

Making it easier to see a GP in evenings and weekends

A new service to make it easier for patients to see a GP in the evening and weekends is now up and running in Warrington Town centre. The service runs weekday evenings from 6pm to 8pm and from 8am to 8pm at weekends at Bath Street Health & Wellbeing Centre and appointments can be offered to Warrington residents registered with a Warrington GP practice.

The appointments are available between the hours of 6pm to 8pm weekdays and 8am to 8pm on Saturdays and Sundays, for non-urgent patients only, on a first come first serve basis. The appointments must be booked in advance and can only be accessed following referral to the service by your own practice. It is not a same-day appointment service.

The service has been developed by Warrington Health Plus, a new social enterprise established by Warrington's GP practices following the award of extra funding from the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund. The Fund recognises and supports the GPs' work to develop family doctor services in Warrington.

Dr Sue Burke, GP at Springfields Surgery said *"This service will be a real benefit to patients. It can be very difficult for some people to access GP appointments if they are working, which is why we are offering more choice to those who find it hard to see their own GP within core hours."*

"If you are registered with a Warrington GP, your practice will be able to refer you to this service if you need a routine GP appointment either out of normal hours or sooner than your practice can offer. Self-referral will not be possible as access to these appointments can only be arranged through GP practices."

Dr Burke added: *"Of course, seeing a GP is one of a number of services available to people and for some conditions, a GP may not be the most appropriate source of support. Other options include NHS 111, the local pharmacy and the out of hours service for urgent care."*

Patients who would find a later or weekend appointment more convenient, should ask the receptionist when booking a non-urgent GP appointment.