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XX Month 2011

Are you prepared for colds and flu this winter?

Colds and flu affect 15 million people each year in the UK¹ and are much more common in the winter months. As part of Self Care Week 2011, **Name of organisation** is running a local cold and flu campaign to help raise awareness of how people can prepare for these illnesses, what they can do if they get ill and when they need to see the doctor.

Name of organisation has sent a number of materials to GP surgeries and Clinical Commissioning Groups including posters and leaflets for local distribution. **(Edit depending on what initiatives are taking place)**

Name at **organisation** comments: "Sometimes people suffering from colds and flu think they have to go to the doctor but for most people the symptoms can be successfully treated at home with rest, drinking plenty of fluids and taking painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen. As colds and flu are caused by viruses, antibiotics will not help get rid of them.

"People only need to see a doctor if they think they have flu and have a serious underlying illness, are pregnant, have a sick child under one year old, the condition suddenly gets much worse or the condition is still getting worse after seven days (or five days for a child).

"The information materials help explain what you can do to help prevent the spread of germs that can cause colds and flu and simple preparation measures in case you do become ill. They also explain how long you can expect the various symptoms of colds and flu to last and what is happening to your body from the onset of symptoms until you start to feel back to normal again."

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Notes to editors:

- Self Care Week takes place from 14-20th November 2011. Its aim is to raise awareness of what's available locally to help people take care of themselves. This year's week is building on the success of Self Care Week 2009 and 2010.
- The European Antibiotic Awareness Day on 18 November 2011 provides a platform to remind prescribers and the general public about the dangers of antibiotic overuse. The key message is to encourage prudent antibiotic prescribing so that antibiotics remain a safe and effective resource for the future.
- Self care includes the actions people take every day in order to stay fit and maintain good physical and mental health, meet their social and physiological needs, prevent illness and accidents, and care more effectively for minor ailments and long-term conditions. People living with a long-term condition can benefit enormously from being supported to self care. They can live longer, suffer less pain, anxiety, depression and fatigue, have a better quality of life and be more active and independent.
- If you would like to interview GP, practice nurse, or pharmacist about colds and flu please contact: **Name and contact details**

For more information please contact: **Name and contact details**

¹ <https://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/CheckSymptoms/SATs/coldandflu.aspx>