

## **COVID-19 UPDATE – Tuesday 7 April 2020**

Please see the latest update regarding COVID-19.

### **Minor Injury Units in Chippenham and Trowbridge to temporarily close as part of COVID-19 response**

The Minor Injury Units (MIUs) at Chippenham Community Hospital and Trowbridge Community Hospital will close temporarily from 5pm on Wednesday 8 April 2020 so that staff can be redeployed across the local health and care system to provide vital additional capacity.

Both MIUs have seen a significant drop in patient numbers since the start of the COVID-19 crisis as local people increasingly follow self-care advice and seek help from the online 111 service. The closures of these MIUs have been put in place as a temporary measure and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with a view to reopening the units as soon as it is feasible and sustainable to do so.

The NHS and its partners across BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire continue to work together to ensure the services provided have the resources and resilience they need to deal with the problems posed by COVID-19.

Patients with minor injuries should visit the NHS 111 online service. This will provide advice on where to go for the best care for their symptoms. People should only phone 111 if they cannot access the 111 online service.

Those patients who feel that they need a GP appointment should call their local GP practice and are likely to be offered a phone or video consultation in the first instance, unless a face-to-face appointment is absolutely necessary. As per NHS guidance no-one with COVID-19 symptoms should attend any medical setting unless explicitly directed to do by the NHS 111 service or a 999 call operator.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) appeal**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is vital to help protect our frontline workers, allowing them to continue delivering critical services in the community, whilst also limiting the spread of COVID-19.

With high demand for PPE across the nation, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Police have launched a joint appeal for support from local PPE suppliers or any businesses that have stock which could be used.

We are asking local businesses for any support that they might be able to kindly provide with supplies of PPE as a short-term measure whilst national supply chains work hard to catch up with demand. This will help allow our staff and our colleagues in Wiltshire Police to continue to

support our most vulnerable residents and ensure we can deliver critical services across the county at this challenging time.

The key items required are water repellent disposable surgical face masks, non-latex gloves, disposable plastic aprons and hand sanitizer (minimum 60% alcohol content).

If you know of any local businesses that can help with the supply of PPE please ask them to email [CandF.Commissioning@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:CandF.Commissioning@wiltshire.gov.uk) with the subject line **PPE support**.

### **Wiltshire wellbeing hub**

Our Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub, which is available via email and phone, has been working hard to provide support for our county's most vulnerable residents. Our teams continue to make daily calls to people identified by central government to see if these individuals require support and we have also received 781 calls to our designated hotline from other members of the community requiring assistance.

This virtual hub can be contacted by email; [wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk) or by calling our designated hotline, 0300 003 4576. It's available from 8am-8pm Monday-Friday and 10am-4pm Saturday and Sunday.

Hundreds of food parcels are being delivered across Wiltshire to help older people and families who need additional help at this time.

We're asking Wiltshire children to make them additionally special by creating a lovely rainbow picture, with a personal message if they wish, which can be attached to the outside of the parcel as they are sent out.

Please encourage children to send pictures to: Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre, Hulse Road, Salisbury SP1 3NR.

### **Business Support**

We are administering the £10,000 grant for businesses in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief (SBRR) or rural rates relief. We are also administering the £10,000 grant for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with a rateable value of under £15,000 and for those businesses with a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000 a grant of £25,000.

Over 4,400 applications have now been received and are currently being assessed. Of these applications, 50% contain all the necessary information for the grant to be processed fairly quickly. The remainder require further assessment or due diligence resulting in a delay in processing the claim. Further messaging will be issued through the communications channels to remind businesses to provide all the information in order that they receive this vital funding as soon as possible.

So far we have transferred £5m to local businesses with further grants being issued today.

Our Public Protection team have received 59 complaints from members of the public, mainly about social distancing measures in place in those businesses that remain open with a few relating to businesses operating when it's perceived they should be closed.

The team has also received 23 enquiries from businesses direct seeking further advice.

### **Interactive map to help you find local COVID-19 support**

The Council has created an [online interactive map](#) that allows people to see what COVID-19 community support is available in their neighbourhood and throughout the county.

The map, which will be regularly updated, can be found at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-coronavirus](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-coronavirus) and people simply have to type in their town/village/city name or a postcode in a search box and the system will automatically take them to that location and highlight the support available in that area, which will be marked by red stars. Clicking on the red stars will bring up information about the groups, including their contact details and a summary of the type of support and services they are providing.

The information on the mapping system can also be found in the Council's regularly updated Community Groups Directory.

This system complements our Community Groups Directory and allows people to find out about the local support available with just a few clicks.

### **Government WhatsApp service**

The government has launched a GOV.UK Coronavirus Information service on WhatsApp. The new, free to use, service aims to provide official, trustworthy and timely information and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19), and will further reduce the burden on NHS services.

This will help combat the spread of coronavirus misinformation in the UK, as well as helping ensure people stay home, protect the NHS and save lives.

The GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service is an automated 'chatbot' service which will allow members of the public to get answers to the most common questions about coronavirus direct from government. The service will provide information on topics such as coronavirus prevention and symptoms, the latest number of cases in the UK, advice on staying at home, travel advice and myth busting.

The service will also allow the government to send messages to all opted-in users if required.

To use the free GOV.UK Coronavirus Information Service on WhatsApp, simply add 07860 064422 in your phone contacts and then message the word 'hi' in a WhatsApp message to get started. Please share this information with your communities.

Regards

**Cllr Philip Whitehead**