

Press Release

Know your health service options

With the NHS experiencing high levels of demand for services and a spell of cold weather forecast over the next few days, health bosses across Worcestershire are encouraging people to know their health services options.

Patients can contact their own GP during surgery hours, visit their local pharmacist, dial 111 for medical advice and information and there are five Minor Injury Units across the county in Malvern, Evesham, Kidderminster, Tenbury and Bromsgrove.

At this time of year, cold weather and cold homes can have a significant impact on people's health, so keeping warm over the winter months can help prevent some illnesses particularly amongst the elderly and those with respiratory conditions.

Some of the best ways to keep warm are:

- Having hot meals and drinks regularly throughout the day
- Staying active and moving around
- Keeping your house warm, at least 18c
- Wearing lots of thin layers to trap heat

Mari Gay, Interim Chief Officer for the Worcestershire CCGs, said: "There's a wide range of health services available to people across Worcestershire and it's important that people know what these are and how they can be accessed.

"Many minor health problems and complaints such as muscular, minor sports injuries can be solved with self-care. Support to manage these conditions can be given by a local pharmacist and if it's an on-going problem then a GP can advise.

"It's also important to be prepared if the weather does turn particularly cold, making plans now could help you stay warm and well during any bad weather."

Emergency departments across the county continue to be extremely busy, so patients are urged to remember that A&E is for serious and life-threatening emergencies only and there are a number of other health services available to help them. Below is a list of alternative health care options available across Worcestershire:

Self-care

Many minor complaints such as coughs and colds can be treated by staying at home, getting plenty of rest and making sure you have a well-stocked medicine cabinet.

Your local community Pharmacy

Your local pharmacist can give expert, confidential advice or medicines for minor ailments such as coughs and colds, tummy troubles and much more. You can find information about pharmacy opening times on the NHS Choices website, just search for your local pharmacy -

www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Pharmacy/LocationSearch/10

NHS 111

Call NHS 111 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for fast, free medical advice when it's not an emergency. This can include arranging an out-of-hours GP appointment.

GP services

GPs can help you with many health problems and complaints and can provide a wide range of family health services. Over the winter months practices are offering an increased amount of appointments that are bookable on the day, so contact your GP for an appointment before attending A&E. If you are not registered with a GP visit www.nhs.uk to find a surgery in your area.

Minor Injury Units

Minor Injury Units (MIUs) offer fast, convenient and expert care for minor conditions including cuts, grazes, sprains and burns. Waiting times are on average 20 minutes.

There are five MIUs across Worcestershire:

- **Bromsgrove** - Princess of Wales Community Hospital, Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove, B61 0BB
- **Evesham** - Evesham Community Hospital, Waterside, Evesham, WR11 1JT
- **Kidderminster** – Kidderminster Hospital, Bewdley Road, Kidderminster, DY11 6RJ
- **Malvern** - Malvern Community Hospital, 185 Worcester Road, WR14 1EX
- **Tenbury** – Tenbury Community Hospital, Worcester Road, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8AP

To find out the opening hours of your local Minor Injury Unit visit www.hacw.nhs.uk/our-services/minor-injuries-units.

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