



NHS 111 Service

A new NHS service for people in Lancashire and Cumbria

October 2011

What is NHS 111?

NHS 111 is a new, easy to remember, and free to use telephone service that gives advice on which service to use if you have a minor injury or illness that needs medical attention, but is not an emergency.

If you are feeling unwell, it can be difficult to know which NHS service to use, especially if you have a number of different services in your area such as a walk-in centre, a minor injuries unit or an urgent care centre, as well as your local high street pharmacy, your GP and hospital.



How will it help me and my family?

- Developed by the Department of Health
- You will be able to telephone 111 any time of day, seven days a week
- Get expert advice on which service is the best one for you

If you call NHS 111, you will speak directly to a trained call advisor, who has information about the different services available to you in your area. The call advisor will ask you questions about your symptoms, and based on the answers you give, they will give you advice on which service is the best for you, based on where you live and the closest services available.

If they think you need emergency attention, they can immediately dispatch an ambulance.

They will also advise you to contact your GP if they think that this is the best choice for you.

So, if you or someone in your family has an illness or an injury that you think needs urgent attention, but is not an emergency, you can get fast advice to help you.



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What about the 999 service and my GP?

999 remains the single number to call if you or someone you care for has a serious or life-threatening health emergency, such as a serious accident, a heart-attack, a stroke or breathing problems.

Your GP will still be your main contact for your day-to-day healthcare needs.

The NHS 111 service is there to give you advice if you think you have an urgent health need, but you are not sure what to do.

Where is the service available?

To begin with the service will be available throughout Lancashire and Cumbria, but will not yet be available in West Lancashire.

The service will be switched on, on Tuesday 29 November – just in time for winter, Christmas and the New Year when the NHS gets very busy.

When can I start to use NHS 111?

You will be able to use the NHS 111 service from Tuesday 29th November 2011. There will be articles in newspapers and stories on your local radio. But why not make a note in your diary anyway?

What can I expect if I call NHS 111?

Your call will be answered by a trained call advisor, who will start by asking you some basic questions such as your name, your age and where you live. They will then ask a number of questions so that they can begin to build up a picture of how you are feeling and what the problem is. Your answers will help them to identify which is the best local NHS service for you.

Call advisors can see a database that contains information about all the local health services that are available for you in your local area. They can see where they are, what the opening hours are and what treatments they offer.

The answers you give the call advisor will be recorded in case you call back to say your condition has changed or got worse.

If the call advisor thinks you need emergency attention, they can immediately dispatch an ambulance.

If English isn't your first language, let the call advisor know which language you prefer and an interpreter will be able to help you.

They will also advise you to contact your GP if they think that this is the best choice for you.

So, if you or someone in your family has an illness or an injury that you think needs urgent attention, but is not an emergency, you can get fast advice to help you.



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Does my GP think this is a good idea?

GPs have information about the NHS 111 service and know about it. GPs had to give their support before the service is introduced.

We know that many of them are concerned that people can find it hard to know which NHS service to use if they have a minor illness and injury. And GPs have helped to create the local database of services that the call advisors use.

Is the service safe?

So far the NHS 111 service is already available in County Durham and Darlington, Nottingham, Luton and Lincolnshire. The service has received thousands of calls from local people in these areas. Calls to NHS 111 are checked to make sure that the service is safe.

A group of national experts, including GPs and hospital Consultants, has helped to design the service and have had an important role to play in making sure the service is safe.

At a local level in Cumbria and Lancashire, for the past six months a team of health workers, including doctors and nurses, have helped to shape the NHS 111 service for Cumbria and Lancashire. And they will be looking closely at how the service performs when it is formally launched.



Why isn't it available yet in my area?

People in all areas of the country will be able to call NHS 111 by April 2013. Because rolling the NHS 111 service out across the country is such a big exercise, this is being done in stages.

Plans are already being put in place to make NHS 111 available to everyone who lives in the North West of England.

If you or someone in your family is feeling ill, but it isn't an emergency don't call 999 – telephone 111 instead.



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Who is providing the service?

Until April 2013 the NHS 111 service for Cumbria and Lancashire will be provided by the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), NHS Direct and Fylde Coast Medical Services (FCMS).

FCMS is run by a group of GPs and has been providing out of hours GP services in Blackpool for many years already.

NWAS, NHS Direct and FCMS are all working together to provide an NHS 111 service for Cumbria and Lancashire.

NHS teams, GPs and other health professionals are looking at the best options for providing NHS 111 across the North West from April 2013.

Where can I find out more?

- Information will be coming out to local communities, through local venues such as libraries and community centres, and in GP surgeries and dental surgeries.
- Health and social care teams will also be giving out information to the people they see over the next few months. You will see information on posters, and you will be able to pick up leaflets.
- You can also look out for adverts in your local newspapers, listen out for radio adverts, and posters in outdoor areas, such as shopping centres and phone kiosks.
- In January, you will also receive a leaflet through your door, which you can keep somewhere handy.



Remember – the launch date for NHS 111 for people in Cumbria and Lancashire is Tuesday 29 November 2011. Why not put the date in your diary or set yourself a reminder on your mobile phone?