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North Tyneside Patient Forum Newsletter: Issue 6 December 2023

This newsletter is produced quarterly for you by members of the Forum’s Communications Working Group, and proudly displays our new logo.

The clocks have changed, the dark nights are upon us and we’re all digging out our hats and gloves to keep warm as the cold winter weather ensues. For the first half of this newsletter, the Patient Forum has focussed on topics that we hope will help you to stay safe this winter.

Winter Weather: Falls

As the weather changes **during the winter the risk of falling, slipping and tripping increases.**

Simple hints and tips follow especially if you are a little older:

- Try and avoid going out in cold, wet or freezing weather.
- Keep well in winter by ensuring you have plenty of food.
- Check medication is restocked, if required.
- Keep warm by using extra clothes and bedding.
- Eat warm food and drink enough to keep hydrated.
- Keep mobile and move around indoors.
- Check that you have easy access to emergency numbers for help:
 - For a health need call 111 or in an emergency call 999.
 - In the event of a power cut or reduced heat call 105.
 - Remember to add family and friends numbers to your contact list.

Age UK has an advice line which offers help 365 days a year. Call 0800 678 1602 between 8am and 7pm.

Check out this NHS website for information on what to do if you have a fall: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/>



Self Care Information

Healthwatch North Tyneside has useful information about **who to contact if you feel unwell:**

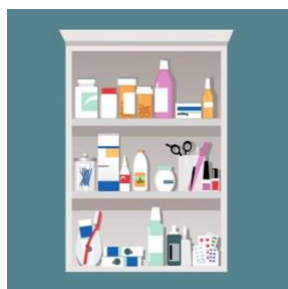
<https://healthwatchnorthtyneside.co.uk/infoandadvice/what-to-do-when-you-feel-ill-in-north-tyneside/>



First Aid Kits and Medicine Cabinets

Essential at any time of the year but more so during Christmas and New Year when services may be limited.

Be prepared by **going through the checklists to treat minor ailments** over the winter months.



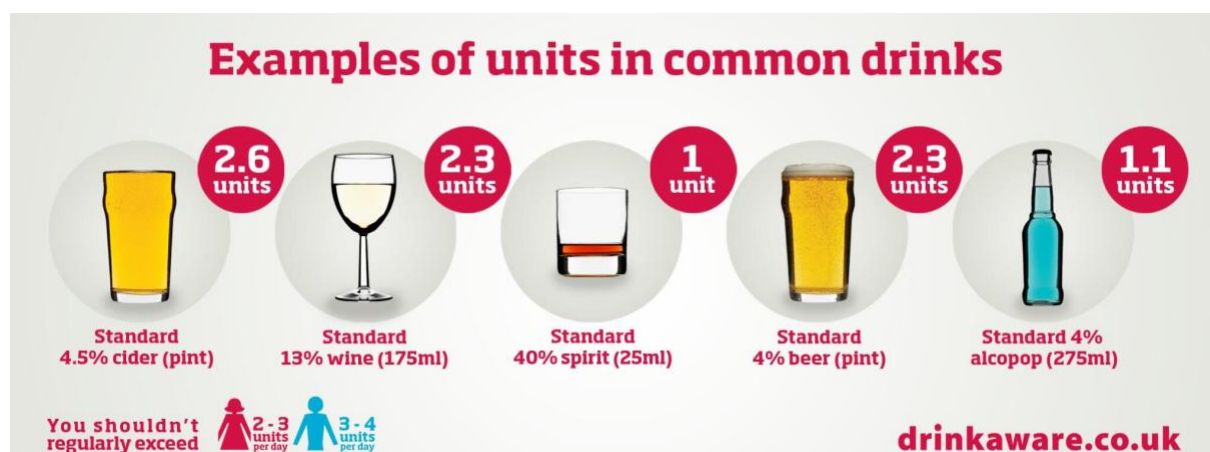
<https://www.ncic.nhs.uk/news/stock-your-medicine-cabinet-winter>

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/accidents-first-aid-and-treatments/what-should-i-keep-in-my-first-aid-kit/>

Safe Alcohol Units

The idea of counting units was first introduced in the UK in 1987 to help people keep track of their drinking. **With so many different drinks and glass sizes it is easy to be confused about how much you may be drinking.**

Check out the website too for more information <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-advice/calculating-alcohol-units/>



Dry January is the opportunity to avoid alcohol for a whole month!



Warm Welcome

More than 40 Warm Welcome spaces are now open across the borough thanks to funding from North Tyneside Council. You can **shield yourself from the wind, rain and cold, join social activities, get a free hot drink or relax in a warm space**. These local spaces are designed for the community, there are no criteria to attend and the support is available to everyone.



Find your nearest Warm Welcome space on this link:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/news/32780/warm-welcome-awaits-north-tyneside>

Utilities Priority Services Register

The Priority Services Register is a **free service provided by your electricity, gas and water suppliers to people who are vulnerable**. It gives extra advice and support, including when there's interruption to services.

You could be eligible for the service if for example, you are of **pensionable age, have a disability or long-term illness, have children under the age of 5**, or require a power supply for essential medical equipment.

Once registered you will have a range of support services available to you, for example advanced notice of power cuts, support in emergencies, getting bills in an accessible format such as braille or large print and more.

For full details of eligibility, how to register and support services available click below:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/information-consumers/energy-advice-households/getting-extra-help-priority-services-register>

Interpreter Service

Did you know that healthcare providers must provide patients with translation and interpretation services?

High-quality translation and interpretation are vital to ensuring that people access the health and care services they are entitled to and understand their treatment.

For more information and guidance please use this link:

<https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-05-19/does-nhs-have-provide-interpreter>



Marie Curie Wellbeing Centre

The Marie Curie Wellbeing Centre is an **outpatient service for patients, their family and carers**. They have a team of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses, Health care assistants, social workers, volunteers and complimentary therapists.



You can take part in groups such as: Art therapy, The Good Life Gardening project, Breathlessness Program, Falls Prevention, Cognitive Stimulation Therapy, Reiki, Mindfulness, Craft activity session, Siblings Bereavement Group, Walk and Talk, Carers Support Group, Life Cafe, Navigating the Care system, Life Pages writing group and much more.

Referrals can be made by health professionals, GP, district nurses, community palliative nurses, hospital teams, specialist nurses and social prescribers, so please speak to a member of the healthcare team or for more information about The Wellbeing Centre, contact Angela.Jackson@mariecurie.org.uk or mariecuriehospice.newcastle@nhs.net. You can also call on 0191 219 1000.

If you require bereavement support, please visit:
<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereavement>

Living with Pet Loss

Cats, dogs, rabbits and any other animal you can think of that people have as pets are wonderful companions and part of the family. **When a pet dies you may need some additional support**. Information on this website may help, also other animal charities including the RSPCA, Blue Cross and Cruse also offer support services.
<https://livingwithpetbereavement.com/>

Talking Therapies

A **full range of options is available for people living with anxiety, depression and excess worry**, including guided self-help, group therapy and counselling. Online services and one-to-one telephone and face-to-face appointments are also available.

You can self-refer and contact the service by telephone or email, the service is available for people 16 + living in North Tyneside with a North Tyneside GP. If you live outside North Tyneside contact your doctor about services available in your area.

Telephone: [0191 2952775](tel:01912952775)

Email: nhc-tr.northtynesidetalkingtherapies@nhs.net

The office is open Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5pm.

Or visit the website;
<https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/talkingtherapies#7e8ebfa9>

Birth Reflection Service

If you've had a baby at either Cramlington (Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital) or the RVI (Royal Victoria Infirmary), this one's for you.

Both hospitals offer a birth reflections service which **gives you the opportunity to discuss your experience of giving birth with a midwife**, in the hope of providing explanations and reassurances about your care.



Some women wish to talk about the timeline of their delivery, others want to understand more about decisions that were made. Some women just want to talk about their pregnancy and delivery experience with a health professional. Whatever the reason, face-to-face or telephone appointments are available, but you must be at least 6 weeks postnatal before getting in touch.

If you gave birth at **Cramlington**, you'll need to fill out this form to arrange an appointment: <https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity/birth-reflection-service#8fe55993>

If you gave birth at the **RVI**, you'll need to call 0191 282 0212.

Social Prescribers – Patient Journey

As described by The King's Fund, **Social Prescribing is a means of enabling health professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services**. The referrals generally come from professionals working in primary care. The service recognises people's health and well-being are determined by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, and social prescribing aims to address people's need in a holistic way by supporting people to take greater control of their own health.

A 70yr old lady was referred by a mental health practitioner via her GP surgery as she had been experiencing low mood, low confidence and anxiety. This lady had seven sessions with staff over four months with each face to face session lasting about one hour.

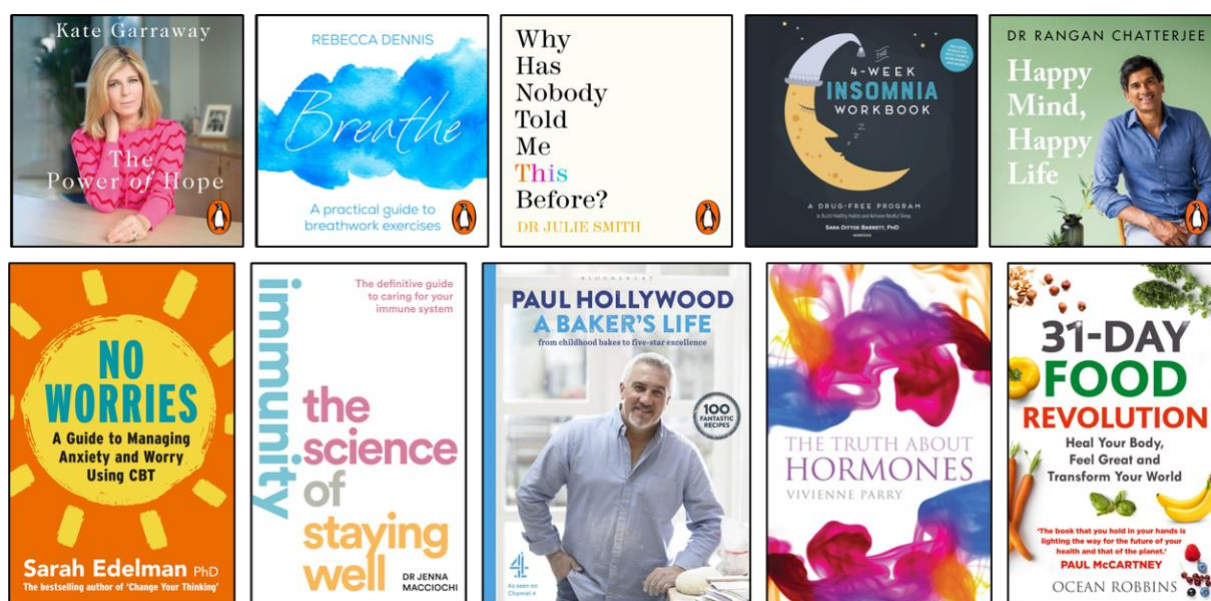
Support also included exploration of coping strategies which included discussion on the pros and cons of having time to reflect. Use of mindfulness and reflection on daily positive outcomes. This was linked with help locating some ladies groups she could join and access to a library for IT support to write a journal to reduce her anxiety.

Once this lady had finished her sessions she felt she was in a good place and ready to be discharged from the service. She was then able to know how to recognise and deal with her mental health issues. She was also very thankful for the help and support she received.

Borrow Box

Did you know you can **access free eBooks and eAudiobooks** via North Tyneside Council's digital library? <https://northtyneside.borrowbox.com/>

As well as an array of fiction books, there are also non-fiction books and lots of titles relating to health and wellbeing:



All you need to use the service is:

1. A tablet, phone or computer with internet access
2. A North Tyneside Libraries membership card and PIN

You can join the library online:

<https://prism.librarymanagementcloud.co.uk/northtyneside/join>

Or call into your nearest library which you can find listed here:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1694/our-libraries>

Have your Voice Heard!

Would you like to help improve local NHS services? If so, joining the North Tyneside Patient Forum is a great way to provide feedback and encourage positive changes.

We want as many people to be a part of the forum as possible to make sure we're hearing a wide range of views. So far, we have members who are new mothers, those who have caring responsibilities for elderly relatives and those who are managing long-term conditions themselves.

What could you bring to the conversation?



Do you have an illness that reduces your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

Have you ever experienced low mood or depression?

Is English a second language for one of your friends or family members and you could advise us on how best to reach them?

Any and all are welcome as long as you live in North Tyneside.

The **forum meets for a couple of hours six times a year** and you can attend as many or as few meetings as you're able.

There are also opportunities to join specific working groups if you can volunteer more of your time.

Thank you for reading our newsletter! We hope that you found the information useful.

If there are any topics you'd like us to explore in future issues, please share your thoughts with Michele Spencer michele@chcfnorthtyneside.org.uk

Season's Greetings from members of North Tyneside Patient Forum

