

## Sandwell Winter Leaflet copy

IF USING IMAGERY ADD **INSERT PICTURE OF....** WITH THE ARTICLE, ALONG WITH A **CAPTION** AND PLACE IMAGE IN THE IMAGE FOLDER. INCLUDE **ALT TEXT** FOR IMAGES FOR ONLINE VERSIONS.

**INSERT PICTURE:**

**CAPTION:**

**Alt text:**

**Design notes: Coloured text as below to clarify headings etc**

## Section

**Main heading of article**

**Subheading**

[Introduction – Welcome message from Sandwell Council Chitra](#)

[Healthy Lifestyle Chitra](#)

[Preventing Care](#)

[How to stay well in winter](#)

[Who's most at risk from cold weather?](#)

[Get your flu vaccination](#)

[Flu vaccine for children](#)

[Where to get the flu vaccine?](#)

[Healthy Sandwell – Chitra](#)

[Do I need ID or proof of address?](#)

[Is my information safe?](#)

[What common conditions can a pharmacist help with?](#)

[Your local pharmacist can help with allergies, athlete's foot, insect bites and stings, common cold, cold sores, conjunctivitis, constipation, coughs, cystitis, decongestants, diarrhoea, dry skin, earache, earwax, fever \(children and adults\), flu, haemorrhoids, hayfever, headaches and migraines, heartburn and indigestion, mouth ulcers, nappy rash, oral thrush, pain, scabies, sore throat, sprains and strains, sunburn, teething, threadworms, thrush and warts and verrucas.](#)

[Other benefits from your pharmacy](#)

# Introduction – Welcome message from Sandwell Council

Leader Cllr Kerrie Carmichael **Chitra**

## Healthy Lifestyle **Chitra**

## Preventing Care **Sasha**

### How to stay well in winter

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you're 65 or older, or if you have a long-term health condition.

### Who's most at risk from cold weather?

Some people are more vulnerable to the effects of cold weather. This includes:

- people aged 65 and older
- babies and children under the age of 5
- people on a low income (so cannot afford heating)
- people who have a long-term health condition
- people with a disability
- pregnant women
- people who have a mental health condition

If you're 65 or over, or in one of the other at-risk groups, it's important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell. You can get help and advice from:

- a pharmacy – pharmacists can give treatment advice for a range of minor illnesses and can tell you if you need to see a doctor
- your GP – you may be able to speak to a GP online or over the phone, or go in for an appointment if they think you need to
- NHS 111 – go to [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or call 111 if you have an urgent medical problem and you are not sure what to do

The sooner you get advice, the sooner you're likely to get better.

## Get your flu vaccination

If you're at greater risk from flu it's important to get the extra protection of vaccination in winter.

The flu vaccine is given free on the NHS to adults who:

- are 65 and over (including those who will be 65 by 31 March 2024)
- have certain health conditions
- are pregnant
- are in long-stay residential care
- receive a carer's allowance, or are the main carer for an older or disabled person who may be at risk if you get sick
- live with someone who is more likely to get a severe infection due to a weakened immune system, such as someone living with HIV, someone who has had a transplant, or is having certain treatments for cancer, lupus or rheumatoid arthritis.

The vaccine is safe and effective and is the best protection from these viruses. You need to have the flu vaccine every year because the viruses that cause flu change every year.

## Flu vaccine for children

Flu is caused by the influenza virus and can be a very unpleasant illness for children. It can also lead to serious problems, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. The children's flu nasal spray is offered every year to children to help protect them against flu - it is safe and effective. Vaccinating your child protects them against flu and protects others who are vulnerable to flu, such as babies and older people.

The nasal spray flu vaccine is free on the NHS for:

- children aged 2 or 3 years
- all primary school children (Reception to Year 6)
- some secondary school aged children
- children aged 2 to 17 years with long-term health conditions

If your child is aged between 6 months and 2 years and has a long-term health condition that makes them at higher risk from flu, they'll be offered a flu vaccine injection instead of the nasal spray. To find out more about flu and the flu vaccine, go to [www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/flu](http://www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/flu)

## Where to get the flu vaccine?

You can get your flu vaccine from your local GP practice, community pharmacy or children will be offered the flu nasal spray through schools.

You may be contacted directly from your GP practice to book an appointment, or you can book your flu vaccination at a pharmacy via the National Booking System.

**INSERT PICTURE: add photo of someone getting flu vaccine**

**CAPTION:**

**Alt text:**

## **Get your COVID-19 vaccination – info TBC**

*Awaiting confirmation from JCVI on eligibility for autumn vaccination*

## **Childhood immunisations**

Young babies and children are vulnerable to infections, so they need to be protected as early as possible. Childhood vaccines are given at different ages - for different illnesses.

They begin when babies are two months old and continue through their teenage years. Your child needs several vaccines to protect them from infections, so it's important to complete their immunisation programme.

The childhood immunisation schedule is designed to provide early protection against infections that are most dangerous. This is particularly important for diseases such as whooping cough, rotavirus and those due to pneumococcal, Hib and meningococcal infections. You can find more information by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>

## **Measles, Mumps and Rubella**

Measles is a highly infectious disease which can lead to serious complications if it is not treated. In the most severe cases, it can develop into more threatening conditions such as pneumonia, especially in those with a weakened immune system.

Symptoms of measles include:

- a high fever
- rash
- cough
- runny nose
- watery eyes.

All children are invited for their first MMR vaccine on the NHS when they turn one. The second dose is given when they reach three years and four months of age. Having two doses of the vaccine provides the best protection against MMR.

Adults and older children can also be vaccinated at any age if they have not been fully vaccinated before and are encouraged to come forward if they haven't had two doses. Parents who are unsure if their child is up to date with all their routine vaccinations should check their child's Red Book (personal child health record), check the NHS app, or contact their GP practice.

## A new online platform for pregnant women and parents

A new NHS website has been created to support pregnant women and children and young people in the Black Country. The 0-18 years website has been created in partnership with local healthcare professionals and contains a range of health advice in one place. There's an extensive directory of common childhood illnesses such as rashes, coughs, asthma, sickness, earache, conjunctivitis, and head injuries as well as information on maternity and mental health and wellbeing. The health information showcases a traffic light system so parents and carers know the signs to look out for, where to seek help, what to do to keep an unwell child comfortable, and how long symptoms should last. It can be easily shared by print or by sending a link via SMS for free.

**INSERT PICTURE** Dr Tania with iPad with 0-18 years website on screen

**CAPTION:** Dr Tania Hussain, local GP and Children and Young People Clinical Lead for the NHS Black Country ICB, presenting the new website.

**Alt text:** Dr Tania Hussain holding iPad with 0-18 years website on the screen.

Healthy Sandwell – Chitra

Seeking Care Sasha

## Help Us Help You

If you need medical help this winter, please choose well by following these four key steps

1. **Remember self-care** – Many minor illnesses can be treated at home with a well-stocked medicine cupboard. This could include painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, anti-diarrhoea medicines and a first aid kit including plasters, bandages, and a thermometer. Most of which can be bought from your local supermarket or pharmacy.

2. **Visit your local pharmacy** – Your local pharmacist should be your first port of call for any minor ailments. Pharmacists are trained medical professionals who can help with a range of illnesses, including abdominal pain, sore throats, and urine infections.
3. **Book a GP appointment** – If your symptoms don't go away, or it's something a pharmacist can't help with, make an appointment with your GP practice. If you need a repeat prescription, remember it can be sent to any pharmacy you choose, even if you're on holiday in the UK.
4. **Contact NHS 111** – If you need urgent medical help or advice, you should contact NHS 111 and they will direct you to the most appropriate service for advice or treatment such as a local pharmacy, GP or a local urgent treatment centre. You can contact the service online at 111.nhs.uk or by calling 111, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You should only call 999 and attend accident and emergency departments for serious accidents and for genuine emergencies.

## Your GP practice is here for you

With demand for primary care services increasing and the need to have increased infection control measures in place, we need to do things in a new way.

GP practices worked hard throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to provide services to patients in a safe way to control the spread of virus. To protect everyone, we must maintain safe infection control measures and minimise unnecessary physical contact for both patients and staff. These new ways of working not only help us to do that but are also ensuring that we can have contact with more patients with the resources (staff, buildings, money) that we have available. This new way of working helps us, to help you, get the care you need.

### **CAPTION:**

#### **Alt text:**

## What type of appointments are on offer?

### **Face-to-face appointments**

Face-to-face appointments are available to all patients where there is a clinical need.

### **Video and telephone consultations**

Appointments are also being delivered by telephone, or by using video calls and messaging to your mobile phone or computer from the comfort of your home, and without any need for you to travel to the practice.

### **E-consults**

Many practice websites have forms for you to complete with your concerns, these are reviewed by a GP before advice is given or a member of the practice team calls you back to

## **Evening and weekend appointments**

Did you know that GP practices in Sandwell now offer appointments on evenings and weekends?

Additional appointments will be available between 6.30pm and 8.00pm Monday to Friday, and between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Saturdays for all patients.

You may be offered an appointment at your GP surgery or another location nearby. This may be a:

- a face to face appointment
- a telephone consultation
- a video consultation

To book an appointment between these hours, please call your practice.

If you need an appointment out of hours, please telephone your surgery and listen to the out of hours information on the answer phone message. Alternatively, you can go to NHS 111 online [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or by dialling 111.

## **Extended healthcare teams in GP practices**

With demand on primary care increasing, GP practices are working differently to offer more appointments for their patients.

To help manage this demand on services, local GP practice teams now include a range of healthcare professionals who are highly skilled and knowledgeable in the areas they specialise in and can diagnose and treat a variety of health conditions.

The different healthcare professionals that make up extended healthcare teams, include:

- General practice nurse and nurse practitioners
- Healthcare assistants
- Physician associates
- GP registrars
- Practice based pharmacists
- Paramedics
- Physiotherapists
- Health and wellbeing coach
- Social prescribing link workers
- Mental health practitioner.

All appointments are triaged to ensure patients are directed to the right professional. This means when patients contact the practice, a care navigator will ask for a brief outline of the problem. You may be asked questions when you contact the GP, this is so the teams can ensure you see the right professional. Where appropriate, care navigators will direct patients to another service such as a pharmacy or optician. Not all surgeries will have all of these roles, but your practice reception team will help guide you to the most appropriate care as soon as possible when booking an appointment.

## Q&A with Sandwell GP, Dr Sommiya Aslam

(Interview with Dr Aslam taking place Friday 25 August - copy to be added then]

## Download the NHS APP

At home or on the move the NHS App provides a simple and secure way for you to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

You can use it wherever you are, at any time. It puts valuable information about your health and treatments at your fingertips. If your GP practice is connected to the app, you can register and verify your identity so you can:

- book and manage appointments at their GP practice
- order their repeat prescriptions
- securely view their GP medical record
- register as an organ donor.

## How can I get the app?

You can download it for free from the Google Play Store or the Apple Store. When you register in the app, there will be a series of checks to confirm your identity. You will not have to go into your surgery to register if you have a driving licence. You can also choose to log in using fingerprint recognition.

## Is my information safe?

The app securely connects to information from your GP surgery. To keep your access secure, a security code will be sent to your phone each time you use the app. This feature can be disabled if you choose to.

**INSERT PICTURE:** Add picture of NHS app on smartphone

**CAPTION:** NHS APP

**Alt text:** A picture of the NHS APP

## Make your local pharmacy your first port of call this winter



Your local pharmacy should always be your first choice for help, advice and treatment for common conditions.

If you or your family become unwell, you may not always need to see a doctor or get a prescription. Local pharmacies offer many of the same services local GPs do.

Community pharmacists are qualified health professionals who can offer expert advice on lots of minor ailments and conditions. They can help you with common problems such as coughs, colds, urine infections, aches and pains, as well as perform health checks and screenings and treat minor injuries and ailments.

## What common conditions can a pharmacist help with?

Your local pharmacist can help with urine infections, allergies, athlete's foot, common cold, cold sores, conjunctivitis, constipation, coughs, cystitis, decongestants, diarrhoea, dry skin, earache, earwax, fever (children and adults), flu, haemorrhoids, headaches and migraines, heartburn and indigestion, mouth ulcers, nappy rash, oral thrush, pain, scabies, sore throat, sprains and strains, teething, threadworms, thrush and warts and verrucas.

You can find your local pharmacist by visiting the NHS website – [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/pharmacies/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/prescriptions-and-pharmacies/pharmacies/)

## Pharmacy First

Have you heard about the Pharmacy First service?

If you are exempt from prescription charges then you can access this service which gives you over-the-counter medicines rather than needing to see a GP to receive the medication on a free prescription. We hope that this service will reduce the number of people seeking treatment via a prescription from their GP or out of hours (OOH) provider, or via a walk-in centre or accident and emergency. Patients can register to access the service at the pharmacy and the patients' GP practice will be notified of any intervention via a secure email. Check with your local pharmacy to see if they provide this service.

You can find participating pharmacies in Sandwell by visiting [www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/health-services/pharmacy-first](http://www.blackcountry.icb.nhs.uk/your-health/health-services/pharmacy-first)

## Keep your medicine cabinet well stocked this winter

Looking after yourself when you're feeling under the weather is easy if you already have a well-stocked medicine cabinet. Many minor illnesses can be treated at home with a well-stocked medicine cupboard. This could include painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, anti-diarrhoea medicines, antihistamines to help with allergies and a first aid kit including plasters,

bandages, and a thermometer. Most of which can be bought from your local supermarket or pharmacy.

It's important to remember that common winter ailments such as coughs, colds, sore throats, sinusitis and earaches cannot be treated by antibiotics. These illnesses are best cared for at home by resting and drinking plenty of fluids.

Many people also suffer at this time of year with norovirus (or sickness bugs) and they are strongly advised not to visit anyone in hospital as they could be putting others at risk. There is no treatment for norovirus but it's important to keep yourself hydrated to prevent loss of fluids and practice good hand hygiene to help with prevention of the virus. If you have any children who have been ill with the virus, keep them away from nursery or school for 48 hours after their last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

## Urgent Care **Sasha**

<b>Services available for patients/carers to directly access</b>	<b>Services available via GPs/Health Professionals ONLY</b>
<p>Walk-in centres – for urgent medical help They are open seven days a week and services are located at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Urgent Treatment Centre, Sandwell Hospital, Little Lane entrance, West Bromwich, B71 4HJ (open 9am-9pm)</li> <li>● Urgent Care Centre, City Hospital, Dudley Road entrance, Birmingham, (open 10am-11pm), B18 7QH</li> <li>● Summerfield Urgent Care Centre, 134 Heath Street, Winson Green, Birmingham, B18 7AL (open 8am-8pm)</li> </ul>	<p>Single Point of Access (SPA)</p> <p>SPA is aimed at helping healthcare professionals arrange the correct care for both urgent and emergency referrals but DOES NOT replace routine outpatients' referral. The team help to prevent avoidable admissions and supports patients in the community with longstanding condition or acute presentation.</p> <p>Following the call, the patient will then sit under the care of the SPA team who will ensure that the patient is seen by the appropriate team/speciality to meet their needs.</p>

<p>Accident &amp; Emergency Departments – for life-threatening emergencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwell Hospital, Little Lane, West Bromwich B71 4HJ</li> <li>• City Hospital, Dudley Road, Birmingham, B18 7QH</li> </ul>	<p>Urgent Community Response, includes falls team, (UCR)</p> <p>The service responds to crisis referrals for falls, decompensation of frailty, reduced function, deconditioning, reduced mobility, palliative end of life crisis, urgent equipment provision, confusion, delirium, urgent catheter care, urgent diabetes and paid carer breakdown.</p>
<p>Care Navigation Centre – triages patients needing urgent and non-urgent referrals.</p> <p>The CNC allows patients to access care by calling one number. There are a range of services they can access and they will be directed to the most appropriate one for their needs.</p> <p>This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connected Palliative Care Hub</li> <li>• iCares</li> <li>• Care Homes Team</li> <li>• District Nursing</li> <li>• Community Continence Service</li> <li>• Foot Health</li> <li>• MSK Physiotherapy</li> <li>• Community Respiratory Service</li> <li>• Community Heart Failure Service</li> <li>• Wheelchairs Service</li> </ul> <p>Contact the Care Navigation Centre on 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm.</p>	<p>Virtual Wards</p> <p>Virtual wards, which include Hospital at Home, are a safe and efficient alternative to NHS bedded care. Virtual wards support patients, who would otherwise be in hospital, to receive the acute care and treatment they need in their own home.</p> <p>Sandwell &amp; West Birmingham Trust has four adult Virtual Wards which are for respiratory infections, frailty, cardiology and EPICENTRE (Emergency Point of Care Testing and Treatment without Transfer To Hospital), as well as a paediatric Virtual Wards team.</p>

**Services accessed via the Care Navigation Centre (CNC):**

**iCares (Integrated Care Service): 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm** iCares is a service and an approach to managing adults with long term conditions irrespective of their diagnosis, location or age. It covers a range of pathways (admission avoidance, rehabilitation, reablement, elderly frail, head injury, stroke, falls and bone health, progressive neurology, care management, therapy and case management into end of life care, wheelchair service, readmissions avoidance). It includes a range of staff including nurses and therapists providing specialist community interventions which will: avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital, help maintain health and wellbeing, improve independence and function.

**Care Homes Team: 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm** Care Homes Team is a multi-professional team, consisting of nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and support workers. The main focus is on long term condition management, reablement and proactive interventions to support admission avoidance in care homes and provide support to care homes to keep their residents at home.

**Connected Palliative Care (CPC): 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm** The service offers advice and support to primary care (GPs), care homes and your local hospital, so that healthcare professionals are skilled and able to help patients cope with their life-limiting illness. The team also signpost patients, carers and professionals to services that provide care, advice and equipment. This includes sitting services, befriending, domestic support and welfare rights advice. There is an out of hours service between 8pm and 8am to provide an urgent response for patients in crisis.

**District Nursing Service: 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm** The Sandwell District Nursing team provide care to housebound patients who are unable to access services via normal routes. They offer a wide range of nursing activities, delivered by highly skilled nurses to patients. The Sandwell District Nursing Service is comprised of seven teams spread across the borough and are able to offer: treatment of wounds; leg ulcer care; wound care; IV therapy; blood tests; end of life and palliative care; injections; continence care/assessment and promotion of self-care. The Sandwell District Nursing team are part of the wider iCares service and work with them to provide the necessary nursing care.

**Community Continence Service: 0121 507 2664, seven days a week, between 8am and 6pm excluding Bank Holidays. For 24/7 home delivery, please leave a message outside normal working hours** The Community Continence Service provides professional advice, support and education to Sandwell patients about promoting continence (controlling the bladder and bowels) and managing incontinence. Individuals can self-refer if they wish, however they must be over the age of 18 and registered with a Sandwell GP.

**Foot Health: 0121 507 2664 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays** The service cares for a wide range of foot and lower limb problems amongst the population of Sandwell and West Birmingham community. The team provides a number of specialist clinics tailored to each patients need including: nail surgery, neurological foot service, biomechanics, diabetic foot care, rheumatology and podopaediatric (a specialist area of podiatry that specifically focuses on the developing lower limb in children) clinics. Any patients with an

active diabetic foot ulceration should be referred to both the Foot Health team and the Diabetic Foot Clinic.

**Musculoskeletal (MSK) Physiotherapy: 0121 507 2664 between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays** The Community Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Service helps patients with an MSK condition which can be as a result of by injury, illness or disability through movement, exercise, manual therapy, education and advice to support patients manage pain and improve function in addition to preventing re-injury and promoting health and wellbeing.

**Community Respiratory: 0121 507 2664, 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. Sat/Sun Bank Holidays 8.30am and 4.30pm** The Community Respiratory Service treats Sandwell residents with breathing problems. The service provides a holistic approach to those living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), asthma, bronchiectasis and interstitial lung disease (ILD). Patients are seen in community-based clinics and also in their own homes for those who are unable to leave their residence.

**Community Heart Failure Service: 0121 507 2664, between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and Sat/Sun/Bank Holidays between 8am and 4pm** Both the acute and community service assess patients and help them with managing their medications, lifestyle support, psychological support, blood tests, and electro-cardiograms (recording electrical activity in the heart). The team provides care for patients with a combination of home visits and telephone contact. Community clinics are also run where patients are seen in a general practice or health centre by a specialist nurse.

**Wheelchair Service: 0121 507 2664 between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank holidays** Provide mobility and postural assessment and solutions for people with a Sandwell GP requiring a wheelchair for full time use inside their own home. Support both adults and children with a Sandwell GP

## What are the alternatives to A&E?

When you need medical help, it's important to choose the right service to make sure you get treatment as quickly as possible. Please only visit our A&E departments if your condition is serious or life threatening.

### NHS 111

This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Patients can get medical advice, self-care support, prescriptions and in some cases book appointments. Go to <https://111.nhs.uk/> or call 111.

### Your local Urgent Treatment Centre

They are open seven days a week and services are located at:

- Urgent Treatment Centre, Sandwell Hospital, Little Lane entrance, West Bromwich, B71 4HJ (open 9am-9pm)
- Summerfield Urgent Care Centre, 134 Heath Street, Winson Green, Birmingham, B18 7AL (open 8am-8pm)
- Urgent Care Centre, City Hospital, Dudley Road entrance, Birmingham, (open 10am-11pm), B18 7QH

## Your local pharmacy

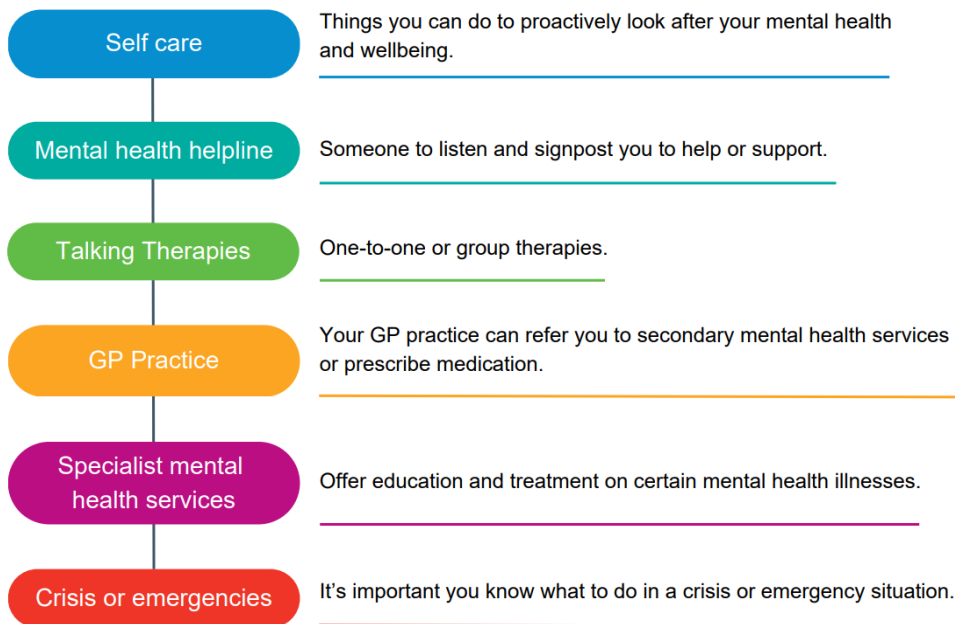
Your local pharmacy is a good place to start if you have a minor ailment such as a headache, cough or sore throat. Pharmacists are medically trained and can give you expert advice on medicines and how they work, as well as help you decide whether you need to see a doctor.

## Your GP surgery

Many GP practices now offer weekend access. To find out if your practice is participating in this scheme please call the usual practice phone number and listen to the full instructions.

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Support in Sandwell

It's important that we look after our mental health and wellbeing the same way we do with our physical health. If you hurt yourself physically, there would be things you could do to make yourself feel better. Say you sprained your ankle – you can rest it and take weight off it. The same is true for your mental health. If you notice changes to your mental health and wellbeing, there are things you can do to improve how you feel. The earlier you recognise changes to how you're feeling or behaving, and begin to take steps to improve things, the less likely these will get worse.



## How you/someone might be feeling...

- Like you're at risk of developing mental health problems
- That you are finding it difficult to manage a diagnosed common mental health problem
- That you need support for your mental health but don't know where best to go
- Experiencing mental health distress
- That you need information, advice and support from a trusted source

## What can you/someone do?

There is a 24-hour mental health helpline, operating seven days a week and is available to Black Country residents of all ages. If you are experiencing increased distress or anxiety during these uncertain times, please don't suffer in silence, pick up the phone and speak to one of our specialist mental health professionals who will be able to support you. That you need information, advice and support from a trusted source.

Contact our 24/7 mental health support line by calling 0800 008 6516 or you can text the service by contacting 07860 025 281

## Talking Therapies

### How you/someone might be feeling...

- Low mood and tearfulness
- Feeling down
- Feeling anxious, including;
  - Panic attacks, obsessive and compulsive thoughts and behaviour (OCD)
  - Phobias, social anxiety, health anxiety

- Dealing with trauma such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Struggling with every-day tasks
- Feeling very stressed/unable to relax
- Hoarding
- Insomnia and problems with sleep

### What can you/someone do?

You can refer yourself into your local talking therapies service, also known as psychological therapies or IAPT or Healthy Minds, without seeing your GP.

Talking therapies provide one-to-one appointments alongside group workshops. You can find your nearest Talking Therapies at: [www.nhs.uk/talk](http://www.nhs.uk/talk)

More can be found about Talking Therapy services at Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation by visiting [www.blackcountryhealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.blackcountryhealthcare.nhs.uk) and searching 'Talking Therapies'

## Specialist mental health services

### How you/someone might be feeling...

- Hearing voices or seeing, feeling, tasting or smelling things that aren't there (hallucinations)
- Erratic and distressing behaviour, including impulsive actions and not being able to control your emotions
- Extreme fluctuations in mood, including:
  - Extreme high and low moods
  - Suicidal thoughts that come and go
- Difficulty concentrating or thinking, sometimes due to being preoccupied with unusual experiences, beliefs or fears
- Risky, challenging or violent behaviour including high risk of criminal activity

### What can you/someone do?

To be able to get support from secondary mental health services, you will most likely need a referral from your GP, or another health, care or public sector professional who may be supporting you with your mental health and wellbeing. This includes; hospital, GP staff, police, courts, housing associations and staff from your local council. Secondary mental health services, also known as specialist services, can offer education and treatment on certain mental health illnesses. They can help you find ways of coping and managing your mental health and wellbeing so that you can be supported to live well in your home or community. Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust provide secondary mental health services across the Black Country (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton).

## Crisis or emergencies

### How you/someone might be feeling...



- Feeling like you may seriously harm or injure yourself or other people
- Feeling suicidal or like you want to die
- No longer feeling able to cope or be in control of your situation
- Extreme distress or extreme changes in behaviour
- Seriously harm or injure yourself

## What can you/someone do?

If you already get mental health support from a health or care organisation, please contact the team that provides you with treatment. You may have a care or safety plan already. This will help with your treatment and will tell you who to contact in a crisis.

You can also get support in a mental health crisis by:

- Calling NHS 111, a 24-hour helpline
- Booking an emergency appointment with your GP practice. Outside of normal surgery hours you can still phone your GP, but you will usually be directed to an out-of-hours service

## Route 2 Wellbeing

### Supporting Sandwell Residents to get the best from life

There are so many people who face difficulties, be it money matters, not knowing who to turn to for some advice, with loneliness or with emotional wellbeing. But help is at hand through the Route2Wellbeing website with information on hundreds of places where you can find that little bit of extra help you may have been looking for. All activities and services are local and open to all Sandwell Residents.

Whether you want advice about finances, health and wellbeing, relationship support, information about activities for children, sports and leisure, or a new training or work opportunity for yourself, Route2Wellbeing will have something near to you. You can find the information at [www.route2wellbeing.info](http://www.route2wellbeing.info) – give it a try!

**INSERT PICTURE:** Route 2 Wellbeing logo/ screenshot

**CAPTION:** Route2Wellbeing screen

**Alt text:** A picture of an ipad showing the Route2Wellbeing website

## Live well this winter Chitra

- Supporting Sandwell offer including [Cost of Living Support Programme delivered by Sandwell Consortium](#)

- Outcomes of Supporting Sandwell summit (early October) **Claire/Matt**
- Warm spaces offer - suggest libraries/leisure centre offer detailed in full with URL link and QR code, plus advice to “visit a library or leisure centre if you’re not online to find out about other community buildings in your area offering a Warm Space”
- **INSERT PICTURE: Members at Warm Spaces**
- HAF activities over Christmas holidays
- Refuge areas