

Update on what the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is doing to respond to coronavirus (11 November 2020)

The NHS is here for you

The NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is reassuring people that healthcare services are still open if you require medical assistance.

All GP practices and hospitals are covid-safe and patients are asked to continue attending their medical appointments, including flu vaccinations, and seeking help for medical concerns.

Patients are reminded to order their medications as normal, just order what you need when you need it, usually seven days before your medicines are due to run out. Patients are able to continue buying regular self-care medications, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, over the counter at pharmacies and supermarkets, so please do not ask your GP to prescribe them.

Chair of NHS Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Dr Anoop Dhesi, is stressing the importance of seeking medical care if you or your family need it.

Dr Dhesi said: "It's really important that people attend appointments when they're arranged and don't "put off" contacting their usual doctor or nurse for any health concerns or ongoing health issues. Some conditions may get worse when they could have been treated more easily at an earlier stage.

Having a flu vaccination is always really important, but this year more than ever. If you have an appointment booked, or are contacted by your surgery to book a flu vaccination, please do attend.

Continue to order your regular quantities of medication as normal. Over ordering or ordering medication earlier than usual puts additional pressure on pharmacies who are operating as normal.

One of the exceptions for people to leave their home during lockdown is to attend medical appointments and collect medications. Lockdown makes no difference; the NHS continues to be here for you."

If your medical requirement is urgent but not an emergency, you can call NHS 111 or access NHS 111 online. Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, the freephone number is manned by trained advisors who can offer advice or arrange for you to see a doctor or nurse if appropriate.



Planning for a future COVID-19 vaccination programme

The Government has asked the NHS to prepare and be ready to deliver a COVID-19 vaccination programme. While it isn't yet certain when COVID-19 vaccine will be available, we are working hard and busy preparing to ensure we are ready to offer it when it is.

Extensive preparations will ensure people across the country can access a vaccine, regardless of where they live, once it has undergone strict clinical trials and approved for use by the independent regulator.

NHS planning is based on the latest information on the vaccine development, including which groups will be the priority to get vaccinated early in the programme. This might mean that smaller numbers of people – who have been prioritised as the most vulnerable – will be vaccinated first, with larger number of people being offered later in the new year.

The NHS has well established plans for delivering vaccinations across the country, for example the annual flu jab and routine immunisations for children and pregnant women. Building on these tried and tested approaches, plans will support existing available services in primary care.

As clinical trials progress and we understand more about the requirements of the vaccine – such as storage, transportation and how it is administered – we will continue to refine our plans to ensure we have the right resources in the right place.

We will ensure we have enough trained and experienced vaccinators to deliver an effective COVID-19 vaccination programme without impacting on the other NHS services our patients rely on, including primary care.

We are working with our partners to ensure we get this balance right. As part of this we are looking at recruiting from the NHS Bring Back Scheme, third sector providers as well as staff already working in the NHS where it doesn't impact other services.

We will provide a safe and effective vaccination programme while continuing to offer timely access to other NHS services. Plans will be finalised when we have certainty on when and what vaccines will be approved for use.

Hopefully we will have an approved vaccine soon. We know that once one is approved, the vaccination programme will be complex. It is likely the vaccine will need to be kept cold and in specific conditions, and that people will need to be given two doses a few weeks apart. So even once we have an approved vaccine, it will take time to vaccinate everyone and we will prioritise vaccinating those at greatest risk from the virus first.

It is vital that we are all patient and continue to follow the rules in place, because this is still a deadly disease and this is not over yet.

Roger returns to QEH after COVID-19 battle

A beloved member of the team at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in King's Lynn has recently returned to work following a long battle with COVID-19. His experience is a reminder that day-in and day-out, before, during and one day after this pandemic, that health and care professionals put themselves in harm's way to care for us.

Roger Fisher, Clinical Site Manager, part of the Site Team at the Trust, had his first day back on site this week after months of hospitalisation fighting COVID-19.

After receiving a positive COVID-19 swab in April, Roger began his two weeks of self-isolating, but a few days later his condition deteriorated and he was admitted to the hospital before being transferred to Critical Care shortly after his arrival.

During his time in hospital, Roger spent five days ventilated, before he was transferred to Papworth to be on a supported breathing machine. Eventually, Roger was able to return to QEH, where he remained on Necton ward for the remainder of his stay.

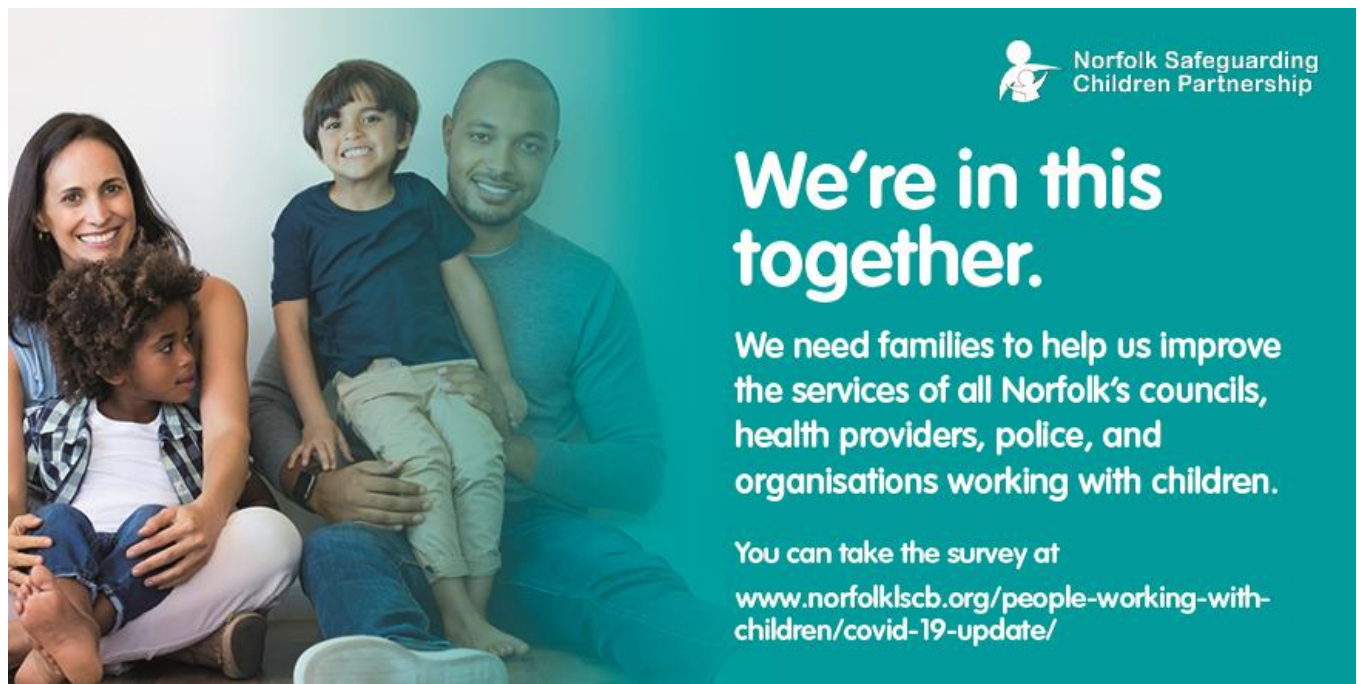
[Read more](#) about Roger's experience of recovering from COVID-19 and returning to work.


Help improve support for children

The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership are running a survey asking families to help improve the services of all Norfolk's councils, health providers, police, and organisations working with children.

The feedback they get will help the service to plan for the future and ongoing support through coronavirus, so the more responses they get the better. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and share this link with you friends, family, networks and communities:

www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/covid-19-update/



 Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

We're in this together.

We need families to help us improve the services of all Norfolk's councils, health providers, police, and organisations working with children.

You can take the survey at
www.norfolkscb.org/people-working-with-children/covid-19-update/

Seven signs your child could be suffering with COVID-19 stress

As we enter the second national lockdown, our children and young people may well be feeling that this is harder than the first lockdown.

They know what to expect this time and the kinds of difficulties that lockdown brought us before. They have also enjoyed the easing of restrictions, returning to school to be with friends and reconnecting with some of their out of school clubs and activities. Now they will be returning once again to reduced social contact, an increase in COVID-19 cases in the community and uncertainty around what the festive period will look like this year.

In addition to this we are approaching darker evenings, colder weather and continuous media coverage which can feel bleak, to say the least. It is important that we can recognise when our children and young people are experiencing stress, in order to support them through this very difficult phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As adults, we may well be finding this an anxiety-provoking time and we may feel that our mood has also dipped as we enter the second lockdown and the consequences this may bring for our health, wellbeing and financial security. We may be particularly concerned if our children have experienced emotional difficulties in the past and this is something to bear in mind, as they are more likely to struggle during this second lockdown. For children and young people, the worry

and uncertainty may feel overwhelming at times but there are many ways that we can support them.

The first step is recognising that they are feeling stressed and this is where noticing changes in your child can be helpful. Individuals experience stress differently but we can think about whether we have seen a change in our children from their normal mood, behaviour and activity levels.

Here are some of the key symptoms of stress to look out for:

1. **Changes in behaviour** (e.g. restlessness and finding it hard to relax, hitting out, withdrawing from others, spending more time alone or being more clingy than normal, crying)
2. **Changes in sleep patterns** (e.g. sleeping a lot more or a lot less than usual, having trouble getting to sleep or waking during the night or very early, younger children may find it harder to settle in the evening, nightmares may be experienced)
3. **Changes in social relationships and activities** (e.g. a loss of interest in contacting friends or family, not engaging in the hobbies they usually enjoy, lacking motivation and interest in attending school or completing homework)
4. **Changes in eating patterns** (e.g. eating a lot more than usual or a lot less, an increase in comfort eating and wanting more treats and snacks)
5. **Changes in mood and thinking patterns** (e.g. feeling low, sad and hopeless about the future, feeling unable to cope, angry or frustrated, being more irritable, thinking or talking more about death and dying, experiencing more extreme 'catastrophic' ways of thinking, "life will never be good again, we have nothing to look forward to")
6. **Changes in self-care** (e.g. not taking care of their appearance in the way that they normally would, showing less interest in their personal hygiene, less concern about eating healthily and exercising)
7. **Changes in coping strategies** (e.g. using unhelpful coping strategies such as alcohol, drugs or nicotine, hurting themselves or talking about wanting to harm themselves, taking more risks)

How you can help

It is important to keep the lines of communication open with your children and allow them to talk about how they are feeling, as this gives an opportunity for them to: express themselves; feel understood; and gain support from you. Just being there to listen when children talk can help them to make sense of their thoughts and feelings and this can reduce feelings of confusion, stress and hopelessness. Knowing that it is normal to feel scared and worried in such uncertain times can be very validating and knowing that there are ways to tolerate these feelings and improve our mood can help to build hope and resilience.

Techniques such as calm belly breathing, mindfulness, progressive muscle relaxation, regular exercise, spending time outdoors and listening to music can all help to reduce symptoms of stress and promote feelings of calm in the body. There are many accessible YouTube videos demonstrating these techniques.

If there are changes in their mood, thinking patterns or behaviour which may indicate an increase in risk (such as self-harm, thoughts of suicide or self-neglect) it is important to seek help and advice from your GP immediately. If you think your child may be in crisis, you can call the First Response 24/7 helpline which offers immediate advice, support and signposting for people with mental health difficulties of any age. Call 0808 196 3494.

Links to organisations for support and advice

There are many organisations offering excellent advice, support and webinars during this very difficult time. It is important for you as parents and carers to look after yourselves too. The

pandemic is affecting us all and we need to look after our own emotional and psychological wellbeing. Do reach out for support if you need it and check out the website links below for support and advice. We are all human and we all need help at times and that's ok.

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support/support-for-parents-and-carers/

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/coronavirus/

www.wellbeingnands.co.uk

www.Kooth.com

Mental health support available for the public

- It's important that we look after our mental wellbeing during this time – for tips and advice visit www.everymindmatters.co.uk.
- If you are worried about your own mental health and wellbeing call First Response, a free 24/7 helpline offering immediate support, on 0808 196 3494.
- 11 to 25 year olds in Norfolk and Waveney can get support and online counselling via www.Kooth.com. The service provides support or advice on any topic, including managing your feelings during the pandemic.
- JustOneNorfolk has a wealth of information and links to support the health and wellbeing of your family: www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk.

NHS
Norfolk and Suffolk
NHS Foundation Trust



First Response

Call: 0808 196 3494
(Freephone)

A 24/7 service for people of all ages in Norfolk and Suffolk requiring mental health care, advice and support.

A colorful graphic for Kooth. It features a yellow background with a blue banner at the top. The Kooth logo is in the top left. Below it, the text 'Lost your routine? We'll be here when you need us' is written. A list of services is provided with icons: Discussion Boards, Kooth Magazine & Help Articles, Free Counselling, and Journal & Self-Help Tools. On the right, there is an illustration of a person's head in profile, a clock, and a calendar. At the bottom right, the text 'Sign up for free at Kooth.com' is displayed.

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