



A message to you about your NHS

As the winter months approach, our local doctors, nurses and paramedics are under a lot of pressure and they are asking for your help.

Most of the people we are seeing at hospital emergency departments (A&E) and at GP surgeries need a lot of time to make sure they are treated well. This is not unusual – people who are already quite ill get a lot sicker during winter.

We are asking for your help so that the NHS system can cope. Here's what you can do.

- **Make your pharmacy the first choice for help and advice** – many pharmacies are open long hours including evenings and weekends and can help you deal with many conditions, such as if you have a cold, a sprain or strain, if you have small cuts and bruises, have indigestion, heartburn or diarrhoea. You don't need an appointment to speak with the pharmacist
- **Get online or on the 'phone for urgent medical advice** – Visit NHS 111 Online for help and advice. If you feel unwell or care for someone who is unwell and you don't know what to do, visit NHS 111 Online or call NHS 111. The 111 service never closes, it's open 24/7. <https://www.111onlinesuffolk.careuk.com/portal/careuk/>
- The **Wellbeing Suffolk** service offers support if you feel stressed or depressed. Call them on 0300 123 1781 to find out how they could help. If you feel in crisis, are in despair or suicidal call the Samaritans on 116 123
- **Don't leave it too long** – please don't let your medical condition get out of hand; the best thing to do is to get checked out. If you look after someone else, encourage them to seek advice. Contact NHS 111 or visit the pharmacy for advice – if you need to make a GP appointment they'll let you know

If you do have an emergency, we are there for you.

If it is not urgent, help your NHS by trying other ways first.