



Key messages for you to support our communities in BLACKPOOL to keep well this winter

In Blackpool, we know that caring for each other is what makes our communities strong. Please help support local public and NHS services this winter by sharing some simple key messages.

These services continue to be under significant pressure, so it makes sense to equip and empower as many people as possible to take steps to keep themselves well and make sure they know where to find information that helps them access appropriate services.

This document is for anyone (front-line staff, volunteers, community leaders, councillors, staff from community organisations and groups) who comes into contact with people who are vulnerable or likely to benefit from support from health and care services.

We ask that you share this information – this could include in community newsletters, leaflets, social media and by email to others where you can.

Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) in partnership with the mental health and hospital trusts in Lancashire and South Cumbria has developed a '**Good health starts...**' campaign with many resources available for you to use.

Whether you're looking for symptom advice, mental health support, or guidance on when to seek emergency care, you'll find everything you need right here - [Good health starts... :: Home](#)

This document has five key steps for keeping well this winter we would like you to remember and share:

- 1. Good health starts ... at home**
- 2. Good health starts ... with you**
- 3. Good health starts ... online**
- 4. Good health starts ... looking after your mental health**
- 5. Good health starts ... by getting more information**

1. Good health starts at home:

Stay warm:

If you can, make sure your home stays at a temperature of around 18°C. This can help prevent serious health problems including heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia and depression. The cold damp weather, ice, snow and high winds can worsen any existing health problems, increase the risk of a fall, and make us more vulnerable to respiratory winter illnesses.

Tips to help you stay warm:

- If you are going outside, make sure you wear shoes with good grip and a scarf around the mouth to protect you from the cold air, and to reduce their risk of chest infections. Wear thin layers of cotton, wool or fleecy fibres to keep you warm.
- To minimise the risks to your health, if you're not moving about as much at home and inactive for long periods wear warm clothing indoors.
- If possible, try to keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed.
- Keep your bedroom windows closed at night - breathing in cold air can increase the risk of chest infections.

Keeping warm is key during the winter months but we want you to stay safe too. Here are some top safety tips when it comes to some ways of heating your home:

- If you use an electric blanket always check it regularly for signs of wear or damage. Never use an electric blanket and a hot water bottle at the same time. If you're in any doubt about your blanket, contact the manufacturer before you use it to make sure that it is safe. It may need to be replaced.
- Only use (portable) heaters that are in good working order and keep them a safe distance from combustible materials such as furniture— do not use them for drying clothes. Switch them off if left unattended. Supervise children and pets around them to prevent burns and other injuries.
- Candles should be secured in proper holders, away from materials that can catch fire. Never leave lit candles unattended.
- Rooms with gas heaters and fires should be well ventilated. Appliances should be maintained regularly. Consider having a carbon monoxide alarm installed too.
- Make sure you have working smoke detectors fitted on each floor of your home.
- If burning solid fuel, use fire guards to prevent embers igniting nearby combustibles. Keep the chimney swept regularly and don't sit or stand too close.
- Wheat bags – Check the manufacturer's instructions and your microwave settings carefully as wheat bags can easily overheat.

Prevent and reduce damp and mould:

Groundwork's Green Doctors offer adults and families in Blackpool expert knowledge, advice and support to help them to achieve a warm, damp free and energy-efficient home. Find out more: [Green Doctor, helping UK residents stay warm, stay well, and save energy. - Groundwork](#)

Damp and mould affect around 75% of rented properties in Blackpool during the winter period*. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. It primarily affects the airways and lungs, but can also affect the eyes, skin and impact on a person's mental health.

Some practical tips on preventing, reducing and treating damp and mould:

- Try to dry washing outside or in a tumble dryer (externally vented), rather than on radiators.
- Keep lids on pans when cooking.

- When running a bath, run the cold water first. This will reduce steam by around 90%.
- Ventilation is key! When cooking or bathing, keep the room doors closed and open a window for 10 minutes or so afterwards.
- Don't use gas appliances to heat your home – these produce lots of moisture.
- Do not block trickle vents.
- Open a couple of windows when you wake up. Open one slightly downstairs and another slightly upstairs, ideally on the opposite side of the house.
- Your heating system will work more efficiently if it is warming up cooler, dryer air. Warming up the warm, moist air will take longer and cost more.
- Try to keep your home at a steady temperature, rather than having no heating on while you are out during the day and then heating it up quickly when you get home. Heating just one or two rooms will cause worse condensation in the rooms left unheated.
- Remove excess mould with a damp cloth. Do not brush or use a vacuum cleaner as this will spread the spores.
- Use a mould remover, diluted bleach or a saline solution to remove the rest. Follow the instructions and use gloves and safety glasses.

Find more information about dealing with mould and damp here: [Damp, Mould and Condensation – My Blackpool Home](#)

To find out more how good health can start at home through making your environment safer, checking in on loved ones or seeking the support of services to all help prevent future illness or accidents, please visit [Good health starts... :: Good health starts at home](#)

2. Good health starts with you:

Here are some simple things you can do to help yourself stay well:

Get vaccinated

Vaccinations are a high priority action for the NHS - they protect people from serious illness and supports NHS and adult social care resilience. This winter, our vaccination campaign is here to help you, and your loved ones stay safe, healthy, and ready for whatever the season brings.

This year, we're making it even easier to get vaccinated, with more locations than ever across Lancashire and South Cumbria. Whether it's at your GP surgery, local pharmacy, the vaccine van, or one of our many pop-up clinics in the community, you can choose the time and place that works best for you. We want everyone to feel protected under our umbrella. More information, including when and where the Roving Vaccine Van, will be at: [LSC Integrated Care Board :: Winter Vaccinations](#)

Vaccinations available include:

- **Flu** – Many people get seriously ill from flu, including having complications like bronchitis or pneumonia, and every winter thousands of people die – including children.
 - **Eligibility** –
 - aged 2 and 3 years on 31 August 2025
 - eligible school aged children (Reception to Year 11)
 - those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
 - pregnant women
 - all those aged 65 years and over
 - those in long-stay residential care homes
 - carers, those in receipt of carer's allowance or main carer of an older or disabled person
 - household contacts of immunocompromised individuals

- frontline health and social care staff
- **RSV** – The RSV vaccine helps protect against infection with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), a common virus that can make babies and older adults seriously ill.
 - **Eligibility** –
 - Pregnant women are eligible from 28 weeks to help protect the baby for the first few months after birth. Women can speak to their maternity service or GP surgery to book a vaccine appointment.
 - Older adults aged 75 to 79
- **COVID19** –
 - **Eligibility** -
 - Adults aged 75 years and over
 - Residents in care homes for older adults
 - Individuals who are immunosuppressed aged 6 months and over

Visit your local pharmacy

If you, your child, or someone you care for starts to feel ill, first of all it might be more convenient (and faster) to get help and advice from your [local pharmacy](#). Pharmacists are highly qualified and can offer advice on a range of illnesses as well as give advice about medicines. This includes how to use your medicine or worries about side effects and any other questions you have. If they can't help you themselves, they will signpost you to a GP or other health professional.

In addition, the launch of a new [Pharmacy First](#) scheme means that patients across England can now get prescription-only treatment, where appropriate, for seven common conditions at their local high street pharmacy without needing to see a GP. This includes earache, sore throat, sinusitis, impetigo and urinary tract infections.

Ask your pharmacist what medicines should be in your cabinet to help you and your family this winter. Always keep medicines out of sight and reach of children – a high, lockable cupboard in a cool, dry place is ideal. Regularly check the expiry dates on any medicine you have or are about to use. If a medicine is past its expiry date, don't use it or throw it away. Take it to your pharmacy where it can be disposed of safely.

Falls prevention

As we get older our muscle strength and balance reduces which increases our risk of having a life-changing fall. Keeping active and doing simple strength and balance exercises can help to reduce this risk.

Active Blackpool offers a range of groups and activities to help you get moving, build your fitness, and have fun! This is available to all adults of all levels of ability and fitness. Find out more: [Community | Active Blackpool](#)

Vitaline is a local service that helps you to stay independent or get help in an emergency. They may be able to help if you have fallen.

Vitaline uses devices such as personal alarms and sensors for your home that are linked to a 24/7 response centre in Blackpool. The operators are trained to deal with emergency situations. When a personal alarm or sensor is activated, an operator will assess the situation and if necessary arrange one of the following actions:

- Dispatch a Vitaline first responder to attend
- Alert a nominated contact
- Contact emergency services

Find out more: [Vitaline technology enabled care | understanding the service](#)

Other tips to help you keep well:

- Stay as active as you can, regular exercise can help improve your physical and mental health.
- Try to stock up on food essentials such as long-life milk, tins of soup and bread in the freezer to reduce the need to go out during extreme bad weather.
- Make sure you have enough medication and remember to get repeat prescriptions in advance of any predicted severe weather.
- Be aware that many surgeries and pharmacies will close over the Christmas and New Year period.

3. Good health starts online:

In today's digital age, taking control of your health and wellbeing has never been easier – or more important. Trusted online resources can empower you to make informed decisions, access support, and stay well, wherever you are and whenever you need it. Whether you're seeking guidance on physical health, mental wellbeing, children's health, or staying safe online, the NHS and its partners offer a wide range of reliable tools and services – available 24/7.

With [NHS 111 Online](#) and the [NHS App](#) you can:

- Get advice for symptoms, injuries, and existing conditions
- Access mental health and dental support
- Find out when to seek emergency care
- Explore tailored information for your needs

Don't go to the emergency department unless you have an emergency

If you are in any doubt, contact 111 either by phone or online at www.111.nhs.uk to get clinical advice or direction to the most appropriate services for treatment.

Please remember to cancel any unwanted appointments

If you do have an appointment with a GP or other NHS service that you no longer need, please remember to contact your GP practice or the NHS service you have your appointment with to cancel. It doesn't matter if this is only 30 minutes beforehand, NHS services are so busy they will always have someone on standby to take the appointment.

4. Good health starts looking after your mental health:

Winter can be a hard time for some people. Colder weather and darker nights may mean it's harder to get out and about and could leave you feeling isolated. In times of crisis, help is available. If you need help straight away, you can:

- Ring **999** if there is an immediate risk to life
- Call **NHS 111** and select the mental health option to get the help you need. Available 24/7, you will speak to a mental health advisor who will listen to you and help you find the right support
- Contact the **Initial Response Service** (Mental Health Crisis Line) which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 0800 9530110. It is staffed by trained mental health professionals who are able to provide assessment and referrals to appropriate services. Ring it if you need to access services or for advice about someone who needs treatment or support
- If you have urgent concerns about someone's social circumstances, it may be more appropriate to call **social services**. You can contact the Out of Hours Adult Social Care team on 01253 477678

For more specific help and support on topics such as talking therapies, bereavement support, self-harm and children's mental health visit: [LSC Integrated Care Board :: Mental health support](#).

5. Good health starts by knowing what other help and support is available:

You can find a wealth of information to help look after yourself, your friends, your family and community on the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria website. To stay healthy, prevent illness and get the right care, please visit: www.lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk/our-work/your-local-services

In addition, there is multiple information available from organisations (both local and national) offering help and support during winter:

FYi Directory

FYi Directory is a comprehensive guide to services and help for the whole family in and around Blackpool. You can find out more here: [Adults care and support - FYi Directory](#)

CAB Blackpool

You can get advice about benefits, housing, work, debt and money, and other issues at CAB Blackpool (formerly Citizens Advice Bureau Blackpool). Find out more: [Contact Us | Citizens Advice Blackpool](#)

Help with the rising cost of living

Blackpool Council is working with various local organisations who can offer support. Visit their website at [Blackpool Council | Cost of living help and advice](#) to find out how they can help you including information about the Household Support Fund, food, and money and debt. This includes information about energy support schemes and the Government's [Help for Households](#).

Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms

Lancashire Fire and Rescue can come to your home and offer advice on fire safety. You can get free smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms. Find out more: [Home Fire Safety Check | Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service](#)

Homelessness and rough sleeping

During winter, sleeping on the streets poses even more of a risk to life than normal. There are however support options for those who sleep rough, are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. If you see somebody, or know somebody, who is rough sleeping you can report this via [Streetlink](#).

Blackpool Council can help if you are at risk of becoming homeless, struggling with insecure housing, affected by antisocial behaviour or your property is in a poor state of repair. Find out more: [Housing and homelessness advice](#)

If you have nowhere to stay today, you can attend Blackpool Council offices at Chapel Street Monday to Friday 1.00pm to 4.30pm. You can also telephone on 01253 477760.

Even if the council can't offer you emergency accommodation they will still try and help you resolve your homelessness in the long-term.

For homelessness emergencies outside these times, please telephone 01253 477600.

Practical tips for rough sleepers to try and protect against the cold:

- Try and find a sheltered place
- Wear layers of thin clothing, use a sleeping bag and blankets

- Avoid sleeping directly on the ground by, for example, sleeping on layers of card

Pension credit

Pension Credit gives you extra money to help with your living costs if you are over State Pension age and on a low income. Pension Credit can also help with housing costs such as ground rent or service charges. You might get extra help if you are a carer, severely disabled, or responsible for a child or young person. Pension Credit is separate from your State Pension.

You can get Pension Credit even if you have other income, savings or own your own home. We know that some people may not be getting [Pension Credit](#) when they might be eligible for it. Pension Credit gives you extra money to help with your living costs if you are over State Pension age and on a low income. It can also help with housing costs such as ground rent or service charges. If you work with people over State Pension age, or with those supporting them, or know anyone who might be eligible, then please encourage them to find out more.

You can [apply for Pension Credit online at GOV.UK](#) or by calling 0800 99 1234. A friend or family member can call for you if you need support.

Priority Services Register

We are seeking your support to actively encourage our elderly and vulnerable community members to sign up to the utility “Priority Users” schemes for electricity, gas and telephone.

Utility companies offer a Priority Services Register for customers who require extra support and additional services. You can sign up if you are aged over 65; disabled or chronically sick; or have a hearing or visual impairment.

Some of the support offered if registered includes free advice on being more energy efficient, protection from cold callers, your meter moved free of charge if it's hard to use or read, bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them, bills and meter readers supplied in a braille, large print, audio tape, textphone or typetalk if you're visually impaired, priority reconnection if your supply is interrupted, alternative facilities for cooking and heating if your supply is interrupted, extra help to use your meter or appliances, and annual gas safety checks.

- **British Gas** – <https://www.britishgas.co.uk/priority-service-register>
- **E.ON** – <https://www.eonnext.com/blog/88-what-is-the-priority-services-register>
- **EDF Energy** – <https://www.edfenergy.com/help-support/PSR>
- **United Utilities** - <https://www.unitedutilities.com/help-and-support/priority-services/>

Information also available on the [Ofgem website](#).

* [Housing and health](#) - Blackpool JSNA October 2025

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding these key messages or insight from the conversations you have, please share it with us. Please email the NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board team at: lscicb.communications@nhs.net