

## **Accessing NHS, social and community services during the COVID-19 pandemic - FAQs**

During these unprecedented times, we understand that some patients may be confused about how to access services such as hospital outpatient appointments, hospital transport, repeat prescriptions, support for carers, as well as important advice and information for those most at risk from COVID-19.

With the help of our local networks we have been able to identify the key areas of concern for our patients in south east London. Below, please find some FAQs which we hope will provide you with the information that you need if you live in the London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham or Southwark.

### **Outpatient appointments**

#### **Q: What are hospitals doing about outpatient appointments?**

A: While some outpatient appointments may be postponed or cancelled, most appointments are now taking place over the phone or by video call but the hospital should be in touch with you about this.

If you are not sure as to whether you need to attend your outpatient appointment or not in person, contact the specific clinic by phone and email. If you do not get a response, then call the main hospital:

**Guy's Hospital** Tel: 020 7188 7188

**King's College Hospital** Tel: 020 3299 9000

**Lambeth Hospital** Tel: 020 3228 6000

**Maudsley Hospital** Tel: 020 3228 6000

**Princess Royal University Hospital** Tel: 01689 863000

**Queen Elizabeth Hospital** Tel: 020 8836 6000

**St Thomas' Hospital** Tel: 020 7188 7188

**University Hospital Lewisham** Tel: 020 8333 3000.

You can also call the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** which offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters. They provide a point of contact for patients and their families and carers.

**PALS services:**

**Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust:**

Tel: 0202 7566 2325 email: [pals@gstt.nhs.net](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.net)

**King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:**

Tel: 020 3299 3601 email: [kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

**Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust:**

Tel: 020 8333 3355 email: [pals.lewisham@nhs.net](mailto:pals.lewisham@nhs.net)

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:**

Tel: 020 7566 2325 email: [pals@moorfields.nhs.net](mailto:pals@moorfields.nhs.net)

**Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust:**

Tel: 0800 917 7159 email: [oxl-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**South London and Maudsley NHS Trust:**

Tel: 0800 731 2864 email: [pals@slam.nhs.net](mailto:pals@slam.nhs.net)

**Hospital transport**

**Q: I am concerned about getting to hospital appointments safely by public transport. What should I do?**

A: Patients who meet the specific criteria or who are considered medically vulnerable get help through GoodSAM's patient referral scheme. The scheme includes a patient transport services for patients, who are medically fit for discharge or need to attend NHS appointments. **Please note: Referrals for patient transport can only be made by organisations including your GP and the hospital.**

In addition, each NHS Trust operates a transport service for vulnerable patients:

**Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust:** Transport Team: 020 7188 2888.

**King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:** Denmark Hill: 020 3299 8000 or Princes Royal University Hospital: 020 3299 6886.

**Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust:** Bexley Accessible Transport Scheme: 01322 311333.

**Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust:** Patient Transport Services call 020 8314 1461.

**South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust:** Patient booking service - 0333 240 4909.

**Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust:** Patient transport assessment centre on 0333 240 4909.

Your local Healthwatch champion can also refer you to the GoodSAM service (see contact information below).

## **Public Transport**

Transport for London are advising travellers to avoid public transport where possible and to use existing or new walking routes.

If you must use public transport, avoid the busiest times. Further information, including how to travel safely, can be found on Transport for London website: [https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/coronavirus-covid-](https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/coronavirus-covid-19)

## **Shielding**

**Q: I am not sure if I should be shielding? What help can I get if I am?**

A: 'Shielding' means not leaving your home and minimising contact with other members of your household. If you have a medical condition and have received a letter from the NHS or you've been told by your GP or hospital clinician that you're clinically extremely vulnerable and need to shield, there are some extra steps that you're advised to take to protect yourself <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/people-at-higher-risk-from-coronavirus/if-youre-at-very-high-risk-from-coronavirus/>

- If you have received a letter or text to say you should be shielding and you don't understand why please contact your GP practice.
- If you think you should be shielding and haven't received a letter or text, please check with your GP practice.

There are some [national FAQs](#) for people who are shielding on the NHS England website.

You can register yourself or on behalf of someone else: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-extremely-vulnerable>

If you need it, you'll be able to:

- get a weekly box of basic supplies
- get priority for supermarket deliveries
- ask for help meeting your basic care needs.

Patients who are 'shielding' can self-refer to GoodSAM for community support and check in and chat support by calling: 0808 196 3646 (8am – 8pm).

Your local Healthwatch champion can also refer you to the GoodSAM service (see contact information below).

### **Pharmacy services**

#### **Q: Where can I get my repeat prescriptions and medication from?**

A: Helpful tips for ordering/collecting your prescriptions:

- If you have not signed-up to the online repeat prescription request service, you can do this via your GP or local pharmacy. But remember, you can still speak to your GP, practice pharmacist or community pharmacist by telephone or email, please check your practice or pharmacy website for contact details.
- If your condition is stable and you are receiving same medicines for last six months, you may be able to benefit from electronic repeat prescriptions. This means you will not have to re-order or collect your repeat prescriptions from your GP practice every time you need more medicine. You can speak to your GP surgery or your pharmacy about setting this up.
- If you are shielding your local pharmacy should deliver your medicines to you.
- If your pharmacy used to deliver your medicines to you before Covid-19, they will continue to do so.
- If you are shielding or self-isolating and you don't have a family member, neighbour, friend or carer who can pick up your medicines your GP or pharmacy can also register you on GoodSAM for a volunteer to do this for you.
- If you are shielding you can also self-refer to GoodSAM for a volunteer to help pick up your medicines by calling: 0808 196 3646 (8am – 8pm).

Your local Healthwatch champion can also refer you to the GoodSAM service (see contact information below).

You can also contact your local Council directly to get help with the delivery of your medicines and other support needs (see council services section below).

**Please remember:** Your GP practice and community pharmacies are still open if you need to order repeat medications, therefore, do not order in advance or increase quantity ordered or stockpiling your medicines, as this will have an impact on supply chain on medicines and cause shortages on medicines.

Where possible, please continue to self-care for minor ailments or self-limiting conditions by getting your medicines over the counter via online pharmacy or local supermarkets.

**Q: What do I do if my medication is missing or incorrect?**

A: You must telephone the pharmacy or email them if you cannot get through. Any issues with incorrect or missing medication needs to be addressed with the issuing pharmacy.

You may be able to benefit from electronic repeat prescriptions. This means you won't have to re-order or collect your repeat prescriptions from your GP practice every time you need more medicine. You can speak to your GP surgery or your pharmacy about setting this up.

**Q: Where can I get help and support for myself or someone else?**

Local councils and other local organisations are offering residents help and support during the pandemic including help for carers, delivering food and medicines, mental health and domestic abuse.

## **Bexley**

### **Bexley Council**

Bexley Coronavirus helpline: 020 3045 5398 or apply online:

[https://mybexley.bexley.gov.uk/service/Covid\\_helpline](https://mybexley.bexley.gov.uk/service/Covid_helpline)

<https://www.bexley.gov.uk/do-you-need-help-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

### **Carers Support Bexley**

Offers emotional support, information, advice, signposting, advocacy etc for Carers over the telephone: 020 8302 8011 or email: [info@carerssupport.org](mailto:info@carerssupport.org)

<http://www.carerssupport.org/>

### **Mind in Bexley**

Wellbeing support line: 020 8303

Email: [info@mindinbexley.org.uk](mailto:info@mindinbexley.org.uk)

<https://mindinbexley.org.uk/>

## **Bromley**

### **Bromley Council**

Bromley Assistance Helpline: 020 8313 4484 or by filling in the online form:

<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/requestforassistanceform>  
[https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200048/health\\_and\\_wellbeing](https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200048/health_and_wellbeing)

**Bromley Community Wellbeing Service**

Child and family support: 0203 770 8848 email: [info@bromley.nhs.net](mailto:info@bromley.nhs.net)  
<https://www.bromleywellbeingcyp.org/>

**Mind in Bromley**

Dementia carers's support: 020 3328 0366  
Mental wellbeing, emotional & social support: 0300 330 9039 email:  
[spa@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:spa@bromleywell.org.uk)

**Bromley Healthcare**

Community health services provider. Services can be accessed through the Care Coordination Centre  
Tel: 0300 330 5777  
<https://www.bromleyhealthcare.org.uk>

**Talk Together Bromley** (Bromley Healthcare's IAPT service)

A free NHS evidence-based talking therapy service for people aged 18 years and over, who are anxious, stressed, have low mood or suffer from depression  
Tel: 0300 003 3000  
Website: <https://www.talktogetherbromley.co.uk/>

**Greenwich**

**Greenwich Council**

Community Hub: 0800 470 4831 (seven days a week, 8.30am to 6pm) or  
email: [covid19support@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:covid19support@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)  
<https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/coronavirus>

**Mind in Greenwich**

Dementia carers' support: 07742 407 189  
Mental, wellbeing, emotional and social support: 020 8858 1735 email:  
[mindline@blgmind.org.uk](mailto:mindline@blgmind.org.uk)

## Lambeth

### Lambeth Council

Call the helpline: 020 7926 2999 or fill in the online form:

[https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/get-support-for-yourself-or-a-vulnerable-person/urgent-assistance?utm\\_source=rightpanel&utm\\_campaign=covid19](https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/get-support-for-yourself-or-a-vulnerable-person/urgent-assistance?utm_source=rightpanel&utm_campaign=covid19)

Report abuse or risk <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/noise-nuisance-pollution-and-anti-social-behaviour/abuse-and-violence/report-neglect-or-abuse-of-an>

### Mind in Lambeth

For confidential information service call: 020 3982 9221 or email: [information.service@lambethandsouthwarkmind.org.uk](mailto:information.service@lambethandsouthwarkmind.org.uk)

## Lewisham

### Lewisham Council

If you have been identified as shielding or need urgent support call 0208 314 3535 or email [incident@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:incident@lewisham.gov.uk). For urgent support outside of office hours call 0208 314 6000.

If you're worried about someone's safety or welfare, or someone you know may need a community care service Telephone [0208 314 7777](tel:02083147777) or email [SCAIT@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:SCAIT@lewisham.gov.uk)

### Mind in Lewisham

Dementia carers' support: 020 3228 5960

Mental wellbeing, emotional and social support: 020 3228 0760 email: [contact@lewishamewellbeing.org.uk](mailto:contact@lewishamewellbeing.org.uk)

## Southwark

### Southwark Council

Community hub Tel: 020 7525 5000 or email: [covidsupport@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:covidsupport@southwark.gov.uk)  
<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/for-the-public/coronavirus/about-the-southwark-community-hub>

### Mind in Southwark

For confidential information service call: 020 3982 9221 or email: [information.service@lambethandsouthwarkmind.org.uk](mailto:information.service@lambethandsouthwarkmind.org.uk)

### **Your local Healthwatch teams**

If you have any questions or need general advice and information around self-isolation, social distancing and other COVID related matters, contact your local Healthwatch and they can help you find the answers and support you need.

#### **Healthwatch (Bexley)**

Tel: 0208 304 9344 email: [info@healthwatchbexley.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbexley.co.uk)  
<https://www.healthwatchbexley.co.uk/>

#### **Healthwatch (Bromley)**

Tel: 020 388 60752 email: [info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk)  
<https://healthwatchbromley.co.uk/>

#### **Healthwatch (Greenwich)**

Tel: 0208 301 8340 email: [info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)  
<https://healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/>

#### **Healthwatch (Lambeth)**

Tel: 0207274 8522 email: [info@healthwatchlambeth.org.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlambeth.org.uk)  
<https://www.healthwatchlambeth.org.uk/>

#### **Healthwatch (Lewisham)**

Tel: 020 3886 0196 email: [info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk)  
<https://www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk/>

#### **Healthwatch (Southwark)**

Tel: 0207 358 7005 email: [info@healthwatchesouthwark.org](mailto:info@healthwatchesouthwark.org)  
<https://www.healthwatchesouthwark.org/>

### **Q: Emerging UK and international data suggests that people from Black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19, where can I get more information and urgent medical advice?**

A: In April, the government launched an inquiry into why people who are BAME appear to be disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Public Health England will carry out a rapid review to investigate this. In advance of its report and guidance, employers have been asked to risk-assess staff at potentially greater risk and make appropriate arrangements accordingly.

The NHS has also updated its [guidance](#) on workers who are vulnerable to COVID-19 (it now covers BAME, age, disability, sex and religion or belief). It states how employers should ensure that line managers are supported to have thorough, sensitive and comprehensive conversations with their BAME staff and



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they should identify any existing underlying health conditions that may increase the risks for them in undertaking their frontline roles, in any capacity.

We will update this page when we have more information.