

Accessing help for other, non-COVID-19, health issues

As a 'Friend' you can let the person you're supporting know that they should seek medical care when they need it and not be put off by the coronavirus pandemic. Anyone who delays seeking treatment could be putting their long-term health at risk.

The person you're supporting can access medical help:

- Online: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk/> (for help and advice)
- Phone: 111 (if symptoms get worse)
- Phone: 999 (if someone's life is at risk)

GP services

GP services are still available, though may be available via virtual, or other, different methods to normal.

The Welsh Government have advised that "video appointments will be offered if doctors want more information than a telephone call can provide. In these cases, surgeries can provide simple instructions about how people can access the free and easy-to-use technology that will work with their smartphone, tablet or PC".

If the person you're supporting is unsure about accessing virtual appointments, you could support them to do so.

Dental treatment

Routine dental services are operating at the moment, but may still be affected to a certain extent by the pandemic situation.

If the person you're helping has pain, toothache, dental trauma or swelling please use the [NHS Direct Wales symptom checker](#) for dental problems and follow the [advice](#). If they have another dental problem they can search for advice on that topic in the [NHS Direct Wales Encyclopedia](#) and follow the appropriate advice.

If they do need formal advice regarding a dental emergency, they should initially try to contact their dental practice by telephone.

They shouldn't go to the practice in person, they'll be provided with advice over the telephone regarding arrangements should they need to be seen.

If their practice is not taking calls they may need to call the number their Local Health Board normally uses for urgent dental care. _____

Support with hearing aids

All NHS Audiology services in Wales offer a postal service for replacement hearing aid batteries and for repair of hearing aids. Services welcome enquiries by phone, text and email to provide help/advice for NHS hearing aid patients who are experiencing difficulties, and contact details are available on individual Health Board Audiology Service websites and social media. However, during the COVID-19 period unless specifically requested, they shouldn't visit their NHS

Audiology department. For the latest updates about services in local health boards, please find contact details at the following locations:

- Aneurin Bevan UHB: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/page/51984>
- Betsi Cadwallader UHB: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/861/page/96704>
- Cardiff and Vale UHB: <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/audiology>
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB: <https://cwmtafmorgannwg.wales/services/audiology/>
- Hywel Dda UHB: <https://hduhb.nhs.wales/healthcare/covid-19-information/>
- Powys THB: <http://www.powysthb.wales.nhs.uk/audiology/>
- Swansea Bay UHB: <https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/hospitals/a-z-hospital-services/audiology/>

If the person you're supporting needs further advice and is aged 50 or over they can contact Age Cymru Advice on **0300 303 44 98**, available 9:00am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday, or email advice@agecymru.org.uk

If the person you're supporting needs further advice and is aged under 50, they can call Citizens Advice on **0800 207 20 20**, available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/