

Here to help winter campaign 2025/26

Updated: 11/12/2025

About this toolkit

This toolkit is for all NHS, local authority and VCSE sector communication leads, GP practices and local community pharmacies.

Working together across the region, we have created some key messages and visuals to support our communications with the public this winter, such as supporting them to stay well and safe this winter and access the right NHS service for their needs.

The full here to help winter toolkit can be accessed [here](#).

This toolkit content covers the winter/festive period, when we know the NHS system experiences exceptional pressure. The toolkit builds on the region's [Here to Help](#) campaign which signposts people to the most appropriate NHS service for their needs, and is backed by a regional wide media buy. This includes asking people to think pharmacy, 111 and GP first, as well as keeping A&E and 999 free for life threatening emergencies only. As well as specific campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of getting vaccinated and the conditions people can seek advice and treatment from their pharmacist, urgent treatment centres and much more.

You can also find a fuller campaign toolkit for vaccinations [here](#).



Social media plan

Here to help winter messaging 2025/26

This social media plan provides content you can include in your social media posts. Animations and images can be downloaded from our toolkit [here](#).

You can help us by:

- Posting and sharing content on your communication channels to help further promote the campaign across the region
- Getting in touch if you need any assets developed to meet your local needs.

Your support in sharing these messages is very much appreciated. Please keep checking the toolkit as we may add new content.

We know that animations and videos are preferred content with viewers, so please try to use these where available.



For further help or advice please contact either: Lee Hansom, lee.hansom@nhs.net, Abbie Mulgrew, abbie.mulgrew@nhs.net or nencicb.comms@nhs.net





Please tag us in your social media posts:




Handles: **Facebook** – NorthEastandNorthCumbriaNHS, **X** – @NENC_NHS, **Instagram** – nenc_nhs


Hastags: #heretohelp




Repeat prescriptions - Further messaging and visuals for repeat prescriptions available [here](#).

<p>Ordering repeat prescriptions in time</p> <p>Schedule from:</p> <p>Now to 20 Dec</p> <p>&</p> <p>27 Dec</p>	<p>Enough repeat medication to last you over the festive bank holiday?</p> <p>Don't get caught short this Christmas and New Year!</p> <p>REMEMBER to order your repeat prescriptions in plenty of time.</p> <p>Use the NHS App or visit your local pharmacy or GP surgery online ordering system.</p> <p>Find pharmacy bank holiday opening hours here.</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>	 <p>The graphic features a dog wearing a red reindeer antler headband. The text 'Oh deer, don't get caught short' is in large, colorful letters. Below it, a purple banner says 'Order your prescriptions in plenty of time.' and a green banner says 'Head to your local pharmacy. HERE TO HELP'.</p>	<p>Or download our animation</p> <p>Or</p>  <p>The thumbnail is similar to the graphic but includes a YouTube interface with a channel name '@northeastandnorthcum brianh1204', a 'Subscribe' button, and the video title 'Here to Help Stock Up 3'.</p> <p>https://youtube.com/shorts/08mKcGG_iss?feature=share</p>
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<p>Forgot your repeat prescription?</p> <p>Schedule from:</p> <p>21 Dec to 24 Dec & 28 Dec to 31 Dec</p>	<p>If YOU forget urgent repeat medication over the festive bank holidays!</p> <p>You can use the 111 online emergency prescription service.</p> <p>Find pharmacy bank holiday opening hours here.</p> <p>#NHS #HereToHelp</p>		<p>Alternatively:</p> <p>You can use the animation available in our online toolkit.</p> <p>https://youtube.com/shorts/08mKcGG_iss?feature=share</p> 
<p>Well stocked medicine cabinet - Further messaging and visuals for well stocked cabinet available here.</p>			
<p>Stock up on healthcare essentials</p> <p>Schedule from:</p> <p>Now to 1 Jan</p>	<p>Be prepared over the festive holidays by keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet at home.</p> <p>Paracetamol, plasters, indigestion remedy, allergy relief and anti-diarrhoea medicine are a good place to start!</p> <p>Your local pharmacist can give you more advice.</p> <p>Find pharmacy bank holiday opening hours here.</p> <p>#NHS #HereToHelp</p>		<p>Alternatively:</p> <p>You can use the animation available in our online toolkit.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>https://youtube.com/shorts/jGjLECGiPnE?feature=share</p>  <p>https://youtube.com/shorts/hku9GjIU5xk</p>

			
<p>Think pharmacy, GP and 111 first</p> <p>Schedule from:</p> <p>Now to 1 Jan</p>	<p>Feeling ill this winter?</p> <p>There are a number of NHS services available to you to provide the best health care for your needs.</p> <p>Choosing the right NHS service will help get you the best advice, and often more quickly too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think pharmacy first • GP • NHS 111 online for medical help and advice • Keep A&E free for EMERGENCIES ONLY <p>Help reduce pressure on A&E and other services - so they can help those who need it most.</p>		<p>Download our animation</p>

	Find pharmacy bank holiday opening hours here .		
Minor ailments - Further messaging and visuals for minor ailments available here .			
UTI message Schedule from: Now to 31 Mar Target more from: 20 Dec to 24 Dec & 27 Dec to 31 Dec	OUCH! Burning or stinging sensation when you wee? Need to wee frequently or urgently? Now't much coming out? You may have a Urinary Tract Infection. Did you know across the North East & North Cumbria community pharmacies can provide immediate advice & treatment for UTIs for women aged 16-64. No appointment needed. Ask your local pharmacist today and say #Bye-ByeUTI #HeretoHelp Available at participating pharmacies only: https://www.thinkpharmacyfirst.health/		Download our animation
Got an itch? message Schedule from:	Got an itch? Tummy trouble? Tickly cough? Head to your local pharmacy.		Or you can use the animation available in our online toolkit.

<p>Now to 31 Mar</p> <p>Target more from:</p> <p>20 Dec to 24 Dec & 27 Dec to 31 Dec</p>	<p>Pharmacists can offer advice and treatments for a range of conditions – just like having a prescription from your GP!</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>		
<p>Emergency contraception</p> <p>Now to 31 January</p>	<p>Pharmacist Ella Hemsley explains how to get the EMERGENCY contraceptive (morning after) pill directly from your local pharmacy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appointment needed • Quick and easy access • Free and confidential • Get support with longer-term contraception options <p>Find your nearest pharmacy at Find a pharmacy offering the contraceptive pill</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>		 <p>https://youtu.be/IB2IXC_ZGa8</p>

Flu vaccinations

<p>Flu vaccinations</p> <p>Schedule from: Now to 1 Jan</p>	<p>Make sure your festive season is un-flu-gettable!</p> <p>It's still not too late to get your flu vaccination to keep you and those around you safe during the festive season.</p> <p>If you're over 65, pregnant, in a clinical at-risk group, a carer, a health and social care worker, have a learning disability or live with someone who is immunosuppressed, flu vaccinations are available at your GP or local pharmacy.</p>		<p>Or you can use the animation available in our online toolkit.</p>
<p>Flu vaccinations</p> <p>Schedule from: 2 Jan to 28 Mar</p>	<p>Be wise – immunise!</p> <p>It's still not too late to get your flu vaccination to keep you and those around you safe during the festive season.</p> <p>If you're over 65, pregnant, in a clinical at-risk group, a carer, a health and social care worker, have a learning disability or live with someone who is immunosuppressed, flu vaccinations are available at your GP or local pharmacy.</p>		<p>Or you can use the animation available in our online toolkit.</p>

NHS111

NHS111

Schedule from:

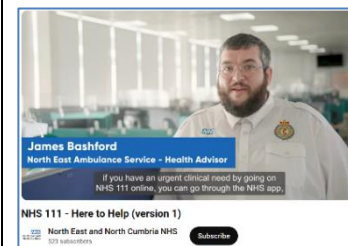
Now to 31 Jan

Get to the help you need ... when you need it!

When it's not life threatening but still urgent or

- You think you might need to go to a hospital or urgent treatment centre but you're not sure
- You need urgent advice and your GP surgery is closed.

NHS111 is here is to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week online or by phone.
#HeretoHelp



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCL_cJrn7Ko&list=PLxLQTUPR0agp5iHlnrUzSwa5tFoIYC2xG&index=25



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1chacZWnuk&list=PLxLQTUPR0agp5iHlnrUzSwa5tFoIYC2xG&index=24>

UTC

Urgent Treatment Centre

Now to 31 Jan

If you have a minor injury or illness that needs medical attention – but is not life threatening - you can get help at your nearest urgent treatment centre!

Urgent treatment centres can treat many conditions including:

- sprains and strains
- cuts and grazes
- suspected broken limbs
- coughs and cold
- ear and throat infections

If you're still not sure where to go or what to do, **contact NHS111 online** - or by phone - **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** - they can help assess and direct you to the right place to go.

NHS, we're #HeretoHelp



[Or you can use the animation available in our online toolkit.](#)



Dental

Urgent dental care

There are 3 ways to get help when you have an urgent dental problem:



- ➡ Contact an NHS dentist
- ➡ Book an appointment at an urgent dental access centre
- ➡ Call NHS 111 or visit 111.nhs.uk

Find out more ➡


<https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/nhs-dentistry>



Mental Health – Further messaging and visuals for mental health available [here](#).

<p>NHS 111 mental health option</p> <p>Schedule from: Now to 31 Jan</p>	<p>If someone's mental or emotional state gets worse quickly, this can be referred to as a mental health crisis or a mental health emergency.</p> <p>If you, or someone you know experiences this, you should get help as soon as possible.</p> <p>24/7 support is available by calling NHS 111 and selecting the mental health option.</p> <p>A mental health professional will listen to you and help you find the right support for you.</p> <p>Find out more - https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/here-to-help-winter/looking-after-your-mental-health/</p>	 <p>The graphic features a woman wearing a headset and a blue NHS lanyard. Text overlays include: 'Need urgent mental health support?' in blue, 'Call 111' in large white letters on a blue background, 'Select Mental Health Option' in white, and 'We're here for you 24/7.' in white. A small 'HERE TO HELP' logo is also visible.</p>	
<p>Mental health crisis text service</p> <p>Schedule from: Now to 31 Jan</p>	<p>Are you feeling anxious or overwhelmed?</p> <p>Talk silently and anonymously to a mental health professional by texting the word 'CALMER' to 85258.</p> <p>We're pleased to be working with Shout to offer free, confidential support by text message, 24/7.</p>	 <p>The graphic has a solid blue background. It features the word 'Text' in white, followed by 'CALMER' in white inside a dark blue speech bubble, then 'to' in white, and '85258' in white inside another dark blue speech bubble. At the bottom, the 'shout' logo is displayed with the tagline 'here for you 24/7'.</p>	

GP practices - Further messaging and visuals for GP practices available [here](#).

<p>Phone lines busy</p> <p>Schedule from: Now to 31 Jan</p>	<p>GP phone lines can be very busy, especially in the mornings.</p> <p>Save yourself a wait by calling later in the day, if possible, for non-urgent appointments or test results.</p> <p>Alternatively, if available, you can use your practice's online booking services, available on their website, or use the NHS app.</p> <p>You may also be able to email your practice for medication requests and other general queries.</p> <p>Need help using the app?</p> <p>Visit www.nhs.uk/helpmeapp</p> <p>Or visit your practice website for more information.</p> <p>#HeretoHelp</p>		<p>Or you can use the animation available in our online toolkit.</p>
<p>Self-care - Further messaging and visuals for self-care available here.</p>			

Infection control	<p>Winter bugs are here! STOP the spread.</p> <p>Hand washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of infection.</p> <p>Wash your hands with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based gel to help protect yourself, patients and staff this winter.</p> <p>#StoptheSpread</p>		
Little orange book Schedule from: Now to 31 Jan	<p>Poorly baby or child this winter?</p> <p>Download the LITTLE ORANGE BOOK!</p> <p>It contains online advice for parents of under 5s on a wide range of illnesses in children from common minor concerns to more serious conditions.</p> <p>Find out more here: www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk</p> <p>#NHS #HereToHelp</p>		
Healthier together Schedule from:	<p>"We know it can be a worrying time when your child is unwell."</p> <p>Dr Anna-Mary Brough, consultant paediatrician, advises how the Healthier Together app or website can help you decide</p>		

<p>Now to 31 Jan</p>	<p>whether you can best manage your child's illness at home or whether they need to see a doctor.</p> <p>Visit the Healthier Together website www.nenc-healthiertogether.nhs.uk.</p> <p>#NHS #HereToHelp</p>		 <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vX2bsBbKw</p>
<h2>Smoking</h2>			
<p>Quit smoking</p> <p>Schedule from:</p> <p>Now to 31 Feb</p>	<p>“Quit smoking this New Year. If you keep trying you will get there.”</p> <p>Former smoker John had a heart attack from smoking – but he’s never felt better after quitting.</p> <p>Stopping smoking gives life back. Find advice and free friendly local support at FreshQuit.co.uk</p>		

	<p>Every moment in life is precious. Make this New Year the one where you quit smoking for good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better health and feel fitter • More money • Feel less stressed • To be there for your family like Cathy <p>Stopping smoking gives life back. Find advice and free friendly local support at FreshQuit.co.uk</p>		
<p>FOR HOSPITAL TRUSTS AND ICB USE ONLY. A&E and 999 only use these assets in times of high pressure!</p>			
<p>A&E</p> <p>Only for use in times of high pressure</p>	<p>A&E departments are extremely busy</p> <p>Think pharmacy, GP or NHS111 first!</p> <p>Too many people who come to A&E don't need to be there. Their illnesses and injuries can be dealt with quicker by an alternative service freeing up emergency services for those who really need them.</p> <p>If in doubt, contact NHS111 online or by phone, to get assessed and directed to the right place for you - including emergency care.</p> <p>If you go to A&E and your condition isn't life threatening, you may experience a very long wait.</p> <p>#HereToHelp</p>		<p>Or use this animation</p> <p>1861 - NHS - Animation_NHS 111.</p>