

PRESS RELEASE

20 March 2013

Don't go to A&E unless absolutely necessary

People in Worcestershire are being asked not to go to Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments unless they have a serious or life threatening condition.

The counties three NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove, NHS South Worcestershire and NHS Wyre Forest) and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, who run the counties A&E departments, are urging the public to choose their health services wisely and to think twice before they go to A&E.

Ruth Davoll, Urgent Care Lead for NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove, NHS South Worcestershire and NHS Wyre Forest), said:

"We are seeing an increase in pressure across the whole health system. More than ever, we need to make sure that emergency services are free to help people with the greatest need. If we can get more people to care for themselves when they have minor complaints such as muscular, minor sports injuries and coughs and colds, this will go some way to easing the pressures on our emergency services."

"Patients with a wide range of minor injuries which do not require a visit to A&E (such as cuts, wounds, sprains, strains and minor burns) can also be treated at Minor Injury Units at Bromsgrove, Evesham, Kidderminster, Malvern and Tenbury. To find out the opening hours of your local Minor Injury Unit visit www.worcestershire.nhs.uk. You can also visit the Worcester Walk-in Health Centre for treatment, which is open from 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year. If in doubt speak to your GP or if your GP is closed, then Worcestershire's GP Out of Hours Service can be contacted on 0300 123 3211."

Mark Wake, Medical Director at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said;

"Our hospital A&E teams deal with some of the high numbers of people who have life-threatening conditions such as heart-attacks, strokes and lung disease in the country. To ensure we can concentrate on helping these emergency cases. I would urge people with non- life threatening conditions to make use of alternative NHS services and only visit if it is necessary."

More information about choosing the right health service at the right time, as well as where you can access our services, can be found on NHS Worcestershire's website at www.worcestershire.nhs.uk.

- Ends -

Notes to editors

1. For details of Pharmacy opening times, visit: www.worcestershire.nhs.uk
2. For details of GP practices and Out of Hours services, www.worcestershire.nhs.uk
3. You can find a symptom checker and information about local NHS services at www.nhs.uk

For further information please contact: Hardeep Cheema, Communications Manager on 07423 524211 or email Hardeep.Cheema@worcestershire.nhs.uk