Press Release

Help the NHS by choosing the right health service this winter

DO YOUR bit for the NHS and for the thousands of people cared for each winter by making sure that you use the right health service for your needs – that’s the message from Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

The Trust, which runs Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, Royal Hampshire County Hospital, in Winchester, and Andover War Memorial Hospital, has revealed that 15 per cent of patients who visit the emergency departments at Basingstoke and Winchester hospitals could receive the treatment they need from their GP.

With pressure expected to increase over the busy winter months, you can play your part by ensuring that you use the most appropriate NHS service for your care.

Call 999 in the event of a life-threatening emergency, such as persistent, severe chest pain or breathing difficulties. If you have an illness or injury that is not life threatening, you should contact your GP surgery first. GPs can treat and offer expert advice on a wide range of conditions.

If you are unsure which service would best suit your needs or your GP service is closed, you can call NHS 111, simply by dialling 111, where operators are on hand to give you advice and direct you to the most appropriate local service.

Dr Louisa Chan, clinical director for unscheduled care at Hampshire Hospitals, said: “We treated a record number of patients in our emergency departments last winter and expect to treat a similar number of people this year as well.

“Staff across the Trust are doing a fantastic job of treating people who come into our emergency departments, but we need everyone to help ease the pressure on them by making sure that they use the correct service.

“Over the last few months we have had people presenting at our emergency departments with things like sore throats and earache. These people certainly could have arranged for a consultation with their GP, reducing waiting times for everyone and allowing us to concentrate on patients who really need our specialist help.”

Working in partnership with North Hampshire CCG and North Hampshire Urgent Care, Hampshire Hospitals is taking action to reduce waiting times and ease pressure on the emergency department at Basingstoke hospital by using funds issued by the Department of Health to introduce a primary care streaming service. This service will see some patients treated by on-site doctors rather than in the emergency department.

“It’s great that we are able to offer this new service, which we are confident will improve the experience of everyone who attends the emergency department at Basingstoke hospital,” Dr Chan added. “However, it is still vitally important that people help us by making sure that visiting the emergency department is the right
course of action for them to take.”

ENDS

PHOTO: Dr Louisa Chan outside the emergency department at Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital

Notes to Editors

1. Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides hospital services to a population of approximately 570,000 people in Hampshire and parts of West Berkshire.
2. HHFT has around 6,000 staff and a turnover of £385million a year.
3. HHFT delivers one hospital service across multiple locations including its own hospitals, Andover War Memorial Hospital, Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital and Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester. It also provides outpatient and assessment services from Bordon and Alton community hospitals.
4. As a Foundation Trust, HHFT is accountable to the local community through a system of local ownership with members and elected governors. HHFT has around 18,000 staff and public members. Foundation Trusts are free from central government control and can reinvest any surplus to develop clinical services. They are authorised and regulated by NHS Improvement, an independent regulator.

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