



Wellbeing and Independence Shropshire (WIPS) Winter Support Service

Shropshire Council, in partnership with its health colleagues has commissioned a Winter Support Service that will work with vulnerable, and potentially vulnerable Shropshire residents. The service will support people to avoid a health and care crisis situation over the winter period and will connect them to a range of support.

It is an enhancement of the current well-being and independence service commissioned by the council and delivered by the Wellbeing & Independence Partnership, Shropshire (WIPS).

The service **can** offer - assessment and ongoing support to people identified as needing help, including:

- Shopping and delivery
- Connecting people to local support groups (e.g. hot meal deliveries)
- Collecting and delivering medications
- Telephone companionship for isolated or lonely people
- Wellbeing home visits and follow-up support

The service **can't** offer - a crisis response, a supported hospital discharge service or personal care, but it **will** work as part of the health and care system to ensure that people get the support that they need through appropriate referrals and signposting.

Primary Care, Shropshire Council and partners will begin to refer into the service this week. The service is free but time-limited to the winter months – ending on 31st March 2021 and reverting to the all- year round WIPS services.

WIPS consists of five voluntary & community organisations:

- Age UK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Shropshire Rural Community Charity
- Royal Voluntary Service
- Oswestry Community Action (QUBE)
- Mayfair Community Centre, Church Stretton

The WIPS partnership and the council have worked closely together since the start of the Covid pandemic. The partner organisations have adapted their delivery models, supported people in different ways and demonstrated their resilience, creativity and flexibility by being able to enhance their core activity and deliver a Winter Support Service.

Over the winter months, pressures build within the health and care system as a result of the significant rise in the number of people admitted to hospital. The health and care system is affected by the increased incidence of infectious diseases, and non-infectious conditions such as asthma, are exacerbated during the winter months.

The challenge of managing the impact of Covid-19 when the health and care system is at its busiest will require an effective, robust and co-ordinated effort to ensure that the system is able to meet the increased demand for services and provide high-quality care and support.

It is really important that we support people to stay well and independent at home – avoiding unneeded hospital admissions and ensuring successful hospital discharges.

The service will help the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (those who previously were asked to Shield) and other vulnerable people maintain their physical and emotional wellbeing through the winter when the effect of Covid -19 remains serious and significant.

Cllr Dean Carroll, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Services and Climate Change, said ‘ I’m delighted that WIPS partners have been able to adapt and enhance their highly valued work as part of the entire health and care system’s approach to supporting people to stay well and independent at home this winter. I encourage people who feel they could benefit from support to maintain their independence at home to get in touch either with the council or the Winter Support Service and talk to us about what could be put in place to make a difference.’

To contact and refer into the Winter Support Service -

Any Shropshire resident who feels they could benefit from the service should contact Shropshire Council on **0345 6789028** for more details and to be referred.

Shropshire Council staff should complete an MS Form to make a referral. This is located here -

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ETDBti03i0O8gmfkx5ZuiREM5T8LWdFKkfJN85kg-xhUMVNSNERXWTNMTDk1QkRRSjY5MExVTVNCVS4u>

Primary care staff need to complete the referral form as a Word document and email it to winter@ageukstw.org.uk

Referrals can be made by other organisations either through the council on 0345 6789028 or directly on 01743 233788, asking to make a referral to the Winter Support Service. The direct number is available 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4pm Friday.

Link Workers will discuss the referral with the person being referred (and if necessary the referrer) and put in place a Winter Support Plan. The Link Worker will liaise with partner organisations and/or other groups required to deliver a service.

12/11/20

