

Media Release

COVID-19: Services still available for urgent and emergency care

3 March 2020

Help for patients requiring urgent and emergency care is still available across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin while health experts deal with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Although the advice for most people remains 'Stay at Home', medical care is still available through GP surgeries and the Emergency Departments at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) and the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) in Telford.

Emergency Departments at RSH and PRH remain open for patients who have suffered a serious injury, severe illness or a medical emergency.

An emergency is a critical or life-threatening situation, such as:

- loss of consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- persistent, severe chest pain
- persistent, severe abdominal pain
- breathing difficulties
- swelling, redness or pain around a cut or wound and a very high or low temperature
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds

Choking, chest pain, blacking out, blood loss and fractures are all considered emergencies and those with these symptoms should not hesitate to visit the Emergency Department.

Dr Arne Rose, Medical Director at The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), which runs RSH and PRH, said: "Whilst the general advice is to stay at home as much as possible, and whilst we do have restrictions on visiting to our hospitals, it is important that people who need emergency care get that care as soon as possible.

"Some people may think that they are doing the right thing by not contacting their GP or not coming to A&E, but they could actually be making things worse for themselves in the long run.

"Our Emergency Departments are only for serious injury, severe illness or medical emergencies but, throughout this outbreak, they remain open and to ready help."

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GP practices are still operating but patients must not turn up at their practice with an appointment.

Nicky Wilde, Director of Primary Care for Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin CCGs, said: "Anyone with Covid-19 related symptoms must contact 111 in the first instance, however GP practices are still open and during this period of Covid-19 we are asking patients not to turn up at their practice without a pre-booked appointment and to contact their practice by telephone."

Patients will be asked a set of questions to ensure that they are referred to the best healthcare professional to help.

Further information can be found by visiting www.shropshireccg.nhs.uk/news/important-information-for-patients-booking-appointments-at-gp-practices-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/

There is also lots of information on a whole range of health issues and conditions online at 111.nhs.uk along with details on how to treat symptoms and where to get help.