

NHS

**Suffolk and
North East Essex**



Accessing health services this winter

**A guide to your local health
services in Suffolk and
North East Essex**

With all the different ways to access health services, it can be confusing to know the best place to go.

Our guide can help you make the right choice.

Self-Care



You can treat most minor illnesses and injuries at home.

Keep your medicine cabinet well-stocked with essentials like painkillers, antihistamine, cold and flu remedies, anti-diarrhoea and indigestion medicine. If you have children, make sure you've got the right medicines according to their age.



The NHS App



If you have a smart phone or tablet, the NHS app is a secure way to access a range of NHS services.

To use the app, you must be registered with a GP surgery in England and aged 13 or over. There are many things you can do on the app including:

- Use the NHS symptom checker
- Order your repeat prescriptions
- Get health advice
- See your test results and access other information on your health record
- See your NHS COVID vaccination status.

More information is available at www.nhs.uk/nhs-app





The NHS website www.nhs.uk provides lots of information to help you manage your health and wellbeing. This includes:

A to Z guide to Health

A guide to health conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help.

A to Z guide to Medicines

Find out how your medicine works, how and when to take it, possible side effects and answers to your common questions.

NHS Services

Find your nearest NHS services, including pharmacies, GPs, dentists and A&E and how to use their services.

Living Well advice

Advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choices about your health and wellbeing.

Social care and support guide

If you or someone you know needs help with day-to-day living because of illness or disability, the website explains your options and where you can get support.

Pregnancy

A guide which includes information about trying for a baby, pregnancy, labour and birth.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Get NHS advice about COVID-19, including symptoms, testing, vaccination and self-isolation.

Pharmacy



If you're suffering from a cold, cuts and grazes or minor illnesses, your pharmacist will offer you remedies, so you don't have to see a GP or nurse.

Your local pharmacist is trained to help you with the safe use of prescription, repeat prescription and over-the-counter medicines. Pharmacies are often open until late and at weekends, and many have a quiet area where you can talk to a pharmacist in private.



Self-Referral



There are some services in Suffolk and north east Essex where you can 'self-refer', by contacting the provider directly.

The Musculoskeletal Service (MSK)



If you have joint, muscle or bone problems, such as back, hips, knees, ankles and hands, you can self-refer to the local musculoskeletal (MSK) service. They can diagnose and treat your condition with physiotherapy or may refer you to another specialist medical team. Your GP can make a referral, or if you live in Suffolk you can self-refer by visiting **www.ahpsuffolk.co.uk**

Access to the service in north east Essex is by referral from the patient's own GP - Musculoskeletal Service - North East Essex Community Services (**www.neecommunity.org.uk**)



Wellbeing Service



If you are aged over 16 and are not your usual self, because you feel worried, anxious or depressed about certain issues in your life, you can contact your GP or local wellbeing service. Our local wellbeing services provide a range of free and confidential talking therapies and specialist support to help you to feel better.

Wellbeing Suffolk - www.wellbeingnands.co.uk – 0300 123 1503 - Phone lines are open Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) from 8am to 8pm.

Therapy for You - North East Essex - www.therapyforyou.co.uk – 01206 334001 - Phone lines are open Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) from 9am to 5pm.

Self-help materials including tips, guides, tools and activities are also available online: www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/

Local GP Services



If you've been unwell for more than 48 hours and need medical help, you can book an appointment with a healthcare professional at your GP practice.



When you contact the GP practice, you will be asked a number of questions to help direct you to the healthcare professional best suited for your health care needs.

GP practices provide many ways you can access their services including online consultations, telephone, video and face-to-face appointments.

If you have the NHS app you can use this to access some of the services available from your GP practice.

You can call NHS111 for help with an urgent medical problem.

You can contact the NHS111 service online at **www.111.nhs.uk** or you can call **111, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

Your symptoms will be assessed and you will be provided with healthcare advice. This may include:

- Self-care
- Visiting a pharmacy
- Contacting your GP practice
- Contacting an urgent treatment or walk-in centre
- Going to A&E.

If needed, NHS111 can also send an ambulance, or where available can also book appointment times to some services.



Emergency Dental Issues

If you have an emergency dental issue, please don't call your GP. Instead, please ring 111 who can help with an emergency dental number.

Local Urgent Care Services



If you are very unwell and have an illness or an injury that requires urgent attention, but it's not an emergency (an emergency is when it is life-threatening), NHS 111 can make you an appointment at a local urgent treatment centre (UTC).

The urgent treatment centres are at:

Clacton Hospital	1 Tower Road Clacton CO15 1LH Open daily 8am - 8pm
Colchester Hospital	Turner Road Colchester CO4 5JL Open daily from 7am - midnight
Fryatt Hospital, Harwich (minor injury only)	419 Main Road Dovercourt Harwich CO12 4EX Open daily from 9am - 5pm



Mental Health Crisis



If you are currently experiencing a mental health crisis or supporting someone in crisis and need urgent help, 24-hour support is available every day for adults, children or young people.

If you need urgent medical advice, you can call the NHS free on **111, option 2**. You can talk to Samaritans anytime on **116 123**.

There are steam cafés in Suffolk and crisis cafés in north east Essex which are available to people to reduce the impact of deteriorating mental health

For Suffolk

10am – 4pm and 6pm – 10pm,
Monday to Friday

Ipswich – 07435 943590

Bury St Edmunds – 07435 944076

For north east Essex

5pm – 10pm,
Monday to Sunday
0300 330 9492

Talking Therapies



The impact of the pandemic on young people's mental health has been significant. During the winter months, it is important that you seek support if you feel you continually depressed or anxious. Please consider contacting the Talking Therapies services for support - **0300 123 1503** (for Wellbeing Suffolk, Monday to Friday 8 am to 8pm, excluding Bank Holidays) and 111, option 2 (for north east Essex).

Pregnancy and Maternity Services



Our local hospitals and community midwives provide a range of services to support you through your pregnancy and birth.

You can refer yourself directly to maternity services. Alternatively, you can visit your GP practice for a referral. Your first contact with a midwife should happen before your first scan. For early, urgent pregnancy advice, please contact your GP. For routine pregnancy information, please speak to your midwife.

Flu and COVID-19 Vaccination



As well as accessing the right service, there is plenty we can all do to take care of ourselves this autumn and winter.

Please do have the Flu vaccination – available from our local GP practice and pharmacy. In addition, please take up the offer of the COVID-19 vaccination when invited to do so.

We have a range of walk in clinics available which are publicised on the Suffolk and north east Essex vaccination website – www.sneevaccine.org.uk



Advice for Parents



If you feel that your child is unwell, or you are unable to care for them, seek medical help. This could be your local pharmacist, NHS111, GP, an urgent treatment centre (UTC) or A&E.

As a parent you have great instincts, please do use them.

Signs relating to:



GREEN - CARE AT HOME

- Your local pharmacist or NHS 111 can give advice
- Check www.nhs.uk
- Consider paracetamol
- Encourage rest and drinks, even if only in small amounts

Appearance

- Normal skin, lips and tongue colour
- Responding normally/still smiling
- Stays awake or wakes up easily
- Normal cry or strong cry
- Mild pain e.g. earache, tummy ache

Breathing/Chest

- Breathing normally with no wheeze
- Mild cough or runny nose without affecting breathing

Hydration

- Baby feeding/child drinking as normal or slightly reduced
- Sick, but drinking and keeping most fluids down
- Diarrhoea for less than 2 days
- Passing urine, normal colour or slightly darker than usual

Temperature

Mild temperature raised up to 38°C (101° F) but controlled if paracetamol is given. Seek advice if temperature continues for 3-5 days



AMBER - GP/NHS111

- **Phone your GP for advice and decision - this may be by telephone/video or face to face**
- **Call GP/NHS111 if concerned**
- **If worried, always seek advice**

Appearance

- Child becoming worse/parents more concerned
- Less activity/more sleepy than usual
- Change in normal behaviour/not acting in usual manner
- Irritable/no smile
- Pain e.g. persistent severe earache, severe tummy ache - seek advice
- Mild/moderate allergic reaction - seek advice

Breathing/Chest

Noisy breathing/wheezy/fast breathing nasal 'flaring'

Hydration

- Drinking less than half of usual amounts/vomiting most feeds

- Less wet nappies than usual/less urine or darker concentrated urine
- For babies under 1 year - sick more than 3 times in 24 hours, diarrhoea 6 times in 24 hours
- For children 1 and over - diarrhoea for longer than 2 days

Temperature

- Over 3 months - temperature over 39°C (102° F)
- Persistent temperature for more than 3-5 days or not controlled by paracetamol - seek advice

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ED (A&E)

RED - URGENT HELP REQUIRED

- **CALL 999 FOR BREATHING DIFFICULTIES OR A NON-BLANCHING RASH (rash that does not fade and lose colour under pressure - glass test)/COLLAPSE**
- **Take your child to your nearest A&E department**

Appearance

- Collapse/unresponsive
- Hard to wake/floppy or listless
- Mottled blue or ashen skin
- Fitting (seizure) without a temperature
- Severe allergic reaction/anaphylaxis
- Rash that does NOT disappear under pressure (glass test)
- Neck stiffness
- High pitched, weak or continuous cry
- Bile stained sick (green)
- Bulging fontanelle (soft spot)

Breathing/Chest

- Severe difficulty in breathing
- Grunting/very fast breathing/sucking in and out between ribs
- Breathless - unable to talk in sentences

Hydration

- Sunken fontanelle (soft spot)
- Very little urine/dry nappies

Temperature

- 0-3 months - temperature over 38°C (101° F)
- Over 3 months - temperature over 39°C (102° F) and/or cold hands or feet
- Any child with a temperature below 36°C (97°F)
- Any child with a high temperature and fitting (seizure)

Emergency Services - Ambulance and A&E

999
ED (A&E)

Emergency services should only be used for life-threatening illnesses or accidents which require immediate, intensive treatment.

In an emergency you should ring the ambulance service (via 999) or go to the hospital's Accident and Emergency (A&E) department.

If it's not life-threatening or an emergency, please use the other options available to you.



Looking after yourself during autumn/winter



- Look after your ears – don't let them build up with wax. Speak to a pharmacist about earwax build-up. They can give advice and suggest treatments.
- Protect yourself and others by keeping up to date with vaccinations such as COVID-19 and flu vaccinations. More details about the COVID-19 vaccinations can be found at www.sneevaccine.org.uk
- Please ensure you give plenty of notice around repeat prescriptions. Little notification puts a strain on other services when they are contacted at short notice for repeat prescriptions.



Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent infectious diseases. Having a vaccination is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and your family against ill health.

www.sneevaccine.org.uk

Bereavement support

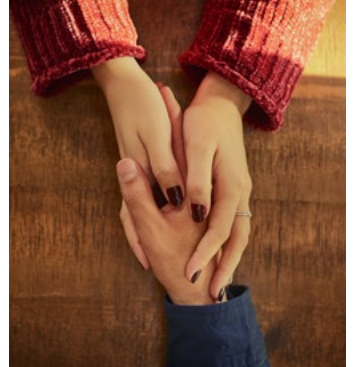


If you or your family are struggling with grief after the death of a loved one, there are bereavement support services across Suffolk and north east Essex that can help. All the organisations listed below provide bereavement support to adults and children. You can refer yourself or your family at their websites or over the phone.

St Helena - North and Mid Essex -
www.sthelena.org.uk/bereavement
01206 984 274

St Elizabeth Hospice - East Suffolk -
<https://www.stelizabethhospice.org.uk>
0300 303 5196

St Nicholas Hospice Care - West Suffolk -
www.stnicholashospice.org.uk
01284 766133



Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services



There are treatment services to support adults and young people affected by drug and alcohol misuse. Drug and Alcohol treatment services for adults and young people in Suffolk are provided by Turning Point in conjunction with Suffolk Family Carers and Iceni. Please call **0300 123 0872**.

In north east Essex, care to substance misusers in the community is delivered by Open Road which offers access for anyone who would like advice, information, support, assessment and access to more formal treatment. They provide one-to-one support as well as support groups and advice.

A Needle exchange service exists at its Colchester site where clients can come and discuss, confidentially, aspects of harm minimisation, and safe practice.

Clients do not need appointments.

Visit **www.openroad.org.uk** Essex Alcohol Recovery Community provides support, advice and information around alcohol use for adults living in the county. Call **01376 316 126** or visit **www.phoenix-futures.org.uk**

Sexual health services



Integrated Contraception and Sexual Health (iCaSH) provides Suffolk's specialist sexual health clinics. They offer a free, confidential service providing contraception, sexual health advice, and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections. This service offers:

- Condoms
- Contraception
- Emergency contraception
- HIV care
- HIV testing
- STI testing
- Support and advice

All iCaSH clinics are self-referral, which means that a GP referral letter is not necessary. The service is free, confidential and non-judgemental. All patients are asked to contact us on **0300 300 3030** in the first instance. You will then be offered either a telephone consultation or a face-to-face appointment as appropriate. Members of the public attending iCaSH in person are required to wear a face covering or mask. Its number is **0300 300 3030**, website is **www.icash.nhs.uk**



The service in Essex is provided by Essex Sexual Health Service which also provides a free, confidential, non-judgemental service regardless of sex, age, ethnic origin and sexual orientation. Its number is **0300 003 1212** (open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm – closed bank holidays – and Saturday 8am to 1pm). Its website address is **www.essexsexualhealthservice.org.uk**

Staying healthy



There is much support to help you to stay fit and healthy.

In Suffolk there is a network called One Life Suffolk which offers a variety of free services for people living in Suffolk to help create healthier, happier futures. They offer free services which include adult weight management, stop smoking support, help to get active, wellbeing walks, training and NHS health checks. Its website is **www.onelifesuffolk.co.uk** and the contact number is **01473 718193**.

In Essex a similar service exists called the Essex Wellbeing Service. Delivered by a group of organisations, this service is for people living in Essex (excluding Southend On-Sea and Thurrock) who are registered with a GP and are aged 16+. Through this service they can receive health and wellbeing support. This includes help to quit smoking, social isolation support, weight management, or help with day-to-day needs. More information is available on the website **www.essexwellbeingservice.co.uk** or by calling **0300 303 9988**.

Active Essex and Active Suffolk



Active Suffolk and Active Essex are two partnerships in England that work with local partners to ensure the power of physical activity and sport can transform lives. Both aim to improve everyone's health and wellbeing. The partnerships do this by continuing to strengthen communities, by providing tools to enable our young to have the best and most healthy start to life, by creating attractive local spaces and places to encourage people to be active, and ensuring that good physical and mental wellbeing can be accessed by everyone. Active Essex - **www.activeessex.org** Active Suffolk - **www.activesuffolk.org**





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