

**Joint media release issued by**

**North Kirklees Clinical Commissioning Group and**

**Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Group**

3 April 2017

**Look after your health this Easter**

The local NHS is reminding patients of a few simple steps they can take to stay healthy over the Easter four day weekend.

Being ill at holiday times is never fun so local people are being urged by NHS North Kirklees and NHS Greater Huddersfield Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to stock up on vital medicines and make sure that repeat prescriptions are ordered in advance of the Good Friday and Easter Monday bank holiday weekend.

“Making sure you have enough medicines to see you through the Easter holidays when GP surgeries are closed can make a big difference to your health,” said Dr David Kelly, local GP and Chair of NHS North Kirklees CCG.

“It could also help make sure that you don’t call out doctors unnecessarily or end up going to A&E when it’s not the best place to get help.

“Often you will be able to get something from your local pharmacy or shop to care for yourself or a family member,” he said.

Doctors are also reminding patients of the benefits of using their local pharmacies. Pharmacists are qualified experts in the use of medicines and can give advice on common symptoms, medicines and healthy living.

Many pharmacies are open over the Easter period and patients can locate their nearest pharmacy by visiting the NHS Choices website – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk/) Pharmacy opening information for over the Easter holiday weekend can also be found on the CCG websites: [www.northkirkleesccg.nhs.uk](http://www.northkirkleesccg.nhs.uk/) and [www.greaterhuddersfieldccg.nhs.uk](http://www.greaterhuddersfieldccg.nhs.uk/)

The pharmacy is also the perfect place to stock up medicine cabinets. Useful items to have handy include:

* pain relief such as paracetamol and ibuprofen (aspirin should not be given to children under 16 or to people with asthma)
* paediatric paracetamol oral suspension or ibuprofen syrups for children
* cough and cold remedies
* sore throat remedies
* anti-diarrhoea treatments
* antihistamines
* indigestion remedies
* simple dressings and plasters.

When medical help is needed but it is not an emergency, people can ring NHS 111 for advice and direction to the most appropriate service, which could be an appointment with an out-of-hours GP. NHS 111 is available 24-hours-a-day; 365-days-a-year and calls are free.

In North Kirklees, there is the walk in centre based in the emergency department of Dewsbury and District Hospital which is open 9am to 8pm (Mon-Fri) and 10am to 6pm (weekends and bank holidays), which can provide health support and advice to anyone who comes through the door.

People are urged to go to their local A&E department or dial 999 only in critical or life-threatening situations. For example:

* loss of consciousness
* acute confused state
* fits that are not stopping
* persistent, severe chest pain
* breathing difficulties
* severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
* severe allergic reactions
* severe burns or scalds.

In the case of suspected heart attack or stroke call 999 immediately. Every second counts with these conditions.

Dr Steve Ollerton, Clinical Leader, NHS Greater Huddersfield CCG added: “Holidays are times when demand on emergency services increases dramatically so it is important that patients ask themselves ‘does this illness or injury really need emergency treatment?’ Sometimes self-care is the answer, especially for coughs and colds that can’t be treated with antibiotics anyway.

“If you are taking regular medicines, making sure you have enough to last over the holidays by getting organised with your repeat prescriptions is essential. This could prevent you becoming ill or even avert a medical emergency.

“A well-stocked medicine cupboard is essential, especially over holiday times. Having home remedies to hand means peace of mind. People should pop into their local pharmacies and ask for advice about essential items.”

**Ends**

**Notes to editors**

* NHS Greater Huddersfield CCG is made up of 37 GP practices and serves a population of approximately 243,000 registered patients across Huddersfield and the Valleys area.
* NHS North Kirklees CCG is made up of 28 GP practices and serves a population of around 185,000 across an area including Dewsbury, Batley, Mirfield and Cleckheaton.
* Clinical commissioning groups are led by local doctors (GPs) and health professionals who come together to design, plan and buy (commission) health services.

**For further information please contact**

Helen Haythorne on 01924 504955 or Helen.Haythorne@northkirkleesccg.nhs.uk

Christine Hughes on 01484 464089 or Christine.Hughes@greaterhuddersfieldccg.nhs.uk