



## **VOLUNTEERS NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2020**

### Service update

Welcome to the October edition of the newsletter, we hope it finds you and your family well. After a quiet couple of months in the office, referrals are now increasing and more drivers have returned. More clinic appointments are being booked and we are now seeing more appointments for children we used to regularly transport.

Thank you to all the drivers that have now returned.

### COVID-19 update

Greater Manchester (which covers the City of Manchester, Trafford, Bury, Tameside, Rochdale, Salford, Oldham, Stockport and Wigan) is now in Tier 3 of the new lockdown restrictions.

This means :

- You must not meet socially with friends or family indoors in any setting unless they are part of your 'bubble'
- You must not meet with people outside of your household or bubble in a private garden or in most public venues (including pub beer gardens)
- You may continue to see friends and family you do not live with in groups of 6 or less in certain outdoor public spaces including parks, playgrounds, countryside, forests, allotments, outdoor sports courts and facilities.
- There are exceptions and if you are vulnerable (over 70 or have an underlying health condition) there is also different advice. You can find this at [www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions](https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions)





## Office Hours

A reminder of the current office hours:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>9am – 3pm</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>8.30am – 4.30pm</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>8.30am – 4.30pm</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>8.30am – 4.30pm</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>9am – 3pm</b>



If you have an **urgent** issue and are unable to contact anyone at the office during working hours, please call the drivers phone on **07914 920 136**.

## Christmas

- Due to Covid-19 restrictions, it is unlikely that we will be able to have a Christmas get together this year. Hopefully, in the coming months we can see how things progress and look to have a social event sometime next year.
- Our Christmas gathering usually provides an opportunity to provide all you all with diaries for the New Year. If you require a diary for 2021, please can we ask that you purchase one yourself, add it onto your expenses and the charity will reimburse you. This will limit the contact in the TfSC office and reduce our postage costs.

## AGM meeting

- Unfortunately, the AGM will not be going ahead under the usual format. Therefore we will shortly be sending out a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2019/20 with an enclosed form to fill in with any questions members may have and return to us in the SAE provided.

## New: Drivers feature

- Let us know if there's anything you'd like to share with other drivers and the office team. It could be useful comments about long term roadworks, road closures or parking tips. Also if anything amusing happens let us know, we could all do with some funny stories at the moment!

## Coming into the office

- Just a reminder that if you need to come in to the office, please phone or email the office to make an appointment. We have packs of PPE made up ready for you which can be posted out or picked up from the office.
- **All visitors need to sign in** and by making an appointment we can ensure there aren't too many people in the office at one time.



## Special recognition for Judith Oxley

The 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020 marked 20 years that Judith has been working hard for the charity. Please join us in congratulating her on this amazing achievement!



## Trip activity



The charity is pleased to inform you that, despite of the challenges the COVID-19 Pandemic is presenting to us all, in the last quarter (July-September) our TfSC volunteer drivers have taken **168 children** on **609 trips** to hospitals and clinics driving **13,470 miles** in the process.

## The Silver Line Helpline – 0800 4 70 80 90

The Silver Line is the only confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year.

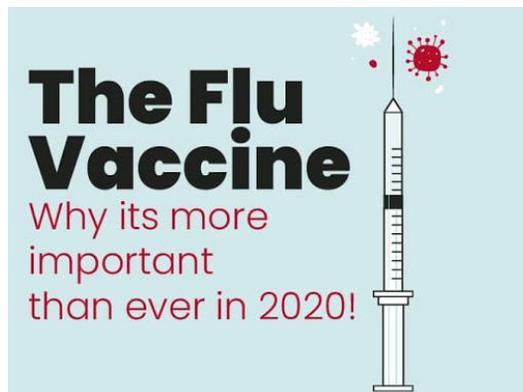
The specially trained helpline team can:

- offer conversation and friendship
- provide information and advice
- link callers to local groups and services.
- refer people on to receive regular friendship calls.
- protect and support older people who are suffering abuse and neglect
- Should you know of anyone who may benefit from the above service, more information about Silver Line can be accessed at: [www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)





## The flu vaccine



### **Myth: Influenza is not serious so I don't need the vaccine**

- Fact: As many as 650,000 people a year can die of the flu. This only represents respiratory deaths, so the likely impact is even higher. Even healthy people can get the flu, but especially people whose immune systems are vulnerable. Most people will recover within a few weeks, but some can develop complications including sinus and ear infections, pneumonia, heart or brain inflammations.

### **Myth: The flu vaccine can give me the flu or severe side effects**

- Fact: The injected flu vaccine contains an inactivated virus that cannot give you influenza. If you feel achy or slightly feverish, it is a normal reaction of the immune system to the vaccine, and generally lasts only a day or two.
- Severe side effects are extremely rare. One in a million people may get Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), which cause muscle weakness and paralysis. However flu kills 2 in every 100,000 people and causes severe and often long-term complications for people in the cohorts who are entitled to a free flu jab.

### **Myth: I had the vaccine and still got the flu, so it doesn't work**

- Fact: Several flu viruses are circulating all the time, which is why people may still get the flu despite being vaccinated since the vaccine is specific to one strain. However, being vaccinated improves the chance of being protected from the flu. This is especially important to stop the virus affecting people with vulnerable immune systems.



**Myth: Healthy people don't get seasonal flu.**

- Fact: Anyone can pick up the virus. Generally 15-20 per cent of the population gets flu - healthy people included. If you can catch it, you can pass it on to those who are at more risk of serious illness. This could include your friends, family or work colleagues.

**Myth: The flu jab uses a big needle.**

- Fact: The needle used to give the flu jab is only a few millimetres long and the injection itself literally takes a couple of seconds. So, if you are usually scared of needles, you may not be as bothered as you think.

**Myth: I've had the flu jab before so I don't need it again.**

- Fact: The flu is a living organism and it changes slightly every year so it can survive. The only way to protect against it is to update the seasonal flu vaccine every year. Therefore, the protection the vaccine gives only lasts around 12 months before you need an updated version.

**Myth: The flu jab isn't safe.**

- Fact: The risk of having a serious reaction to the seasonal flu vaccine is less than one in a million. It is much less than the risk of getting seriously ill from having the flu itself. The only people who should not have the vaccine are those who have a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to eggs. This is because hen's eggs are used in the manufacture of the vaccine. If you are unsure whether you should have the vaccine because of this, please speak to your GP.

For more information visit the NHS website on flu vaccine:

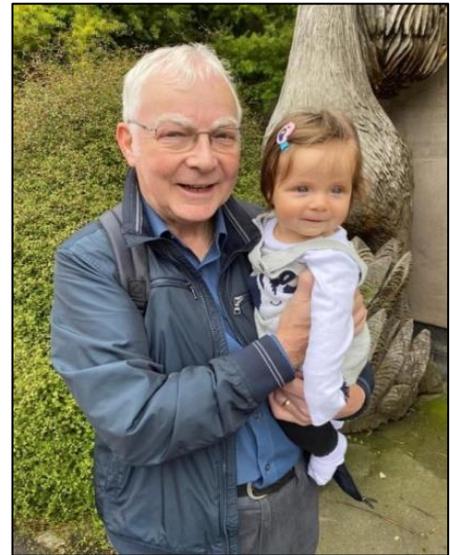
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/flu-influenza-vaccine/>



## Meet the team

### ***What is your role and what does it involve?***

- My role is Chairman of Transport for Sick Children and I was elected by Directors/Trustees of the Company/Charity as TfSC is both a limited company and a registered charity. I preside over board/committee meetings and ensure the organisation is compliant with all the necessary regulatory, legal, rules and regulation. I also provide leadership through those meeting and feed in to policies and procedures. As we are a small organisation I get involved with the recruitment process and anywhere I'm needed.



**George Stenson – TfSC  
Chairman**

### ***How long have you been with TfSC?***

- I retired from my role as Head of Business Quality & Performance in 2006 and after I painted the fences cut the grass, cleaned the shed etc. I thought I can't play golf everyday and started looking for part time work. At the same time the Charity created a new role to increase the Charity's income from the NHS and have less/zero reliance on Greater Manchester Passenger Transport who were then the major funders. I was appointed on a 2 day week which suited my work/life balance perfectly.

### ***What do you enjoy most about the role?***

- I enjoyed my previous role immensely and I became attached to the great work of the Charity. The work our volunteers do each day for children, who would otherwise miss their needed healthcare, impresses me and always has done. They are the 'beating heart' of the charity. If I can assist them with my contribution I will have succeeded.



***What do you find most challenging about the role?***

The most challenging part of the role is keeping the Charity going each year. There are 2 key aspects:

- Operational – making sure we have enough staff, volunteers, trustees to deliver a service
- Commissioner Management- making sure our sponsors continue to resource us and are happy with what we do

These are areas that Beverley, Laura, Judith, Julie, Linda and Marie-Anne are all involved to a lesser or greater extent.

***Where do you see the charity in 5 years' time?***

- Good question. This would have been difficult to view in normal times but looking forward has to be viewed through the prism of Covid-19 which has had a huge impact on business, local authorities and charities. Child deprivation is likely to increase given a deep recession causing mass unemployment in a reduced economy. The need for our service is likely to increase but our response will be limited by the number of volunteers and our income from the NHS. My fellow Trustees will be focused on making sure we can meet these challenges.

***Tell us something interesting we might not know about you?***

- During my youth I saw many highly skilled guitarists e.g. Jimmy Page, Peter Green, Jimi Hendrix, Dave Gilmore, Rory Gallagher and Simon Nicole. All had different styles but all were masters of their instrument. I have always had a wish to learn and play the guitar. My Sons enabled this wish by buying me a Stratocaster for Christmas one year and with the help of software and YouTube lessons I can better appreciate the afore mentioned experts.

***Did you learn any new skills over lockdown?***

- Like many others I learned the use of Zoom to hold virtual meetings both for TfSC and a school where I am a governor. I suspect this may become a new way of life. I also discovered the joy of painting, a programme on BBC4. In 30mins the artist can produce a complete picture using oils brushes and trowel. I suspect this may be beyond my skill set!!!