

If it's an emergency, call 999. For anything else, choose if you can treat it yourself at home or at the pharmacist, or call your GP practice. At night, call NHS 111.

A big SHOUT OUT

We'd like to join you all in thanking and congratulating the NHS staff, in hospital, the emergency services, and of course in your GP practice, who braved it through snow and ice to make sure you get the care that you need. That's real dedication!

Ongoing Care or a new condition?

Did you know, that on average GPs see 6 times as many appointments as there are patients? For practice with a registered list of 5000 patients, that means that every year they will answer 30,000 patient consultations! For North Tyneside, that's nearly 1.3 million patient consultations per year.

If you are young and fit, you probably think "who are all these people?" If you have a condition that needs ongoing treatment, like diabetes, or heart disease, or a complex combination, then you probably think that you see the doctor more often than 6 times each year. The NHS, and in particular your GP practice, are here for you, to put (as the saying goes) life in your years.

It's a salutary reminder, with the snow and ice we've had over the last week, but we aren't all young and fit, and what's more, none of us are getting any younger (or fitter). We want you to have the best life possible – physical health, mental well-being, a strong community – and the GP practice is in the middle of your community. So help us to help you, by taking your medication when you said you would, by doing the exercises you agreed to, by coming to your arranged appointments, and by looking after your health.

Did you know?

The GP practices in North Tyneside hold **1.3 million** clinical consultations per year.

The pressures on General Practice

Of course some of us are lucky enough not to need the doctor very often. It might seem frustrating that you can't get an appointment straightaway, that all the appointments seem to be taken up. Everyone knows that people are living longer, and that's a good thing. But it does mean that some of the conditions that creep up on us in our later years, such as cancer, are getting increasingly common. This means that more people have the kind of conditions that either need regular visits to the GP, or regular help at home, or both. There are also more people. Added to this, many activities previously undertaken in hospital are now done in GP practices.

It's estimated that GP workloads went up by 7.2% in 2 years to mid 2017. If this rate of increase hasn't changed since 2010, that would mean 30% increase in workload over 8 years. Unfortunately there has been no real-terms increase in funding for General Practice, and no additional staff.

TyneHealth and North Tyneside CCG are working together to try to improve this situation; if we can keep you as healthy as you can be, and get you out of hospital and back into your own home amongst friends and family, then we can save a bit of money from the costs of hospital care and spend it on keeping you healthy.



Career Start – planning for your future clinical professionals

We launched Career Start Practice Nurses in January. This is a conversion course for qualified nurses who wish to work in General Practice – to enjoy looking after someone throughout their condition, sharing their ups and downs. Since October we have appointed 3 Practice Nurses and 4 Career Start (needing the conversion course) Practice Nurses.

We're employing pharmacists to work in many of those practices that don't already have a pharmacist, to help with the workload. Twice a year we run recruitment rounds to attract GPs to this wonderful Borough, to fill the inevitable retirements (although we do seem to have better retention of GPs than many parts of UK).

We launched Primary Care Navigators in nearly every member practice – these are very similar to the Link Workers at the front desk of many charities. These practice staff can be a great help in addition to your GP and nurse.



Using the NHS: when you should go to A&E, or call an ambulance?

A&E is called that for a reason – it's for Accidents (road traffic accidents, serious accidents) and Emergencies. Basically, when there's a likelihood that someone could lose their life or be seriously hurt. A&E needs to be able to take Emergencies in quickly and save lives, and besides which, although ours North of Tyne are beautiful buildings, you really don't want to be there if you don't need to be.

What about NHS 111 and Urgent Treatment Centres?

There are times when you need immediate help but it isn't an emergency (probably). These are the times when you might want to call NHS 111. If it's a minor injury like a sprain or possible break, then they may suggest that you go to an Urgent Treatment Centre (open during the day). If your GP practice is open, chances are they will suggest you call your GP practice – and note that GP practices now offer more evening and weekend appointments through the Extended Access Hubs (which address some of the extra 30% of demand by offering 4% increase in appointments each week).

What can you do to help?

1. Check in on neighbours who are affected by the weather or who might be lonely. Friends are the most important thing anyone can have.
2. Choose sensibly – do you need an appointment, or do you need a rest? Come to the NHS before it gets worse, but if it's time limited like a cold then there's nothing we can do to speed it up.
3. Join a Time Bank (call Age UK North Tyneside for more details) and help out your neighbours at the same time as improving your own health. If you don't feel connected to your local community to either offer help or receive some community based practical support, Time banking is a great introduction.

TyneHealth Board Members

Please welcome Dr Naeem Iqbal (Swarland Ave), in addition to existing board members:

- Dr Kerry Burnett (Park Road)
- Dr Jane Derry (Collingwood)
- Karen Iliadis (Portugal Place)
- Sylvia McKeag-Smith (Marine Ave)
- Les Miller (Appleby)
- Lin Murray (Lane End)
- Dr Jake Pearson (Whitley Bay)
- Dr Martin Wright (Chair - Portugal Place)
- Hugo Minney (Chief Executive - based at Monkseaton)

Contact

Hugo is Chief Executive, and you can reach me on hugo.minney@nhs.net, and Claudia Kern is Administrator on Claudia.Kern@nhs.net.

We're based at Monkseaton Medical Centre and you can phone **0191 252 1616** Option 4.