

Issued: Friday 3 April 2020

Embargo: Immediate



People are being reminded that other health conditions don't go away during the Covid-19 pandemic

People who experience new symptoms and are managing long term conditions are being reminded to seek medical advice if they need it.

In particular those who experience life threatening symptoms, such as chest pain or the signs of a stroke, should still call 999 or go to A+E.

GPs are still supporting people who need medical advice or monitoring and want to reassure people to ask for help if they need it. People can still see their primary care health professionals; they will receive a call back to discuss the issue and may be invited for an appointment.

Distington GP Dr Helen Horton said: "We have really seen people respond to the Stay at Home message to support our NHS, but we need to make sure that people who should be getting medical support continue to receive it.

"We know that there are lots of things that don't need an immediate response, but some things do, and other health conditions don't disappear because we have to prioritise Covid-19.

"We also know some people will be anxious about burdening the NHS at this unprecedented time – so we want people to be sensible. If you need advice check NHS services online or call your Practice and have a telephone conversation. We will be able to reassure you, give you the support you need over the phone, or call you in if it is needed."

You should call 999 or attend A+E if you experience:

- chest pain
- experience the symptoms of stroke such as a drooping face or slurred speech
- serious injury

People who experience symptoms which may suggest cancer – such as new lumps or new bleeding - can seek NHS advice online at <https://www.nhs.uk/> and <https://111.nhs.uk/> or speak to their Practice.

People should expect to continue managing ongoing conditions, or ongoing monitoring of treatments, in consultation with their healthcare team. Practices are still offering essential services such as:

- baby immunisations
- postnatal checks
- pre-chemo blood tests
- blood monitoring for medications
- active management of wounds and dressings

At the moment people should NOT expect to be able to request routine reviews such as:

- Routine health checks
- New patient checks
- Routine reviews for some conditions such as asthma, diabetes or blood pressure.

Dr Horton added: “Please think carefully and seek help or advice for new symptoms and if you need regular monitoring.

“If it is something that can wait then please do. But if it can’t, please ring and someone can call you back.”

At this time you might not see your usual healthcare professional or be called to your regular surgery.

Notes to editors:

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Commissioning primary care, community and hospital services to get the best healthcare and health outcomes for our communities.

More information available from Julie Clayton Head of Communications and Engagement for NHS North Cumbria CCG on 07826 918018 or julie.clayton@northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk