

## **Lister hospital under extreme pressure – please keep A&E free for genuine emergencies**

**4 January 2018** – The Lister hospital in Stevenage is under extreme pressure, due to the number of very sick patients needing to be admitted.

Emergency department doctors are asking people not to go to A&E unless it's a life or limb-threatening emergency, or if they have been advised to go there by a healthcare professional.

People who have an urgent need for medical advice have three options:

- Speak to a local pharmacist; many pharmacies have private consulting rooms
- Call NHS 111 – a free 24/7 service accessible from any phone, where you can get advice over the phone from a range of clinicians
- Consult the online NHS Choices website – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust is working very closely with its colleagues in community and social care to do everything possible to ensure patients attending the Lister get the care they need. At the same time, they are making sure that those who are well enough can be discharged home or on to the next stage in their care.

Across the country, the NHS is under extreme pressure. The Trust is prioritising the welfare of the very sickest patients who need immediate life-saving care, and have brought in all available additional staff to help, in line with locally agreed winter plans. Anyone coming to the Lister's emergency department with a minor illness or injury is very likely to face a very long wait. Please use alternative services and keep A&E for those who are gravely ill or injured.

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**The release is jointly issued by East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.**

For more information, please call the communications team on: 01438 285362 or 01438 285940; for out-of-hours calls, please page the duty press officer on 07659 103839.

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