



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Tuesday, 25 September, 2018**

### **Local GP Practices to offer evening and weekend appointments from 1st October**

Local GP practices are working together to offer patients more access to appointments, in the early evenings and weekends, from Monday, 1 October, 2018. NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is rolling out the national initiative called Extended Access to offer more appointments to local people. It recently held a survey and used the feedback from local people to help shape Extended Access for Shropshire.

Part of the national agenda by NHS England, Extended Access means patients will be able to book appointments to see a GP, practice nurse, or other qualified healthcare professional, at a time which may be more convenient - in the evenings, at the weekend and during bank holidays.

Nicky Wilde, Director of Primary Care at NHS Shropshire CCG, said:

“We understand how important accessibility to appointments can be – 9 to 5 doesn’t always work for everyone. This is where Extended Access can really benefit members of our local community – it offers choice and enables patients to have more flexibility around when they can access the care they need.

“Extended Access also adds to the existing range of healthcare services already available in Shropshire to help patients including pharmacists, NHS 111, the walk-in centre, minor injury units, and A&E (which is there 24/7 for life threatening serious emergencies only).”

In Shropshire, local practices will work together in a network of ‘hubs’ to provide this Extended Access service. This will ensure patients can access appointments at a nearby practice in their local area – the practices will take turns on a rota basis and patients will be advised about location at time of booking, so they can make an informed choice.

The pre-bookable appointments will be available between:

- **Weekday evenings (Monday to Friday)**  
between 6.30pm and 8pm (at a local area hub)
- **Saturdays**  
between 8am and 1pm (at a local area hub)
- **Sundays and bank holidays**  
between 8.30am and 12.30pm (at a single site in central Shrewsbury)

Arranging a pre-bookable evening, weekend or bank holiday appointment is easy to do - patients simply need to contact their practice (who they are currently registered with), during normal opening hours, and speak to the practice receptionist or a member of the practice

team who will be able to help. Appointments may not be with your registered GP but will be with a GP or other qualified healthcare professional.

Information to help patients understand more about Extended Access is available on the NHS England website, visit <https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gp/v/redesign/improving-access/>.

## **ENDS**

### **For more media enquiries / more information please contact:**

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NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is responsible for the planning and commissioning (buying) of health and care services from a range of providers for the people of Shropshire. It also has a duty to monitor these services to ensure they provide a high level of care and are value for money. It is a clinically led organisation with 41 GP Practices and it provides healthcare services for patients across the County registered with a local GP. The CCG buys a wide range of services and these include GP and primary care services through to hospital care as well as community services and mental health services. The CCG's Head Office is based at William Farr House in Shrewsbury.