

## **Statement from the North East and Cumbria Urgent and Emergency Care Network**

PRESS RELEASE – 5th January, 2018

Dr Stuart Findlay, Co-chair the North East and Cumbria Urgent and Emergency Care Network, which represents all NHS organisations, said:

I would like to thank our hard working front line NHS staff, who yet again have made sure that we focus our efforts on those patients who need our clinical care the most over this busy holiday period.

The guidance issued by NHS England is in line with the winter plans for dealing with times of increased pressure on front line services.

The guidance advises that trusts can delay planned, non-urgent operations to release staff and resources and capacity to deal with more urgent cases, ensuring that those patients in the greatest immediate need get the support they require.

Each hospital is different so they can choose how they do this and our region's hospital trusts will try to minimise disruption to those patients with non urgent planned operations when making their decisions.

It's very important that patients with planned operations, procedures or outpatient appointments should attend as normal unless they are specifically contacted by their hospital and asked not to. Only those patients contacted directly will have appointments delayed and these will be rearranged. Cancer diagnosis and treatment appointments will not be delayed.

Any patients who do have a hospital appointment delayed, and feel their condition is getting worse, should contact their GP in the first instance for support."

Everyone can continue to help reduce pressure on our NHS this winter by having their flu jab, keeping a well-stocked medicine kit at home, using local pharmacists for expert advice and treatment for common illness or by calling NHS 111 for urgent advice. Parents can search 'NHS child health' in the app store to get a free app developed by local doctors and nurses for advice on common childhood illnesses.

If you are a normally healthy young person or adult, and have symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting, or symptoms of flu - please do not go to hospital. Use <http://urgentoremergency.co.uk> for advice on self-care.

There are hundreds of extra GP appointments available for those who do need to see a doctor or nurse, and again we urge people to only call 999 or go to hospital emergency departments unless it really is an emergency.

ENDS

[www.necsu.nhs.uk](http://www.necsu.nhs.uk)