

# Joined Up Care Derbyshire

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## When you think you need A&E, think NHS111 first

**Getting the right treatment, at the right time and at the right place has now become easier as Derby and Derbyshire residents are asked to contact NHS111 first by phone or online at [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) if they think they need A&E.**

From this week the new initiative is designed to help people get the right treatment, at the right time and at the right place. If those contacting NHS111 need to go to A&E then a booking or time slot will be arranged for them.

NHS111 provides medical advice and assessment quickly. People using NHS111 will be taken through a series of questions which will determine the next course of action. This may result in patients being referred to their GP practice for a call back or an arrival time being given for A&E or an Urgent Treatment Centre, who will then know who is due to attend. The new system will help to ensure that people can safely receive the right care, in the most appropriate setting, whilst relieving pressure on hospital A&E departments.

Dr Paul Wood, GP and clinical lead for NHS111 First in Derbyshire, said: “We are pleased to be offering this service as it will support patients to access the right clinical service, first time.

“You should continue to use 999 if you have a serious or life-threatening condition. However, if you think you need A&E, contact NHS111 first by phone or online as it may well save you a trip to the hospital. If you do need to go to hospital, using NHS111 will likely reduce the time you spend waiting as we will book you in to be seen quickly and safely with a time slot.

“The new system will help more people to benefit from early clinical assessment over the phone, or online and will support the NHS to manage the flow of patients when capacity in waiting rooms is much smaller than before, maintain distancing and reduce the risk of infection.”

Paul continued: “We know that a high proportion of people who walk in to A&E could be safely treated in an alternative healthcare setting. No-one experiencing a medical emergency will ever be turned away - you will always be treated urgently if your condition is severe or potentially life-threatening. However, using NHS111 first will help to ensure we can see people with the most urgent needs in a safe way, while protecting staff and patients.”

Dr Aqib Bhatti, Clinical Director for DHU Health Care, said: “The co-operation and partnership between the various healthcare providers in Derby and Derbyshire to make NHS111 First possible in Derby and Derbyshire has been outstanding.

“Our NHS 111 health advisors and clinical teams will be able to direct people to the quickest and most appropriate treatment for their needs. This initiative is vital for keeping people safe as it will help to reduce the time people spend waiting in A&E and help manage the capacity of NHS services by ensuring patients are getting the most appropriate care for their clinical needs.”

NHS 111 First is now available to everyone in England. The service supports people to access the right care in a timely and more convenient way and will help to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19.

Dr Magnus Harrison, Executive Medical Director at UHDB, said: “We have introduced social distancing measures within both of our A&E departments, in order to help keep everyone as safe as possible. This does mean however that we now have less space available to us in different areas at both Royal Derby Hospital and Queen’s Hospital Burton, such as in our hospital waiting rooms. With this in mind, it’s really important that we help patients to choose the right NHS services for them, so that they can receive the care that they need in the most appropriate setting.

“By contacting NHS 111 before visiting hospital, you will be helping to protect our most vulnerable patients, whilst also relieving pressure on A&E, so that our staff are able to care for more people this winter who urgently need our assistance.

“We know it can sometimes be difficult to know where to go for urgent medical treatment or advice. When you think you need to go to A&E, we ask that you please stop and contact NHS 111 first – either by phone or online. Here, clinicians will be able to advise you where to go, or what to do next and help you to book a time to attend that service, if appropriate. It’s important to stress though that, if you do have a genuine emergency, like a heart attack,

stroke, or major trauma, we're still here for you, and you shouldn't hesitate to call 999 without delay."

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) and by calling 111. The free-to-call single non-emergency number medical helpline is operated in Derby and Derbyshire by DHU Health Care. For those who have difficulties communicating or hearing, they can:

- Tell the call handler that they need an interpreter
- Use [NHS111 Online](#) (for age 5 and over only)
- Call 18001 111 on a text phone
- Use the NHS 111 British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter service [NHS 111 \(BSL\) interpreter service](#)

**ENDS**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Media contact:** [ddccg.communications@nhs.net](mailto:ddccg.communications@nhs.net) | 01332 888192.

- Arrangements have not changed for people with serious or life-threatening illnesses or injuries. Please continue to dial 999, as before.
- To contact 111 – just call 111, or click: [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk)
- DHU Health Care has recruited extra staff for the expected increase in calls to NHS111.

Joined Up Care Derbyshire partners:

**The organisation that commissions health services:**  
[NHS Derby and Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group](#)

**Organisations that provide healthcare services:**

[Chesterfield Royal Hospital](#)  
[Derbyshire Community Health Care Services](#)  
[Derbyshire GP Alliance](#)  
[Derbyshire Healthcare](#)  
[DHU Healthcare](#)  
[East Midlands Ambulance Service](#)  
[University Hospitals of Derby and Burton](#)

**Organisations that provide commission and provide public services and social care:**

[Derby City Council](#)  
[Derbyshire County Council](#)