

The current situation in general practice



Overall the situation in general practice mirrors that across the rest of the system

- There is increased demand across all channels, with more patients considering their condition to be urgent
- Clinical capacity is stretched across routine, urgent, long term condition management and preventative services in general practice
- Practices continue to see presentations of undiagnosed illnesses following lockdowns
- Practices continue to manage people on the waiting lists to access community and secondary care services

Workforce pressures remain challenging

- Covid-related sickness absence has been significant in recent weeks, but is beginning to decrease
- Recruitment and retention in general practice remains a challenge:
 - Frimley CCG has fewer general practice staff than England and a higher proportion than England that are over 55 and likely to be retiring soon
 - Primary Care Networks report that their recruitment to the Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (new workforce in general practice) is difficult in a competitive employment market and we did not meet our recruitment targets in 2021/22 – this scheme is intended to act as a mitigating factor for the decreasing number of GPs

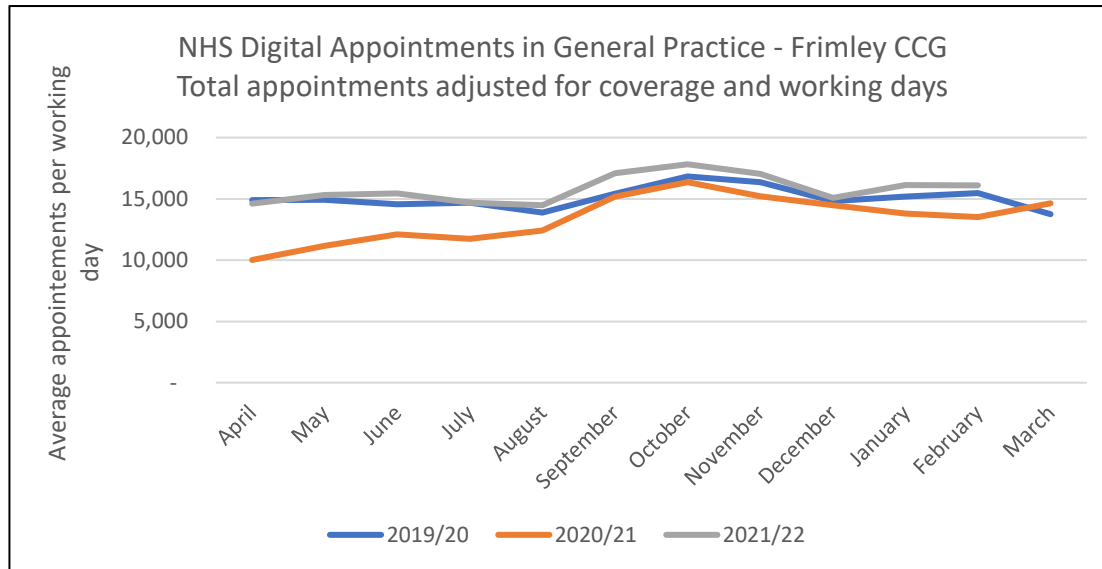


Progress

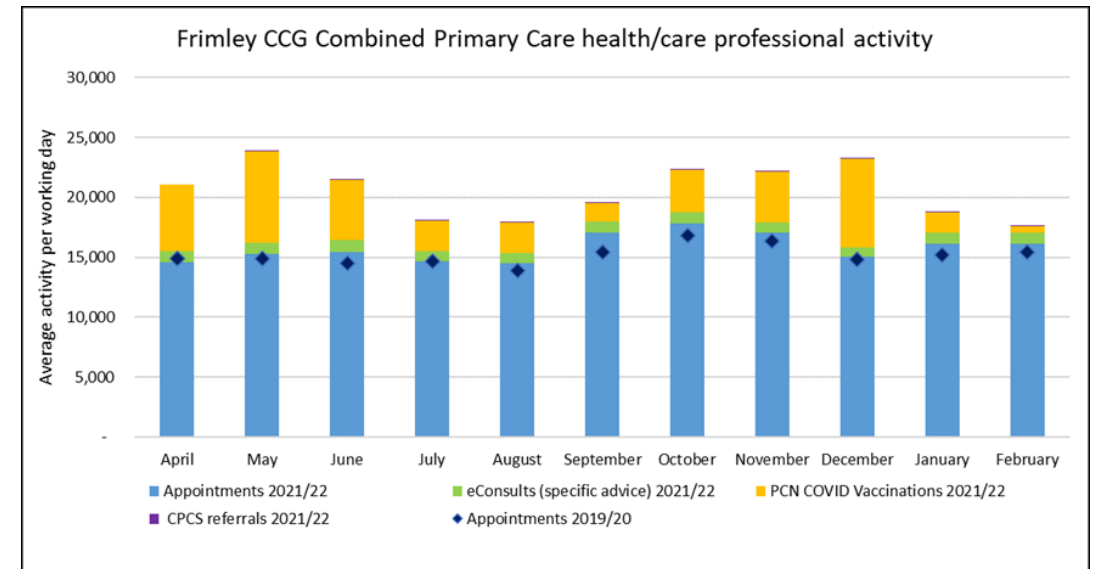
Despite the pressures, general practice continues to support our whole community

- The proportion of physical health checks completed for people with a severe mental illness increased from 35.8% in 2020/21 to 56.4% in 2021/22
- The proportion of physical health checks completed for people with learning disabilities increased from 75% in 2020/21 to 79.1% in 2021/22

The number of appointments provided is consistently higher than in the same period two years ago



The total activity is also consistently higher



What we're doing to improve access



Increasing capacity – 53,086 additional appointments were provided from October 21 to February 22



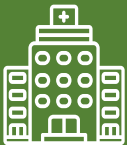
Self care and alternatives to general practice including using Community Pharmacy services, digital enablers such as Frimley Healthier Together & BP@home



Increasing workforce capacity & skills mix including support from non-clinical roles where appropriate for patients' needs



Continuing to engage and communicate with our residents including supporting PCNs and practices to improve their communication with patients



Releasing premises capacity through digitising notes and utilising wider community space



Population health management to drive proactive care, working in partnership with others to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities

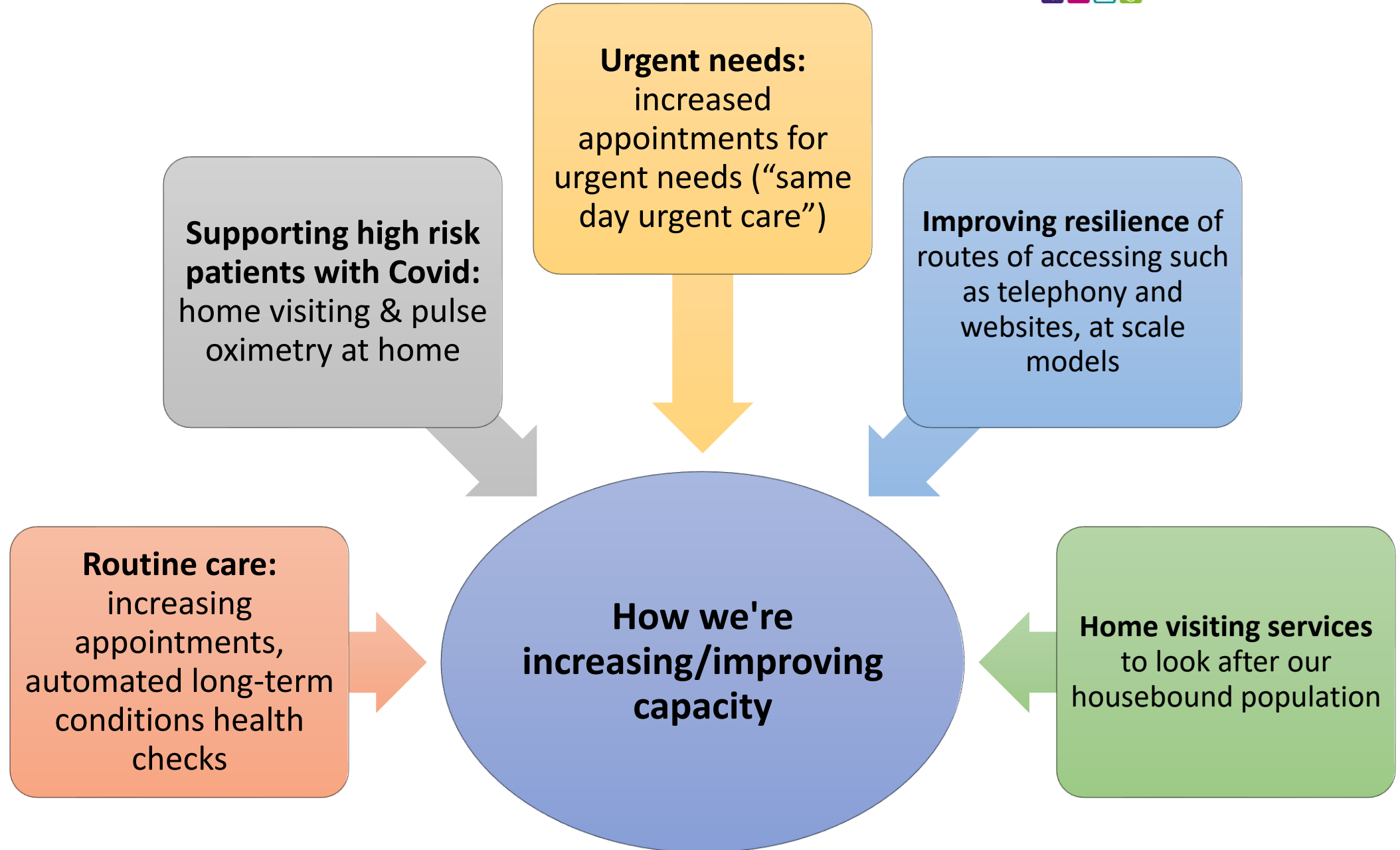


Utilising digital and improving telephone systems to support people getting the right care for their needs and directing clinical capacity where most needed



Maturing PCN development to develop “at scale” models of care based on local population needs

How we're increasing capacity



Engagement

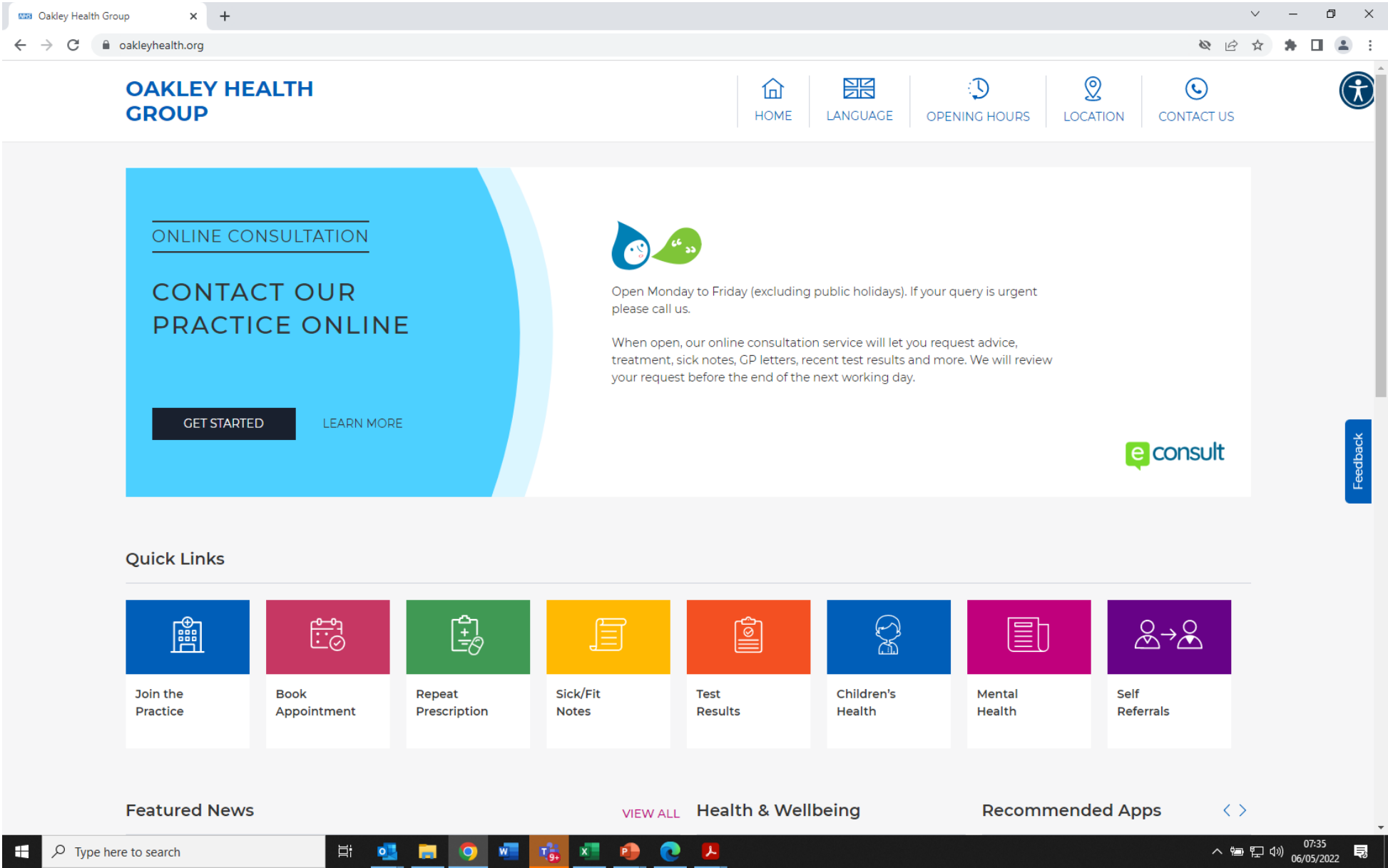
- Digital access survey – designed alongside patient representatives, live between October and November 2021. Widely shared through our communications colleagues in partner organisations, local councils of voluntary services, our community panel and community Covid-19 response networks.
- Over 600 responses. Overwhelmingly the general population asked us to **make things easier for them**. There is a genuine interest to use the digital options available, but they must be user friendly and offer the user the desired outcome.
- Key themes included: many positive experiences of accessing digital services including e-consult and video consultations, overwhelming choice of access routes and perception of inconsistency in offer, concerns around security, confusion around triage and need to speak to reception staff, GP websites difficult to navigate



Improving practice websites

New websites with clearer navigation and a wide range of self-serve options to reduce demand on telephone systems and reduce admin queries needing practice staff support to resolve – closer to a more commercial model that patients are used to in other sectors

Practice website feedback survey - ongoing feedback from local people as new websites launch



New animation series

A new series of short animations have been created and will be launched this month.

The animations focus on the following themes:

- the role of receptionists
- online consultations
- access to other health professionals , such as physiotherapists
- children and young people's mental health support
- Healthier Together website and app
- social prescribing
- the role of clinical pharmacists

The animation series will be part of a larger primary care access campaign to help support greater understanding of the new ways of working for health and care in the community.

MEET THE TEAM:





Your GP practice is working differently

The pandemic is not over. GP practices are open and have been throughout, however to protect everyone, they must maintain safe infection control and minimise unnecessary physical contact. Since lockdown restrictions eased we have been experiencing unprecedented demand on our services.

How are practices working now?



Appointments may be triaged to provide appropriate clinical care. This helps keep you safe and makes sure the people with the greatest need are seen first. We will see everyone in person who needs to be seen that way.

Why do receptionists ask personal questions?



GP reception staff are a vital part of the health care team and ask questions to direct you to the best support. They are skilled in assisting with triage and treat all information confidentially.

What is triage?

You will be assessed to decide who needs:

- to be seen in person
- a phone consultation
- a video consultation
- help from a community pharmacy.



Some calls are closed at this stage when needs have been met through the triage call or digital consultation.

I wanted to see my GP, so why am I seeing someone else?

Many GP practices now include a range of professionals (e.g. advanced nurse practitioners, physiotherapists, mental health workers and link workers amongst others) who can diagnose and treat health conditions. This ensures that you see the right person at the right time more quickly.



Please be patient

Our health services are under enormous pressure, but we are open and here if needed. You can help us and help yourself by making sure you get the right care, in the right place, at the right time appropriate for your needs. Please continue to be kind to our staff, socially distance where possible and wear a face mask in healthcare settings.

What about emergencies

Always dial 999 in a life-threatening emergency. If you need help with minor injuries at any time or urgent care when your GP practice or community pharmacy is closed visit 111.nhs.uk or dial 111 if you do not have internet access.



Where else can I get help?



To find out where to go when you're feeling unwell visit: <https://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/knowwheretogo>.

For children/parents, visit: <https://frimley-healthiertogether.nhs.uk>

Visit www.nhs.uk for advice on common symptoms and a list of local services or speak to your community pharmacist first for advice on minor illnesses.

We need your help



Know where to go when feeling unwell

Download the NHS App to:

- view your Covid-19 vaccination details
- order repeat prescriptions
- book appointments
- get health advice
- view your health record and more



Self Care

Be prepared to care for yourself with a well-stocked medicine cabinet and plenty of rest if you have:

- an upset tummy
- pain or headache
- sore throat (but if for two weeks or more contact your GP)

For health advice, visit www.nhs.uk

For self care advice, visit www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk and search "stay well"

Not sure what to do when your child is unwell? If you are worried about a child, visit the Frimley Healthier Together website: frimley-healthiertogether.nhs.uk



Pharmacists

are qualified healthcare professionals, who can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines. Ask for help with:

- minor aches and pains, burns and scalds, head lice, etc
- bites and stings
- queries about medication dosage, type or suitability plus urgent requests
- medication related to hospital discharge
- repeat prescriptions



GP surgery

Visit your GP surgery website and click on eConsult to:

- get help for a condition that has not improved after seeking help from your pharmacy
- to report urgent conditions that are not life threatening
- to report a deteriorating chronic condition

Please continue to use usual routes, including online patient access, to order repeat prescriptions. If you do not have access to the internet, you can continue to phone your surgery



111 Visit 111.nhs.uk or call NHS 111

when the situation is not life threatening and:

- if you think you need to go to hospital
- if you don't know the most suitable place to go or call
- if you don't have a GP to call or if your GP practice is closed
- if you need advice or reassurance about what to do

Available 24 hours a day, every day. If needed, an NHS advisor will help you to be seen quickly and safely.



Minor injuries

A minor injury service is only for conditions such as the following:

- sprains and strains
- suspected broken limbs
- minor head injuries
- cuts and grazes
- minor scalds and burns
- skin infections

Whether you're booked into the minor injury service via your GP, NHS 111 or you decide to walk-in, the service is available 7 days a week, from 8am-8pm.

The minor injury service is located at Bracknell Urgent Care Centre.



999 Emergency department or call 999

Only for very serious or life-threatening situations. This can include:

- loss of consciousness
- an acute confused state
- fits that are not stopping
- chest pain
- breathing difficulties
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds

Call **999** immediately if you or someone else is having a heart attack or stroke.

Also call **999** if you think someone has had a major trauma, such as after a serious road traffic accident, a stabbing, a shooting, a fall from height, or a serious head injury.

If you are unsure, call **NHS 111** or go on-line at 111.nhs.uk



For urgent help for your mental health, use the [NHS 111 online service](http://111.nhs.uk), or call 111 if you are unable to get help online.

If you've injured yourself, taken an overdose or are in an emergency and believe that your life is at risk, please dial 999. www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters provides NHS-approved expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

You can also text **Shout 85258**. Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

For mental health services local to you, please visit [Mental health services \(frimleyccg.nhs.uk\)](http://frimleyccg.nhs.uk)

Not sure what to do when your child is unwell? If you are worried about a child, visit the Frimley Healthier Together website: frimley-healthiertogether.nhs.uk



For more information visit www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk