



COVID-19 briefing 22 May 2020

This briefing aims to provide you with the latest information on the measures we are putting into place across Frimley Health and Care to respond to the impact of Covid-19 and provide you with a key issues update of what is happening across the system.

We are working together across our organisations and with the NHS England team to ensure our communications are consistent and timely. For the latest local position on Covid-19 please visit this link <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Today's update covers:

1. **Changes to services and Bank Holiday arrangements**
2. **Help us help you get the treatment you need – Heart attacks**
3. **Mental Health Awareness week**
4. **Support for people with learning disabilities or autism**
5. **Covid-19 Summary of published guidance and support for vulnerable groups**
6. **#coping guides**
7. **BBC South Today coverage of Farnham practice**
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1/ **Changes to services and Bank Holiday arrangements**

Bank Holiday Arrangements:

For the coming bank holiday Monday (May 25), a number of pharmacies will be open and NHS 111 will be available to offer you advice should you or a member of your household feel unwell.

If you have an urgent need over the Bank Holiday weekend, phone your GP practice. If the practice is closed, you may be re-directed to contact NHS111. Please contact the NHS 111 service, either online (111.nhs.uk) or by dialling 111. The service will advise you on the right course of action and can refer you to services (i.e. the out-of-hours GP service) if treatment is needed.

Whilst some pharmacies will be open, many will be closed so we would urge you to check before heading out – particularly in light of the social restrictions. Click on the below links to see pharmacy opening hours for each area:

[East Berkshire](#)

[North East Hampshire and Farnham](#)

[Surrey Heath](#)

Many common ailments and minor injuries can be managed at home with the help of a well-stocked medicine cabinet. For more information [see here](#).

Information on mental health services, including crisis support, can be found [here](#).





If you have symptoms of coronavirus, click here: <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19/>

What's changing to our services ? With the coronavirus pressure on services gradually reducing, the NHS is seeking to start bringing back services that had to be paused while we dealt with the surge. NHS staff have pulled out all the stops to deal with coronavirus but we have also been working hard to make urgent care – A&E, mental health and cancer services – available to those who need it.

We are still asking patients to attend hospital only when it is really necessary but now more non-urgent care will be made available.

What about urgent care? It's important to know where to go for support during this time. The NHS is well prepared to cope, so if someone is seriously unwell, they need to access the relevant service to ensure their condition doesn't get worse. We are still urging people who need urgent care to use the NHS111 online service, or to call 111 if they cannot get help online. You'll then be referred to the most appropriate service.

If you're coming to A&E you may be tested for coronavirus and observe social distancing. This is to make sure that if you have it, you can be treated without the risk of infecting other patients or staff.

Our GPs continue to offer telephone and on-line consultations, so we don't want people to be afraid to ask for help if they need it urgently. GP practices are operating a triage system which means that all requests for appointments must be made by calling the surgery or online through your surgery's website. We are asking people to contact their local practice online for more information.

Child health - It is also important to speak to someone about concerns around children's health for both COVID-19 or other worrying symptoms. Please contact your GP practice online service, 111 online or, in an emergency, 999.

Pharmacies - You can leave your home for medicine collections and urgent pharmacy support. Find out where your nearest pharmacy is at <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/pharmacies/>. Pharmacy opening hours will have changed the bank holiday weekend, so check online or telephone them if you can before you leave home.

Dentists aren't working as normal at the moment, but you can still get help with your teeth if it's an emergency. You should call your normal dentist and they will tell you what to do. If you can't ring your normal dentist you should contact NHS 111. Here is an easy-read leaflet about going to the dentists www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/easy-read-katrin-as-dentist-story.pdf

Problems with your eyes: If you have an eye care problem, you should telephone your normal optician and ask them what you should do. If you don't have a regular optician, you can find a list of all of them on the NHS website - www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-an-optician. If you have an eye care problem and you can't get in touch with an optician, you should contact NHS 111.





2/ **'Help us to help you' campaign - Know the symptoms of a heart attack**

With the number of people in hospital with coronavirus now less than half at the peak, NHS leaders are working to bring back even more non-urgent services safely, as well as reducing the risk for those needing urgent services like A&E.

After a steep drop in people coming to hospital emergency departments with heart problems, we are urging the public to recognise heart attack symptoms and to get help if they experience them.

The common symptoms of a heart attack can include:

- chest pain – the chest can feel like it's being pressed or squeezed by a heavy object, and pain can radiate from the chest to the jaw, neck, arms and back
- shortness of breath
- feeling weak or lightheaded, or both
- an overwhelming feeling of anxiety

Dr. Raj Thakkar, Long Term Condition and Cardio Vascular Lead for Thames Valley Strategic Clinical Network has told us; "Since the Covid-19 crisis we have noticed a significant number of patients staying at home, when they should be calling 999. If you notice chest pain, leading up to your jaw, neck arms and back or shortness of breath you must call 999 straight away. this could save your life"

Mark Ainsworth, Director of Operations (Urgent & Emergency Care) at South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS), said: "Whilst the symptoms of a heart attack can vary from person to person, if you – or someone you're with – is suffering from chest pain, pain travelling from your chest to other parts of your body, or shortness of breath or dizziness, then do call 999. This could be an indication of a heart attack which, if not treated quickly, can soon become life-threatening. A heart attack damages the heart's muscle so the longer it goes on for, the more likely it is you will have done permanent damage that will affect the quality of life you can enjoy should you recover."

3/ **Mental health awareness week**

We are nearing the end of mental health awareness week. Organised by the Mental Health Foundation, Mental Health Awareness Week is an annual campaign aimed at raising awareness of mental health and "inspire action to promote the message of good mental health for all".

We want to remind people that in these unprecedented times, it is as important to look after your mental health as your physical health. We have developed the Frimley Health and Care website to highlight some of these resources and will be adding to them over time so please check back regularly.

<https://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/our-work/helping-you-to-stay-well/mental-wellbeing/>

4/ **Support for people with learning disabilities or autism**

We want to ensure that if you know someone with learning disabilities or autism or who is worried about getting help then we want to support them. This is even more important with the coronavirus around.





If you are struggling with worries or anxiety the community teams are still here to help you. The Frimley Health and Care website has a range of information that can provide support:

<https://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/news/posts/2020/may/help-for-people-with-learning-disabilities-and-autism-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>:

- We hope you are all keeping well and if you would like some Easy Read information on how to look after your feelings and your body during the Coronavirus outbreak click [HERE](#)
- Mencap is a national charity working to give those with learning disabilities a voice and you can find a lot of helpful information and support on their website by clicking [HERE](#) or by calling 0808 808 1111
- If you are a carer there is support for you too. Please visit our information pages [HERE](#) to find out more.
- Two organisations called SignHealth and InterpreterNow have joined together to make a service called BSLHealthAccess. This lets you get BSL interpreters for free when you are communicating with health staff at any time of day, every day of the week. You can do this using the InterpreterNow app on your phone or tablet. To find out more about BSLHealthAccess you can visit their [website](#).
- You can also get general information about support for those with learning disabilities from the NHS website [HERE](#)

5/ **Covid-19 Summary of published guidance and support for vulnerable groups**

A round-up has been published of much of the guidance and support for vulnerable groups. It has wide-ranging resources collated within one document, so whether you are looking for an 'easy read' guide to Covid-19, asthma guidance, or resources for sex workers, you'll probably [find it here](#)

6/ **#coping guides**

Three guides to help children, young people and their families to cope with the stresses of the coronavirus pandemic have been launched across Frimley Health and Care as part of Mental Health Awareness Week (May 18-24).

According to the World Mental Health Organisation, one in four people will suffer with some form of mental health issue in their life. When the world may feel upside down, it is important that we continue to not only help and support others, but to look after our own mental wellbeing and our physical health.

The guides contain some of the best reliable and free sources of information and advice to help children and young people and their families to cope with life under lockdown:

- [#Coping – Family life during lockdown](#);
- [#Coping – Five Ways to Wellbeing](#), and;
- [#Coping – Young Person's guide](#)

the guides are available to download online. [Click here.](#)





Dr Andy Brooks is the Clinical Chief Officer for the Frimley Collaborative – the NHS organisations which plan and fund the majority of health services for 800,000 people from Slough to Farnham. He said: “In difficult times like these, looking after our mental health is just as important as taking care of our physical health - and your NHS is here to support you. It’s normal for everyone to feel anxious, and children and young people of all ages are just as affected as adults by the worry and stress coronavirus can cause”.

“Families may feel overwhelmed by the constant influx of information and misinformation, online and elsewhere. Yet helping children and young people to build their resilience and to deal with change and uncertainty has never been more vital.

“These guides have been developed by mental health experts so they are full of information you can trust. We hope local people will find them informative and useful that our three guides will help provide useful information and support during these challenging times.”

If you or someone you know is experiencing any mental health issues, your GP, key worker (if you have one) or NHS 111 are still here to help. This is a difficult time for many of us and it’s important that you get the support you need. For more information, visit www.nhs.uk/mentalhealth

7/ **BBC South Today coverage of Farnham practice**

Primary care within Frimley Health and Care featured in the news spotlight last week when BBC South Today sent a TV crew to Farnham to see how local health services have been adapting to meet the Covid-19 challenge.

Dr Edward Wernick, Farnham’s Covid-19 GP Lead, worked with local primary care and acute colleagues to facilitate the visit and highlight the huge changes that have taken place.

Also featured were Dr John Rose, a retired GP who returned to support patients on the wards in Farnham Hospital, Consultant Geriatrician Lucy Abbott from Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Dr James Hubbard, a GP who is still working and supporting patients despite having to shield himself at home.

With much of the national media spotlight on acute hospitals, the report helped to describe how changes taking place at local community level are making real contributions to the national Covid-19 battle in a number of ways, including:

- Technology (phone, online and video appointments) has been enabling people to continue to access GP services while remaining safe at home, and it allows GPs who are shielding themselves to continue to work.
- If patients do need to be seen face-to-face, the physical separation of Covid positive and Covid negative sites helps to protect them and the medical staff.
- Retired GPs returning to medicine have bolstered the staff levels in the community and have enabled hospital consultants to be redeployed in acute hospital settings.

To see an excerpt from the broadcast and read a local newspaper report, [click here](#)



Frimley Health and Care



8/ Communications - Are you following Frimley Health and Care social media accounts?

Can't wait for our briefings to hit your inbox? Stay up to date with our latest information by following us on social media...

Frimley Health and Care website: www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/

Twitter - @FrimleyHC twitter.com/FrimleyHC

Facebook – Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System

<https://www.facebook.com/FrimleyHealthandCare>

