Primary care communications toolkit – Winter 2023-24

# Social media – for use during all of winter

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| **Topic** | **Post** | **Image to use** |
| Primary care | There are many health professionals at a GP practice. Save yourself time by seeing the most appropriate person for you – you often don’t need a doctor. Find out more at [www.healthlierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthlierlsc.co.uk/winter). |  |
| Extended GP access | A GP receptionist isn’t asking questions to be nosey! They have been trained to help you navigate to the right healthcare professional for your need. It means you’ll get an appointment sooner than waiting for a GP if you don’t need one. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Primary care | Here are some top tips for making the most of your appointment:   1. Listen to the advice of the health receptionist/navigator. 2. Arrive in plenty of time but be prepared for a short wait. 3. Think about booking a double appointment if you have more than one thing to discuss. 4. Make notes of your symptoms, how long you’ve had them, things you’ve already tried, and any questions you have before you go and take them with you. 5. Remember to stick to the thing you went in for. Get that sorted first. 6. If you don’t understand anything, ask for it to be explained.   Find out more about primary care services at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Primary care | Don’t forget! You can get appointments for GP practice services in the evening and at weekends. Services are there for you when you need them. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Pharmacy | If you have a minor condition like a cough or cold don’t wait for a GP appointment; go to the pharmacy instead. You’ll be seen straight away and could leave with the treatment you need. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Pharmacy | Pharmacists are trained professionals with over 5 years of training in medicines. If you have a common illness a pharmacy is the place to get it sorted. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Pharmacy | If you know you have a cold or viral illness, you don’t need a GP to confirm it. Save yourself some time and go to the pharmacy for help and advice. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Pharmacy | 82 per cent of people trust a pharmacist, but only 19 per cent say they would go to the pharmacy first if they have a minor illness like a cold. What’s that about?! Find out more about what pharmacies can offer: [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| CPCS | GPs are working with pharmacies so you can be offered an appointment with a pharmacist at a pharmacy near you instead of going to the GP practice with a minor illness. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Optometry | *Optical practices - also known as optometry practices or opticians - are usually the first place to contact to help you maintain good eye health, or to help you with eye or vision-related symptoms.* Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) | A person using an eye lens to check the eyes of a person  Description automatically generated |
| Dentistry | For urgent dental treatment or advice please contact your usual dental practice in the first instance. The Lancashire and South Cumbria dental helpline can also provide advice, support and an appointment where required. It is charged at your local rate. Call 0300 1234010 between 8am and 9pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm weekends and bank holidays.  Outside of these hours, for urgent dental support call 111. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |
| Dentistry | How often you need to see the dentist depends on your individual need. Those at highest risk may be recalled every three months, while children at lowest risk will be invited every 12 months and low-risk adults may only be invited to visit their dentist every two years. Find out more at [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter) |  |

# Digital screen slides

(See attached separate document.)

# Intranets/Newsletters

**Supporting the NHS by using the right health service**

With the NHS being much busier during the winter months, the public are being urged to ensure they’re using the right service for them.

GP practices have a range of different healthcare professionals who can support a variety of conditions, from nurses who can offer health checks, take blood samples and prescribe some medications to social prescribing workers who can connect patients to community-based support.

To access the different services available, the receptionist or health navigator will ask the patient a few questions about their condition and help book an appointment with the right health professional.

GP practices also offer appointments in the evening and at weekends making it easier for patients to be seen at a time that suits them.

Most people with minor conditions will be best served by visiting a pharmacy as they have clinicians who are experts in a range of different medications and treatments. GP practices are directing some patients to the pharmacy for a consultation which we recommend people accept.

Unless someone has a life-threatening accident or becomes seriously unwell, it is unlikely they will need to go to A&E. However, the best place to get advice is online at [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or by calling 111.

For urgent dental treatment or advice, patients should contact their usual dental practice or call the Lancashire and South Cumbria dental helpline on 0300 1234010 between 8am and 9pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm weekends and bank holidays.

For urgent dental support call 111.

To find further information on local health services visit [www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter](http://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/winter).

# Press release (and for websites)

4 December 2023

**Supporting the NHS by using the right health service**

To prevent an illness becoming an emergency, the NHS in Lancashire and South Cumbria is reminding the public how to make the most of the health services available.

With the NHS being much busier during the winter months, the public are being urged to ensure they’re using the right service for them.

GP practices have a range of different healthcare professionals who can support a variety of conditions, from nurses who can offer health checks, take blood samples and prescribe some medications to social prescribing workers who can connect patients to community-based support.

To access the different services available, the receptionist or health navigator will ask the patient a few questions about their condition and help book an appointment with the right health professional.

Dr Lindsey Dickinson, associate medical director for Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB), which plans and buys health services for the region, said: “People often feel they need to see a doctor, but by seeing one of the many other healthcare professionals in a GP practice or a pharmacy they will get the best service for their need. By doing this it may be possible to be seen sooner than if they were to wait to see a doctor.”

GP practices also offer appointments in the evening and at weekends making it easier for patients to be seen at a time that suits them.

Most people with minor conditions will be best served by visiting a pharmacy as they have clinicians who are experts in a range of different medications and treatments.

Dr Dickinson added: "Utilising your local pharmacy is a great way to get treated for a minor condition quickly and you don’t need an appointment. Your GP practice might direct you to the pharmacy for a consultation which we would recommend people accept.

“To ensure health services don’t become overrun this winter, it is essential that people use the right service for their need. Primary care services are available, and we want to ensure people get the best service by knowing how to access them and where to find the right information.”

Unless someone has a life-threatening accident or becomes seriously unwell, it is unlikely they will need to go to A&E. However, the best place to get advice is online at [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or by calling 111.

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**ENDS**

# Other related toolkits to be aware / make use of

* [Some important information from the NHS to help you stay well this winter. | Campaigns | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/stay-well-this-winter/)
* [NHS General Practice Team | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/nhs-general-practice-team/)
* [Pharmacy assets | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/pharmacy-advice/)
* [General practice access routes | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/general-practice-access-routes/)
* [Supporting general practice and urgent and emergency care referrals to the NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/supporting-gp-and-uec-referrals-to-the-nhs-community-pharmacist-consultation-service/)
* [General Practice - Enhanced Access | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/general-practice-enhanced-access/)
* [NHS Dental Practice Access | Help Us Help You - Primary Care Services | Campaign Resource Centre (dhsc.gov.uk)](https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/nhs-dental-practice-access/)