

## Local NHS 111 services running well

The NHS would like to reassure local residents that the NHS 111 urgent care service in south Essex is working well and that patients can be confident of getting a good quality service. It stresses that patients calling the number over the busy bank holiday period in early May 2013 received a speedy and efficient service.

The 111 number allows people to access healthcare for any health problem that is not life-threatening. Local residents can ring the 111 number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

When callers dial 111 they are put through to highly trained call handlers, supported by experienced nurses or paramedics. They will be clinically assessed and either given information or referred directly to the most appropriate service which can deal with their injury or illness. This may range from dentist, pharmacy, community service or out-of-hours GP.

Call handlers are dealing quickly and efficiently with the high volume of calls. Over the bank holiday weekend in early May, 2,319 callers dialed the 111 number. Of these calls, over 95 per cent were answered within 60 seconds, topping the national quality requirement.

Dr Roger Gardiner, GP for Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and lead clinician for NHS 111 service in south Essex, said:

“We are very pleased to see the local service performing so well over the busy bank holiday. The 111 number is under scrutiny following reported difficulties in some areas of the country. We would like to reassure local people that the service in south Essex is working very well and has not encountered the problems described in the national media. We are confident that the local service is robust, and able to cope in a timely manner with the demands placed upon it. We would like to assure people that 111 is the number to call for urgent or out of hours medical help.”

Castle Point and Rochford CCG welcomes and value all comments and feedback and therefore encourages local residents to contact them about their experience with the new NHS 111 service in south Essex.

To help Castle Point and Rochford CCG to make necessary service improvements, email: [NHS111.southessex@nhs.net](mailto:NHS111.southessex@nhs.net) or write to: Castle Point and Rochford CCG Phoenix Court, Christopher Martin Road, Basildon, Essex SS14 3HG.

For more information about Castle Point and Rochford CCG, visit their website at: [www.castlepointandrochford.nhs.uk](http://www.castlepointandrochford.nhs.uk)