

Help Us, Help You

The student guide to the NHS when away from home

Campaign Toolkit

NHS England / Improvement (Midlands) – August 2021

This toolkit is for communicators in higher education or further education and student unions to help share NHS messages with their students

Background for communicators

As we come out of the pandemic the NHS is restoring its services. Some services are going back to what they were, but some new ways of working are being adopted. This means that the way we would like patients to engage with the NHS is changing slightly. There are more digital ways than ever before to access the NHS using technology young adults are more familiar with such as online and apps.

This communications toolkit contains articles, web copy and social media to explain to students how to get the best out of the NHS when they need it.

If you have any questions about this communications toolkit please email england.midlandscomms@nhs.net

Contents

This pack covers the following advice for students:

- Healthcare away from home
 - registering with and using a GP
 - dental services and vaccinations
 - contraception
 - being healthy
 - disability allowance
- The NHSApp – accessing health care using your smartphone, tablet or desktop
- NHS111 – the service to use when it's urgent but not an emergency

Healthcare away from home

Article and website copy

It's important to look after your health when moving away from home. This includes registering with a new GP and finding your local sexual health service.



Here are our 5 health tips for new students.

1. Register with a local GP

If, like most students, you spend more weeks of the year at your university address than your family's address, you need to register with a GP near your university as soon as possible.

That way you can receive emergency care if you need it, and access health services quickly and easily while you're away.

This is especially important if you have an ongoing health condition, particularly one that needs medicine, such as [asthma](#), [diabetes](#) or [epilepsy](#).

You can choose to register with any local GP. The health centre attached to your university is likely to be the most convenient, and the doctors working there will be experienced in the health needs of students.

[Find your local GP surgery](#)

Other health services available

Many university health centres have good links with specialists, such as psychiatrists, sports physicians, psychotherapists, counsellors and physiotherapists.

Having trouble getting an appointment? You can also always ask your [local pharmacist](#) for medical advice and support.

They may not be at the pharmacy counter when you go in, so ask the person at the counter if you can speak to the pharmacist.

Getting ill during the holidays

If you become unwell or need other medical treatment when you're at home or not staying near your university GP, you can [contact your nearest practice](#) to ask for treatment.

You can receive emergency treatment for 14 days. After that you will have to register as a temporary resident or permanent patient.

[Find out how to register as a temporary resident with a GP](#)

If you have an urgent care need use NHS111 first. This service can be found online <https://111.nhs.uk/>; on the NHSApp or by calling 111.

2. Register with a dentist

Dental problems cannot be dealt with by doctors, so make sure you register with a local dentist.

Not all treatment is free, even under the NHS. You may be able to apply for help with health costs, including prescriptions and dental care.

[Find an NHS dentist](#)

[Get help with dental costs](#)

3. Check your vaccinations

MenACWY vaccination

Students are now routinely offered a vaccination to prevent meningitis W disease.

The [MenACWY vaccine](#) protects against 4 different causes of meningitis and septicaemia: meningococcal (Men) A, C, W and Y diseases. It replaces the separate [Hib/MenC vaccine](#).

All 17 and 18 year olds in school year 13 and first-time university students up to the age of 25 are eligible as part of the NHS [vaccination](#) programme.

GP practices will automatically send letters inviting 17 and 18 year olds in school year 13 to have the MenACWY vaccine.

But if you're a student going away to university or college for the first time, contact the GP you're registered with to ask for the MenACWY vaccine, ideally before the start of the academic year.

This is because you'll be at particularly high risk in the first weeks of term, when you're likely to come into contact with many new people.

Mumps vaccination

Universities and colleges also advise students to be immunised against [mumps](#) before starting their studies.

The [MMR vaccine](#) (for mumps, measles and rubella) is part of the routine NHS childhood immunisation schedule. This means most young people who've grown up in England will have had 2 doses of it in childhood.

If you're not sure you've had 2 doses of the MMR vaccination, ask a GP for a catch-up vaccination.

Flu jab

Get an annual [flu vaccination](#) if you have asthma and take inhaled steroids. You should also get a flu vaccination if you have a serious long-term condition such as [kidney disease](#).

Covid vaccination

You're now eligible for the covid vaccination. Book online at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

4. Get contraception

Even if you do not plan to be sexually active while studying, it's good to be prepared.

Contraception and condoms are free for everyone from any GP – it does not have to be your own – or family planning clinic.

[Find your local sexual health service](#)

5. Rest and eat healthy food

You'll greatly increase your chances of keeping healthy by taking care of yourself.

Student life may not be renowned for early nights and [healthy eating](#), but getting enough sleep and eating well will mean you have a better chance of staying healthy.

You'll feel more energetic and be better equipped to cope with studying and exams.

Remember to:

- eat [5 portions of fruit and vegetables](#) a day
- buy wholemeal bread and pasta instead of white
- avoid eating fast food and takeaways

Eating well does not have to cost a lot and is often cheaper than takeaways. Taking the time to cook simple meals instead of eating out or buying ready meals is also healthier.

You might want to try downloading the free One You Easy Meals app – available on [the App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

[Read more about eating well for less](#)

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

As a higher education student living in England, you can apply for a [Disabled Students' Allowance \(DSA\)](#) if you have a:

- disability
- long-term health condition
- mental health condition
- specific learning difficulty, such as [dyslexia](#)

The support you get depends on your individual needs and not on income.

ENDS

Social media messages and images

- *If you're moving away from home to study make sure you register with a local GP* www.nhs.uk/register
- *Don't forget to register with a local GP during Freshers Week* www.nhs.uk/register



The NHSApp

Article or website copy

Not to be mistaken for the NHS Track and Trace app, the NHSApp is owned and run by the NHS. It is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet.

It keeps your data safe and secure. Once you've downloaded the App you will need to set up an NHS login and prove who you are. The app then securely connects to information from your GP surgery.

By linking to your GP record it lets you access your medicines, order repeat prescriptions and indicate whether you wish to donate your organs. You can also use it to access the NHS111 service and it also shows your (COVID) vaccination status, sometimes called the COVID Pass. If you don't yet have it, you can download it from the App Store or Google Play.

If your device supports fingerprint detection or facial recognition, you can use it to log in to the NHSApp each time, instead of using a password and security code.

ENDS

Social media messages and images

- *The NHSApp is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet, including the NHS COVID Pass. Download it now on www.nhs.uk/nhs-app*
- *Download the NHSApp today to get your NHS COVID Pass and to access a range of other NHS services www.nhs.uk/nhs-app*
- *Have you downloaded the NHSApp? Find out about the secure NHS services you can access, including the NHS COVID Pass. Want more info? This way www.nhs.uk/nhs-app*
- *You can order repeat prescriptions through the NHSApp. Find out more about the free NHS App www.nhs.uk/nhs-app*



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NHS111 online

Article or website copy

Do you know that if you need urgent care you don't need to get yourself to A&E? In 2020 the NHS launched a new service. Those using NHS111 would be offered a timeslot at a local service matched to their health needs and urgency to be seen. The service will book you in to be seen quickly and safely in A&E, an Urgent Treatment Centre; a GP practice, a pharmacy, emergency dental services or a Walk-In Clinic. How good is that? Saves time in waiting areas or sitting on the end of a phone!



All you do is answer a few questions. You can find NHS111 online <https://111.nhs.uk/>; on the NHSApp or by calling 111 to speak to someone.

If it's life-threatening you should always call 999.

ENDS

Social media messages and images

Twitter posts

- *If you need urgent care, then make sure you think 111 first. NHS 111 will be able to assess you and, if you should need it, book you at time slot at A&E to make sure you can be seen safely. #HelpUsHelpYou*
- *Did you know there's a new, more convenient way for you to get the urgent care you need? Instead of going to A&E, just contact 111 first. NHS 111 can book you a timeslot at A&E if needed. #HelpUsHelpYou*
- *If you have an urgent health concern, then think 111 first. NHS 111 will direct you to the most appropriate service to use and can even book you a timeslot at A&E. #HelpUsHelpYou*
- *Social distancing measures at A&E help ensure you're seen safely. So, if you need urgent care, contact 111 first and they will be able to book you into A&E or direct you to a local service that is right for you. #HelpUsHelpYou*
- *Your NHS is providing a new, more convenient way for you to access urgent care. If you need medical help but it is not an emergency, contact 111 first, and they will be able to advise on the service you need or book you into A&E. #HelpUsHelpYou*

Instagram/ Facebook posts

- *If you need urgent care, then the best way to receive the most appropriate service, in a safe and timely way, is to contact 111. Your NHS 111 advisor or clinician will be able to assess you on the phone and, if needed can direct you to or book an appointment with a GP, pharmacist, Urgent Treatment Centre, or can book a direct time slot at A&E. They may also be able to give you the advice you need without using another service. However, if you do have life-threatening illnesses or injuries then you should continue to dial 999, and anyone who arrives at A&E without calling NHS 111 will still receive medical care, but those needing emergency treatment will be prioritised. #HelpUsHelpYou*

- *When you think you need A&E, just contact NHS 111 first. The NHS will help you right away and if you need urgent care then NHS 111 can book you in to be seen quickly and safely. And if A&E isn't the right place for you, they can direct you to or make you an appointment at a more appropriate local service such as a GP practice, pharmacist or Urgent Treatment Centre. However, if you do have a life-threatening illness or injury then you should continue to dial 999. #HelpUsHelpYou*
- *Social distancing measures at A&E will help ensure you're seen safely So, if you need urgent care, contact 111 first and they will be able to book you into A&E or direct you to a local service that is right for you. #HelpUsHelpYou*

Images for website / social media (three sizes below)



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