

Guide to services

In Essex we have a wide range of professionals and other services who are there to help and support you.

Self-care

Now you are becoming more responsible for your own health and well-being there are lots of things you can do at home to help. Many minor illnesses and injuries can be treated at home using over the counter medicines from your local pharmacist and getting plenty of rest. If you are still worried call NHS 111.

Teachers

Teachers and tutors can be great people to talk to. If they cannot help they will be able to point you in the right direction.

School nurse

The school nursing team and school staff will help support your health and development. They provide confidential advice and support on issues such as sexual health, emotional health, physical health and long-term condition management.

NHS 111

If you think you need help urgently during the day or night you should call NHS 111 before you go to any other health service. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and is free to call, including from a mobile. You will be directed straight away to the local service that can help you best. Call NHS 111:

- When you need help fast but it's not life-threatening.
- When you think you need to go to A&E or another NHS urgent care service.
- When it's outside of your GP's surgery hours.
- When you do not know who to call for medical help.
- If you do not have a local GP to call.

Dentist

It is really important that you visit your dentist twice a year and take care of your teeth and mouth daily.

If you've just started college, university or you've moved away from home, it's a good idea to register with a local dental practice.

Essex Youth Service

Essex Youth Service is an excellent informal education, social and personal development service. They offer free support, counselling, activities, advice, sexual health products and much more to all young people between the ages of 13-19 years old and 13-25 years old for those with special needs. The service also supports young carers from age 8. Youth workers have the skills, knowledge and significant experience to work in schools and other educational establishments.

Pharmacist

Your local pharmacist can provide advice on most common health issues. They can suggest and dispense medicines and other health products. There are often pharmacists in supermarkets and many are open late.

Visit www.nhs.uk where you can find the service locator that will help you find the pharmacy nearest to you.

You can see your local pharmacist for a confidential consultation for a wide range of ailments including coughs, colds, sore throats, pain and temperature and lots more. Any medicine dispensed is free if you do not pay for your prescriptions.

Sexual Health Services

Contraception and sexual health clinics offer confidential advice, all methods of contraception including free condoms, pregnancy testing, advice on unplanned pregnancy, chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing and treatment. All are free of charge.

Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service

The service offers counselling and advice to young people who think they may have a drug problem or are worried about someone else.

GP (Doctor)

If you've just started college, university or you've moved away from home, it's a good idea to register with a local GP practice. This means you don't need to go back home if you need medical help.

You will need to register with a GP - to find a GP in your area, use the NHS Choices, Find Services System at:

www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories

Your GP can advise, give medicines and information and point you in the right direction if you need other specialist services. Everything said between a GP and a patient is confidential and a private matter between yourself and your GP. You will need to make an appointment. After 6.30pm weekdays, at weekends and public holidays most services are covered by a GP out-of-hours service. Check with your local surgery.

Confidentiality

Here are some facts about confidentiality when going to see your GP/practice nurse:

Young people have the same right to confidentiality as adults. This means that when you visit your GP (or another healthcare professional) they are not allowed to share what you talk about. So basically, they can't tell your parents/carers unless you give permission. The only time your GP will break this confidentiality is if you or someone else may be at risk of serious harm or abuse. In this instance, they would usually talk through with you the action they would need to take.

There may be times when your GP suggests that it might be helpful for you to discuss your problem with your parents/carers or that they phone and talk to them. They may be suggesting this because they think it would be helpful for you. However, if you are over 16 and you really don't want your parents/carers to know then you don't have to tell them and you can request that the GP does the same. If you are under 16 and the GP is worried that you don't fully understand the treatment you need, they have the right to contact your parents without your consent but would try and talk this through with you first.

The GP can't share information about your health with other professionals outside of the NHS without your permission (e.g. a social worker or teacher). However, if your GP refers you to another health professional within the NHS, they may ask you if they can share your notes with that person via their shared computer system. You can say no to this and the other health professional will not be able to see all of your notes.

How to get the most out of your GP appointment

We know that some young people don't feel comfortable going to their GP, especially about their emotional well-being. We therefore hope that the following information will help you find the support you need.

You can see your GP about a range of issues including:

- Physical health
- Emotional well-being/mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, self-harm etc
- Sexual health
- Drug and alcohol issues

Your Rights!

We know from our recent consultation with young people (the YEAH! Report) that sometimes, going to see a GP can be stressful and at times a frustrating experience. We've pulled together a list of your rights which will hopefully help you get the most out of your appointment:

Did you know?

- You can ask for a double appointment (20 mins) if you need it (if you have lots to talk about).
- You can bring someone with you to your appointment.
- You have a choice about which GP you see. You can request a male or female and can ask to see the same GP each time.
- If you have a bad experience with a particular GP you have a right to ask for a different GP next time. If there is only one GP in your practice you have a right to move to a different practice.
- You don't have to have students & trainees in the room with you. You should always be asked.

- You will get more from your appointment if you are able to be honest with your GP and it might help to plan out what you want to say.
- If you are suffering with depression, anxiety etc, your GP should talk through options with you and not just offer medication. Counselling should be offered too.

Want more help?

www.docready.org

This is a really useful website which has also been designed by young people for young people. Doc Ready helps you get ready for your GP visit and in particular, if you are going to discuss your emotional well-being. It has lots more information about your rights and confidentiality.

How to make a complaint

If you're not happy with the service you have received and you want to make a complaint, all GP practices should have a complaints box or procedure.

Key findings YEAH! Report 2014 - 2015

- 71% reported problems with booking systems requiring them to call at surgery opening time.
- A third had missed school, college or work to attend appointments.
- Participants praised surgeries with flexible booking systems, or drop-in clinics.