

**Healthwatch is the new consumer champion to give adults, children and young people a powerful voice about health and social care services.**

## Spotlight on: NHS 111

### What is NHS 111?

NHS 111 is a new service that has been introduced to make it easier for people to access local NHS healthcare services in England.

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is an easy way to get the right help, whatever the time, and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### When should you use NHS 111?

You should use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation.

### You should call 111 if:

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do.



**when it's less  
urgent than 999**

For less urgent health needs, contact your GP or local pharmacist in the usual way, but for immediate, life-threatening emergencies, continue to call 999.



NHS 111 has been under the spotlight in the national media in recent weeks, so Healthwatch Sheffield's Carrie McKenzie took the opportunity to visit the new NHS 111 call centre in Wath-upon-Deane.

## Who provides NHS 111 services in our area?

Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust won the contract to be the provider for the new NHS 111 service across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

## How does the service work?

Staff in three call centres located in York, Wakefield and Wath-upon-Deane offer callers basic advice, and signpost them to the most appropriate services for their needs.

80% of staff are non-clinical call handlers and 20% are registered clinicians, such as nurses and paramedics. The split reflects the number of calls which are handled by each group of staff.



Demand for the NHS 111 service varies throughout the day and week. At the moment the service is averaging 2,000 calls on weekdays, and up to 5,000 calls on Saturdays and Sundays, with the average call length being between six and eight minutes.

The service receives the highest number of calls after 6pm on week day evenings when GP surgeries have closed, on Saturday mornings (600 per hour) and on bank holidays.

## How accessible is the service?

Anyone with an urgent care need can use the new service by simply dialling 111 from any telephone and calls are free, even from mobiles.

Typetalk and Language Line services help to ensure NHS 111 can be accessed by all and the Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust welcome feedback from service-users about how to further improve access in the future.

## Have your say!

Healthwatch Sheffield is keen to find out about your experience (good or bad) of using NHS 111. You can give us your feedback in a range of ways:

**Online:** Use the **Speak Out form** on the Healthwatch Sheffield website  
**Email us:** [info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk)  
**Call us:** (0114) 253 6688



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### Healthwatch Sheffield

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[info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk)

Fax 0114 253 6601

[www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchsheffield.co.uk)

## Response to the Urgent & Emergency Care Review

On Wednesday 31st July 2013, Healthwatch Sheffield ran a discussion forum to gather your opinions in response to the Emergency & Urgent Care Review. Here is a summary of some of the key points which were raised.

The forum participants acknowledged the role primary care has to play in the success of urgent and emergency care, and told us that services vary greatly from GP to GP, that some GPs may not adequately explain choice, and that some can be difficult to access. They considered that initiatives such as 'Right First Time' and 'Doctor First' may offer some solutions.

The group told us that they want the most appropriate treatment as close to home as possible, but accept some concerns that this will always lead to inappropriate use of A&E. They felt that more needs to be done to inform the public of the range of different services available to them: from NHS 111 and GPs, through to Walk-in Centres, the Minor Injuries Clinic and A&E.

A number of other issues arose during our discussion and Healthwatch Sheffield will be working with you to gather your views on NHS 111 (see the previous article) and access to GPs, as part of our follow-up work from this review.

## Looking for information or advice?

Looking for information or advice on health or social care services in Sheffield? Use the online self-help materials at [www.advicesheffield.org.uk](http://www.advicesheffield.org.uk) or to speak to an adviser, please call:

**Sheffield Adviceline (0114) 205 5055**

(Lines are open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm)

To make a complaint about a Sheffield service, please contact NHS Complaints Advocacy on 0300 330 5454 (charged at local rate), text 0786 002 2939, or email [nhscomplaints@voiceability.org](mailto:nhscomplaints@voiceability.org)

## The Healthwatch Information Hub

Some of you may have already seen our new information hub on the ground floor of The Circle building on Rockingham Lane. The hub is fully equipped with an internet connected computer and can be used free of charge by anyone wanting to find information on health or social care.

We have a plan to develop the use of the hub, including providing a range of leaflets for frequently asked questions around health and social care. There will be an official launch event for the hub in the autumn and we'll have more details for you in next month's newsletter.



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## Dates for your diary

### 15 September

#### **Pinknic (12-7pm at Weston Park)**

This free, family-friendly event is aimed at all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities within Sheffield, including their friends and family. Healthwatch Sheffield will be having a stall, so do pop down and see us.

### 23 September

#### **Sheffield Health & Social Care NHS Trust AMM (12:45pm at The Showroom, Sheffield)**

This Annual Members Meeting is open to the public and provides an opportunity to meet the Trust's Board and Governors, and find out about the new initiatives taking place. Call the Ticket Hotline on (0114) 271 6747 or email [karen.jones@shsc.nhs.uk](mailto:karen.jones@shsc.nhs.uk) to book.

### 24 September

#### **Yorkshire Ambulance Service AGM (9am-1pm at The Cutlers Hall, Sheffield)**

A presentation on 'Improving end of life care' at 9am, followed by the public Annual General Meeting at 9:30am. Please register in advance by telephoning (01924) 584416 or by email to [foundationtrust@yas.nhs.uk](mailto:foundationtrust@yas.nhs.uk) to confirm your attendance.

## Coming up in October...

### 8 October

**Older People's Day** (More details in next month's newsletter)

## Our priority areas of work for 2013/14

Following our initial consultation with people in Sheffield, we have now clarified the priority work areas that we will be working on this year. These are:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| - Mental health   | - Homecare                                |
| - Access to GPs   | - NHS 111                                 |
| - Children & Young People   | - Complaints & Compliments                |
| - Healthwatch Sheffield's activities & volunteering opportunities | - Sheffield's Health & Wellbeing strategy |

## Have your say!

We want to hear from you and find out what your health and social care priorities and issues are. Please call us on (0114) 253 6688 or email us [info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsheffield.co.uk)

## Want to get involved?

Volunteers are a vital part of Healthwatch Sheffield's work and activities. Please get in touch to find out how you can get involved.

## Future communications

We will continue to send you updates and regular newsletters to let you know what we're working on. This newsletter is also available by email - let us know if you would prefer to receive this and future communications by email.



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