and can offer expert advice on lots of minor ailments. Most pharmacies in North Yorkshire offer confidential consultation rooms too. They can help with common problems such as coughs, colds, aches and pains, treating minor injuries and infections.

If they can't help, they'll tell you whether you need to see a doctor or where else you could get the best treatment.

**Julian Sturdy MP** said, "On average 215,000 prescriptions are dispensed every month in the Vale of York CCG area. This is a very high foot fall of people visiting their local community pharmacy given the area's population is 331,000. Therefore community pharmacies are in an ideal position to promote these campaigns and advise patients. I know they do a tremendous amount in offering free flu vaccinations to vulnerable groups and 65 plus patients. I would also urge the public to **Think Pharmacy First** before making an appointment to see their GP, and in many cases your pharmacist will be able to help you to a speedy recovery from your ailment".

**Dr Andrew Phillips, Joint Medical Director and the Clinical Lead for Unplanned Care for Vale of York CCG** said, "We know that people visit their GP with minor illnesses that their local pharmacist could help with. Instead of booking a GP appointment, you can visit your local pharmacy, saving you time and with no appointment needed, you can just walk in.

All pharmacists can give advice and medicine if you need it that will help clear up the problem.

If your condition is more serious they will refer you to your GP.

So, if you're suffering from a minor illness, injury or condition and need help, visit your local pharmacy first..."

**Tracey Chambers Pharmacist at Copmanthorpe Pharmacy** said, "Our Pharmacy is a certified Healthy Living Pharmacy like the vast majority of Community Pharmacies in North Yorkshire, and we run monthly campaigns on different health issues.

In recent months we have run campaigns on Cancer, Staying Safe in the Sun and Stoptober (Smoking Cessation). My team and I support our patients with advice, signposting to local services and offering treatments that can be accessed in the pharmacy.

We are pleased to take part in the "Stay Well This Winter" and will actively support patients, whilst at the same time we always promote the "Think Pharmacy First" campaign. The result is that we treat a lot of minor ailments efficiently and effectively which benefits the patient and the GP practices".

**End**

**For further information contact...**

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## 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 153 Community Pharmacies in North Yorkshire. Ninety-five percent of the North Yorkshire population live within a 10 minute drive of a Community Pharmacy.

## Stay Well This Winter

A national campaign to help people prepare for winter weather has been launched today by NHS England and Public Health England. The message is to [Stay Well This Winter](#) and to encourage people most at risk from cold weather, including those with long-term health conditions and the over 65s, to prepare for the lower temperatures.

Around 25,000 more people die over the course of each winter compared to other times of the year and there are a range of conditions worsened by the cold weather – 80 per cent of these deaths are accounted for by people with circulatory diseases (such as heart disease, lung illnesses and stroke), dementia and respiratory diseases (such as asthma).

Exposure to cold indoor or outdoor temperatures increases blood pressure, thereby increasing the risk of heart failure, kidney disease, stroke or dementia. Cold temperatures can also make blood more likely to clot, which can lead to heart attacks and stroke. In addition, cold can also affect the respiratory system, which reduces the lung's ability to fight off infection explaining why lower temperatures are linked with bronchitis and pneumonia. Colder weather is not only associated with an increase in deaths but also has a significant impact on the number of people becoming ill, increasing the winter pressures felt by the health care services. Research shows that for every one degree centigrade drop below five degrees in outdoor average temperatures, there is more than a 10 per cent increase in older people consulting their GP for breathing problems, a 0.8 per cent increase in emergency hospital admissions and a 3.4 per cent increase in deaths.

The campaign messages, which includes TV, radio and social media, urge people to be ready for the colder season and to seek immediate advice and help from a pharmacist as soon as they feel unwell, before their condition gets more serious.

## What is a healthy living pharmacy?

HLPs have a health and wellbeing ethos, where everyone in the team works together to proactively engage their customers in health promotion activities and consistently provide high quality public health services.

They need a health promoting environment in the pharmacy (known as the 'health promotion zone') and at least one full-time equivalent health champion, who has qualified for a Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) [level two award in understanding health improvement](#).

Each pharmacy's health and wellbeing ethos is enabled by a HLP leader, who develops and motivates the team to be the best they can be: friendly; welcoming; and working together in a way that is connected and efficient.

## About the Pharmacy Flu Vaccination Service:

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).