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From: **West Northamptonshire Council Communications**

Team <[westnorthants@onclusivenews.com](mailto:westnorthants@onclusivenews.com)>

Date: Wed, 8 Jan 2025 at 09:25

Subject: NHS in Northamptonshire declares a critical incident

To: Gillian Greaves <[clerkcoldhighampc@gmail.com](mailto:clerkcoldhighampc@gmail.com)>



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

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08 Jan 2025

## NHS in Northamptonshire declares a critical incident

The NHS in Northamptonshire has been managing on-going pressures since December and today it has reached the point where the decision has been taken to declare a critical incident.

The on-going pressure is being seen mostly at Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospitals and East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS). The combination of patient demand, increased attendances and admissions to hospitals due to viral infections including flu and wider environmental factors across the region, has led to this level of escalation.

Dr Naomi Caldwell, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, NHS Northamptonshire ICB said "This has been one of the most challenging winters we have ever experienced in the NHS, and we have taken this step today to ensure we can continue to deliver a safe level of care to our local population, while we work together to resolve it.

"We are today asking local people to help us by choosing which service to access when they are unwell, and only calling 999 or attending A&E if it is a life-threatening emergency.

Maria Laffan, Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Northamptonshire ICB added: “If you need urgent health support, please continue to come forward as needed and don’t wait if your condition is becoming worse but please access alternative services where possible and continue to use [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) for 24-hour help and advice.

“We would like to reassure the public that all our emergency services remain open, and we thank them for their co-operation, patience and understanding.”

### **What does declaring a Critical Incident mean?**

This allows us to take additional steps to maintain safe services for patients and help us cope with the growing pressures including opening additional beds and enlisting the support of our partners to help us cope with the current pressures.

We would like to reassure patients and the public that despite the challenges faced, essential services remain fully open for anyone who needs them so if you require urgent medical help, please continue to come forward. People should also continue to attend planned appointments unless they are contacted.

Use alternative services such as pharmacy, NHS 111, Corby Urgent Care Centre during this time wherever possible. We would ask the public to think carefully before attending Accident and Emergency or dialing 999 and only do so in a real life-threatening emergency.

General Practice remains open in the usual way but is likely to be extremely busy.

We will do everything possible to avoid an impact on outpatient appointments and planned operations. Please attend the hospital as usual unless notified otherwise.

### **What can you do to help?**

There are several things our community can do to help:

- Use NHS services wisely – 999 and A&E should only be used for life-threatening emergencies
- If you need urgent health care but your condition is not life-threatening please seek support from alternative services such as NHS 111, Corby Urgent Care Centre or your local pharmacy
- Please collect relatives who are ready for discharge promptly from local hospitals

- Seek medical assistance early from your local pharmacy, the urgent care centre or [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) to avoid conditions becoming worse and needing urgent medical help
- If your condition is becoming worse or your symptoms are not improving, please don't wait – contact [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) who can direct you to the best service to support you
- It's not too late to get protected from winter viruses – if you are eligible for a flu and COVID-19 vaccine our mobile vaccination van continues to visit communities to offer vaccines. More information about eligibility and the van schedule is available via our [vaccination page](#)
- Our teams continue to work exceptionally hard, so please continue to be kind to everyone who is working as hard as they can to support you

### **Where to go if you need help**

#### **NHS 111**

Anyone who needs urgent care should use [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) to be assessed and directed to the right care for them. If needed a healthcare professional will call you back and this option can save you time in waiting areas.

If you do not have internet access or you are contacting 111 about a patient aged 5 or under, please call 111 instead.

#### **Corby Urgent Care Centre**

Corby Urgent Care Centre is open every day between 8am and 8pm and can help with minor injuries/ illnesses such as lacerations, sprains, strains, minor burns or scalds.

#### **Local Pharmacy**

Your local pharmacy can help with minor illnesses like coughs, colds and red eye. They can also offer care for a number of conditions through the Pharmacy First scheme including sore throat, ear infections, sinusitis, impetigo, shingles, infected insect bites and uncomplicated urinary tract infections. [Our website](#) has further information about eligibility criteria and participating pharmacists. They are open late and no appointment is needed.

#### **General Practice**

GP practices continue to be open, including the out of hours service but are also likely to be extremely busy. Please continue to contact your GP practice if you need GP services and the out of hours service can be reached via [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) Remember you can also book appointments and order repeat prescriptions online or by using the NHS app.

#### **Not sure where to go?**

Patients who need medical help or advice but are unsure where to go, should

contact NHS 111 online unless it is a life-threatening emergency when you should still call 999

**What next?**

Please be assured we are doing everything we can manage the situation as quickly as possible. We will only step down the incident when we are confident we can do this safely.

We understand this is a difficult position for our local NHS, care and public services to be in and we thank our local community and staff for their patience and support over what is a very challenging time for all of us.

## **Contact Information**

**West Northamptonshire Council Communications Team**

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