

PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

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Thurrock Health Centre: See a GP or nurse seven days a week, 8am to 8pm, with walk-in appointments too

From the end of March, any patient - wherever they live - will be able to see a GP or nurse seven days a week, between 8am and 8pm at our new GP service in Grays.

The service will accept new patient registrations and will also have appointments available all day every day for patients who aren't registered at the practice. Anyone, whether they are a registered patient or not, will be able to walk-in and wait to see a GP or nurse without an appointment.

Marc Davis, Director of Primary and Community Care for NHS South West Essex, says: "For the first time in south west Essex, we'll have a practice that's open seven days a week and 12 hours a day.

"It will significantly improve access to primary care for everyone in the area, whether they are a local resident, work or study in the town, are passing through Thurrock, or are visiting friends and family in the wider area.

"There will be no restrictions on who can access services at the new Thurrock Health Centre, which is great news for residents across south west Essex as a whole."

NHS South West Essex has commissioned the new extended service, and has appointed College Health to run it, initially from Grays Health Centre in Brooke Road, then from the former Woolworths site - which will be called Thurrock Health Centre - from May 2010.

Thurrock Health Centre will offer a range of primary care services. Primary care is usually the first point of contact that a patient has with the health service, and services at Thurrock Health Centre will include GP and nurse appointments, immunisations, health checks, advice and screenings.

KEY DATES

28 March 2010

College Health will be providing an extended hours service (seven days a week, 8am to 8pm), including a service for walk-in patients, from Grays Health Centre in Brooke Road.

Dr Shehadeh will also continue to run his usual practice from this site.

April 2010

Dr Shehadeh will relocate to his new premises at Odd Fellows Hall in Dell Road.

May 2010

College Health will relocate to the former Woolworths site in the High Street, which will be their permanent home. This will be called Thurrock Health Centre.

Once both Dr Shehadeh and College Health have relocated, there will no longer be a GP practice at Grays Health Centre. Instead, this site will be used for clinics and community services. More details will be confirmed nearer the time.

ENDS

For media enquiries contact Georgia Jerram, Head of Communications Agency at NHS South West Essex, on 01268 245764 or email georgia.jerram@swessex.nhs.uk

Notes for editors

For more information about College Health visit www.mysurgerywebsite.co.uk/index.aspx?p=COLLUT Note that the website does not yet carry details about the new Thurrock Health Centre

Additional notes to editors

NHS South West Essex is the primary care trust that commissions services for people living in south west Essex. This means that we plan, develop and buy services for people living in Thurrock, Brentwood, Basildon, Billericay and Wickford.

Our vision is to for the entire population served by NHS South West Essex to become one of the healthiest and best cared for in the country.

The primary care trust's strategic plan - a top-level plan which sets the agenda for its work over the next five years - was launched in July 2009. It identifies four key priority areas:

Access to quality primary, community and dental care: making it easier to get an appointment with a GP or dentist, and providing community-based services so that patients don't have to go to hospital unnecessarily.

Prevention and screening: using screening (such as bowel screening for the over 60s) and immunisation programmes (such as the MMR jab) to prevent - or identify - illness wherever possible.

Patient experience, safety and quality: providing better choice, higher standards, faster access and ensuring all patients are treated with respect and dignity.

Integrated care pathways: designing services around the needs of patients and communities (rather than organisations and institutions) so that GPs, hospital doctors, social care staff, community nurses and the ambulance service work together, in the best interests of the patient.

The work described in this press release relates to the first theme, improving access to primary care.

NHS South West Essex is committed to the NHS Constitution, which sets out: the rights of patients, the public and staff; the responsibilities we all have to each other to ensure the NHS is fair and effective; pledges which the NHS is committed to achieve.