

Winter is coming....

Healthwatch Shropshire is keen that people get the best out of their local NHS services this winter:

Many people who have visited A&E departments could have used an alternative local service. With increased pressure on A&E over the winter months it is worth knowing what the other options are to avoid long and stressful waits.

Pharmacists are fully qualified to offer advice on common problems such as colds, aches and pains and can also help you decide whether you need to see a doctor.

For details of local pharmacy opening times over the Christmas period go to:

http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/sites/default/files/pharmacy_opening_shropshire_christmas_and_n_year_2016_final.pdf

If you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency, call NHS 111 for clinical advice and for direction to the most appropriate services for treatment.

If you feel unwell contact your GP practice. For out of hours or when the practice is closed over the holidays contact Shropdoc on **0333 222 6655**

Make sure you keep details of your local Minor Injury Unit (MIU) somewhere handy. Remember there are MIU's in Oswestry, Whitchurch, Ludlow and Bridgnorth. They can treat a range of minor injuries including, bites, cuts, and fractures, foreign bodies in the eyes, nose or ears, minor burns and minor head injuries. This is a walk-in service and you do not need to be referred or to make an appointment.

For details of location and opening times please go to

<http://www.shropscommunityhealth.nhs.uk/miu>

If you need urgent medical attention and you are unable to get an appointment with your GP or you are not registered with a GP there is an Urgent Care Centre (walk-in centre) at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. This is located in the same building as A&E. It is open every day from 8am to 8pm. You do not need an appointment and the wait is likely to be considerably shorter than at A&E. To contact them phone **01743 231000**

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion for people in Shropshire. It gathers the views and experiences of patients, carers, and the general public about services, including hospitals, GPs, mental health services, community health services, pharmacists, opticians, residential care and children's services. It then make reports and recommendations about how these services could or ought to be improved based on the information received from members of the public. This is shared with providers and commissioners of services who have a statutory duty to listen to Healthwatch and act on the information it shares with them.

People can contact Healthwatch Shropshire by phone 01743 237884, by email enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk or online www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk.

Ends

Notes for Editors:

Healthwatch Shropshire is one of a network of 148 Local Healthwatch in England. It is supported by a national organisation, Healthwatch England.

It has a team working in community engagement, plus a volunteer programme, a visit programme to health and social care premises, an advocacy service and an associate membership scheme to involve the public in its work. It also has a signposting service to help people access health and social care services and support.

Contact

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