

Industrial Action

Messages for the public

Last updated: 25 January 2023

Our services, including our crisis and single point of access services, are open and running as normal.

If you need urgent care please continue to come forward as normal regardless of any industrial action taking place. Especially in emergency and life-threatening cases – when someone is seriously ill or injured, or their life is at risk.

If we have not contacted you, please attend any planned appointments as normal. We will contact you if your appointment needs to be rescheduled for any reason.

Staff at GP practices and pharmacies are not planning to strike. Please continue to attend your GP or use your local pharmacy unless you are told otherwise.

Remember where the situation is not life-threatening or you're not sure what to do, you can access support using [NHS 111 online](#).

If you do not have internet access then dial the NHS 111 helpline, contact your local GP or visit your pharmacy.

Background and frequently asked questions

What is happening?

Trade unions representing some NHS staff are in dispute with the Government over the 2022/23 pay award. The NHS wants to see a resolution as soon as possible, but pay is a matter for the Government and the trade unions.

What if I need urgent or emergency care?

Anyone who needs urgent care should use NHS111 online to be assessed and directed to the right care for them. If you do not have internet access, then 111

helpline is available. When someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk, you should seek emergency care in the normal way, by calling 999.

What do strikes mean for NHS services in my area?

Not every hospital and ambulance service will be affected by strike action. NHS Employers has [published this web page](#) with details of the confirmed industrial action dates for health, transport and education staff in England.

What if I have an appointment on a strike day?

Everyone who has an appointment should attend as planned, unless your local NHS provider has contacted you to reschedule. If we have not contacted you, please attend your appointment even if your Trust is affected by strikes.

Will emergency care be affected on strike days?

Emergency care will continue to be available across all parts of the country. It is really important that in emergency and life-threatening cases – when someone is seriously ill or their life is at risk patients continue to come forward as normal.

What if I have a minor injury or illness?

Save time if you have a minor injury or illness - A&E will be busier than usual on strike days, unless it is a life threatening or emergency case (when someone is seriously ill or injured, or their life is at risk) you are likely to experience a long wait. It may be quicker for you to go to an urgent treatment centre or call 111 / visit [NHS111 online](#).

Will GP services be affected on strike days?

GP services will be running as normal on strike days. Please continue to attend scheduled GP appointments.

When will I find out if my appointment is rescheduled?

The NHS will contact you if your appointment needs to be rescheduled due to strike action. This is likely to be a letter or phone call, and you should be offered an alternative date for your appointment. If we have not contacted you, please attend your appointment as planned.

Is there anything I should do now?

No, the NHS will contact you if your appointment needs to be rescheduled due to strike action.

Should I cancel my appointment on the day of strikes?

No, if we have not contacted you, please attend your appointment as planned.

What should I do if I need an ambulance?

On strike days, patients should only call 999 if seriously ill or injured, and there is risk to life. Ambulances will be dispatched where clinically appropriate. For all other health care needs support will be available through [NHS 111 online](#), via the NHS 111 helpline or at your local GP or pharmacy. The NHS.UK website has more information on [when to call 999](#) and [when to go to A&E](#).

What is considered an emergency?

Patients should only call 999 if seriously ill or injured, or there is risk to life. Ambulances will be dispatched where clinically appropriate.

How long will services be impacted?

The nurses strikes on 15 and 20 December 2022 will last for 12 hours and the ambulance strikes on 21 and 28 December 2022 will last for 24 hours. However patients should be aware that it may take slightly longer for services to return to normal.

How will hospital transport be affected?

It may be quicker for you, when being discharged from hospital on days affected by the strikes, to arrange for a relative/friend to transport you, rather than relying on the transport services which are likely to be under extreme pressure.