

MEDIA STATEMENT

Issued: 11 January 2017

Keeping our busy hospitals running smoothly

We can confirm that an internal incident was declared on Friday 6 January at 8.45am due to unprecedented numbers of sick patients needing care in our hospitals and a high number of people attending our A&E Departments. The incident status ended at 7.45pm on Friday 6 January.

We were able to rise to the challenge thanks to the efforts of our hard working staff and partner organisations. We have an excellent track record in delivering the A&E standard and working closely with our partners in community and social care to ensure people receive the right health care in the right setting. We are receiving an exemplary level of support from our partners in the local health and care system.

We also have a number of measures in place to make sure that, even during unprecedented times of demand, we can provide compassionate care to our patients in a timely way. That includes having additional consultants at work (including at weekends) to provide senior medical reviews for our patients, as well as additional staff on every shift. These plans are truly making a difference, and we would like to thank everyone involved, especially our staff and our local partners, for helping to keep our hospitals running smoothly.

As our hospitals remain very busy at the moment, patients coming to A&E who do not need emergency care are likely to be in for a long wait. We know that's not ideal for our patients so we would encourage people to follow the advice below.



Call **NHS 111** if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. You can also call NHS 111 if you're not sure which NHS service you need.



Call **999** if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk.



Visit a **walk-in centre, minor injuries unit or urgent care centre** if you have a minor illness or injury (cuts, sprains or rashes) and it can't wait until your GP surgery is open.



Ask your local pharmacist for advice – your pharmacist can give you advice for many common minor illnesses, such as diarrhoea, minor infections, headache, travel advice or sore throats.



Make an appointment with your GP if you are feeling unwell and it is not an emergency.

Ends

Note for Editors

1. For more information, please contact Lewis Deakin, Senior Communications Officer in the trust's communications department on tel: 020 8296 4996 or email lewis.deakin@esth.nhs.uk. Out of hours, please call 07975 232 380.