

Sussex CCGs Public Involvement Weekly News Briefing on COVID-19 (7th May 2020)

This briefing will be produced weekly, and is aimed at **patient leads, public members, voluntary and community sector (VCS) leads and community group leads in Sussex**, to support the dissemination of information on coronavirus to our wider communities.

The NHS is committed to keeping our people informed during this crisis, ensuring that our communities have the information they need, in the right format, and at the right time. We know that our patient leaders, VCS and community organisations are all working exceptionally hard to support local people, and that they are key to working together to make sure that our communities have the support and information they need.

Local Focus

Stay Home This Bank Holiday Weekend

Bank Holiday opening hours... 

NHS

- Many community pharmacies will be open for a minimum of three hours on Friday 8 May with some pharmacies being open longer. Please check the NHS website or your pharmacy's own website for details.



With the May Bank Holiday weekend just round the corner we wanted to ensure that should you need us, you know where to go if you require healthcare this bank holiday.

It is important you do not ignore any health concerns you may have, we need people to get the right care, in the right place, now more than ever.

If you need help or advice not related to coronavirus this bank holiday:

GP surgeries

- GP practice services on Friday 8 May will be available. This may be offered by your practice or another nearby service.

If you think you need to talk to your GP practice about something other than coronavirus:

1. Contact your GP practice online or by phone to be assessed. If your practice is not open for any reason you will be directed to another nearby service.
2. If a face-to-face appointment is necessary, you'll be advised on this.

Community pharmacy services

- Many community pharmacies will be open for a minimum of three hours on Friday 8th May with some pharmacies being open longer. You can check the opening times of your pharmacy [online here](#) or phone the pharmacy for details.

Dental services

- NHS dental practices are providing urgent telephone advice and triage. If you have a regular dentist you should call them as a first step. Please do not visit the practice. The dentist will assess your situation over the phone, including giving advice and, if needed, prescriptions for painkillers or antibiotics which can then be collected from or delivered by a local pharmacy.

- If you don't have a regular dentist and need urgent dental advice, call NHS 111.
- If your dentist or NHS 111 think that you need urgent face-to-face treatment, they will refer you for local urgent dental care so that any necessary emergency dental treatment can be carried out.
- If a face-to-face appointment is necessary, you will be advised on what to do. Urgent dental centres have measures in place to minimise any risk from coronavirus
- Please do not visit A&E departments with dental problems.

Easier access to telephone GP appointments for d/Deaf people across Sussex

From this week, d/Deaf people across the whole of Sussex are set to benefit from a new Video Relay Service (VRS), which has gone live in all GP practices and offers telephone access and consultations to British Sign Language (BSL) users.

The new, improved service will see GP practices being able to offer the consultations with support from Signlive, a free to download App that connects the caller to a fully qualified BSL interpreter before connecting to the recipient.

It will mean d/Deaf patients across Sussex will now be able to call their registered practice for free, using the standard telephone number, speak with receptionists and book a telephone appointment with a GP, just as a hearing person can.

The service has been rolled out at speed in response to Covid-19 and the changes in how GP practices are offering healthcare during the pandemic.

Community Matters

The Covid-19 Community Connectors Team has been answering questions from our communities in Sussex about accessing health and care services at this time – you can read more about this in the attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Each week, we will answer some of your questions – please see below this week’s questions and answers on **emergency and urgent care**:

1. Are Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments closed? What should I do if there is an emergency?

A&E departments are not closed and continue to be open to deal with genuine life-threatening emergencies, such as:

- [loss of consciousness](#)
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- [chest pain](#)
- Broken bones
- [severe bleeding that cannot be stopped](#)
- severe [allergic reactions](#)
- severe burns or scalds
- [stroke](#)
- major trauma such as a road traffic accident

A&E is not an alternative to a GP appointment.

If you have a medical emergency and need an ambulance, you should continue to call 999. You can use the find nearest A&E [here](#).

2. What should I do for urgent non-coronavirus medical queries?

Less severe injuries can be treated in [urgent care centres or minor injuries units](#). Conditions that can be treated at an urgent treatment centre include:

- sprains and strains
- suspected broken limbs
- minor head injuries
- cuts and grazes
- bites and stings
- minor scalds and burns
- ear and throat infections
- skin infections and rashes
- eye problems
- coughs and colds
- feverish illness in adults
- feverish illness in children
- abdominal pain
- vomiting and diarrhea
- emergency contraception

You can find your nearest urgent care centre or minor injuries unit [here](#). Please check for any local changes before accessing this service.

Alternatively you can go to 111.nhs.uk or call 111, which will direct you to the best local service.

Community Hubs

Local Authorities now have the names and contact details of people that are "[Shielded](#)"; this group of people will be contacted directly to ensure they are provided with the help they need.

Community Hubs are up and running in each Local Authority area across Sussex, and offer additional help in coping with coronavirus.

The Community Hubs will focus their help on people who do not have an extreme medical condition but may be vulnerable because they are isolated from help, too unwell to buy food or have other pressing difficulties because of coronavirus.

Community Hubs will also provide a place for people to find out about local volunteering opportunities.

Brighton and Hove Community Hubs

Contact details for the Community Support:

[Brighton and Hove Community Support Website](#)

Brighton and Hove Community Support Telephone: 01273 293117

East Sussex Community Hubs

Contact details for the Community Hubs in East Sussex are below:

[Eastbourne Community Hub Website](#)

Eastbourne Community Hub Telephone: 01323 679722

[Hastings Community Hub Website](#)

Hastings Community Hub Telephone: 01424 451019

[Lewes Community Hub Website](#)

Lewes Community Hub Telephone: 01273 099956

[Rother Community Hub Website](#)

Rother Community Hub Telephone: 01424 787000 (option 4)

[Wealden Community Hub Website](#)

Wealden Community Hub Telephone: 01323 443322

West Sussex Community Hubs

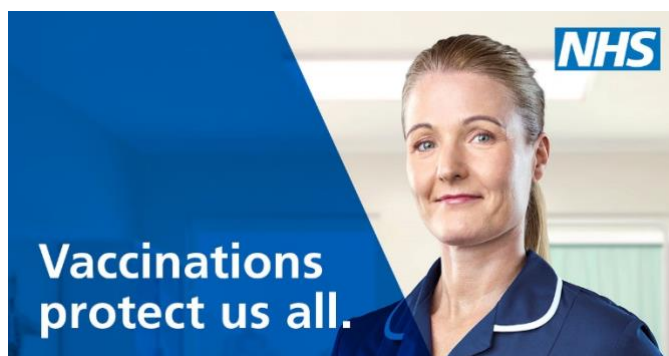
Contact the West Sussex Community Support Team:

[West Sussex Community Support Team Website](#)

West Sussex Support Team Telephone: 033 022 27980 (Lines are open 8.00am - 8.00pm)

NHS Guidance

Help Us, Help You Get The Treatment You Need – Vaccinations



NHS England is urging people to attend all regular vaccination appointments to prevent outbreaks of serious diseases and reduce pressure on the health service.

The NHS is continuing to help people to manage illness linked to coronavirus, but is still urging parents to bring children forward for lifesaving jabs to stop killer diseases like measles and mumps.

With many people expressing concern and even fear about seeking help during the virus emergency, the NHS is running a [nationwide campaign](#) to encourage people to come forward for help when they need it.

Essential, routine vaccinations like the MMR jab can save a child's life and are available through family doctors, including in

some parts of the country through new children's immunisation drive-through clinics.

As long as those attending appointments, including parents of babies or children, do not have symptoms or are not self-isolating because someone in the household is displaying symptoms, all scheduled vaccinations should go ahead as normal.

NHS carries on delivering

Tuesday 5th May was International Midwife Day and England's top midwife praised NHS maternity teams for providing high quality care in the face of the most significant challenge to ever face the health services, and urged new and expectant families to continue to come forward for routine checks and urgent advice.

Since the NHS put itself on the highest level of alert over coronavirus on 30th January, local midwives and maternity services have helped to bring an estimated 158,000 babies into the world – most famous among them being No 10's newest resident, Wilfred!

Read more on the NHS website [here](#). You can also access leaflets on maternity services [here](#).

National Updates

The government has announced further expansion of access to coronavirus testing to help protect the most vulnerable including:

- Everyone in England aged 65 and over with coronavirus symptoms can now get tested, along with symptomatic members of their household
- Symptomatic workers who are unable to work from home also eligible for testing

- Testing of all asymptomatic NHS and social care staff and care home residents also being rolled out
- New expansion of testing made possible due to rapidly increasing testing capacity

Anyone in England with symptoms of coronavirus who has to leave home to go to work, and all symptomatic members of the public aged 65 and over, will now be able to get tested

This will mean people who cannot work from home and those aged 65 and over can know for sure whether they have coronavirus and need to continue isolating.

Members of their households with symptoms – a new continuous cough or high temperature - will also be eligible for testing.

Anyone eligible can book a test using an [online portal](#).

Resources

Please see attached our FAQs – gathered from comments and questions raised in the community. Section 12 of the FAQs includes a Resources Section which provides information on additional community support available.

You can find further information about support in the local area on the Sussex NHS Commissioners websites – please click below:

[NHS Brighton and Hove CCG](#)

[NHS East Sussex CCG](#)

[NHS West Sussex CCG](#)

Tell us about your experiences and let us know what you need!

The Covid-19 Community Connectors Team are here to help make sure you, and the people you help and support, get the information and support needed. Please do contact us using the contact details on page 6.

Healthwatch

You can also raise issues through Healthwatch, which is an independent body responsible for gathering people's views of health and social care services. Contact details are below:

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove:

Telephone: 01273 234 040

Email: info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk

Website: <https://www.healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk/contact-us/>

Healthwatch East Sussex

Telephone: 0333 101 4007

Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastsex.co.uk

Website: <https://healthwatcheastsex.co.uk/contact/>

Healthwatch West Sussex

Telephone: 0300 012 0122

Email: helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

Website: <https://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/contact-us>

Contact Details

If you have any questions, or if you need this brief in an alternative format, please contact the Community Connectors Team:

Email: sxccg.involvement@nhs.net

Telephone: 0127 323 8725

Deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users can use a Video Relay Service (VRS) called [SignLive](#) (a free app which connects deaf people to a qualified British Sign Language Interpreter before connecting you to one of the Community Connectors Team). This service is currently available every **Thursday from 14:00-16:00**. Please contact the Community Connectors using the details above if this is not convenient.

Let us know what you need to see in this briefing, give us feedback on services and support related to Covid-19 and let us know about issues you are picking up from your communities.

