

➡ Tim - "My Girlfriend's First Seizure"

A resident praises front line emergency services, particularly the ambulance service.

"A couple of weeks ago, I woke up at 7.30am to my girlfriend (who is 30) having her first ever seizure, which I'm told is quite rare. Obviously a seizure at any time, anywhere is a terrifying experience.

I called the ambulance who arrived in 7 minutes 22 seconds and I cannot thank the person at the other end of the phone enough.



The call handler was 'simply brilliant'

He was calm, he talked me through some simple steps, and asked me simple questions at a time where I thought my girlfriend was losing her breath and about to die in front of me.

This was incredibly stressful, and I didn't know how to go about thanking the person at the other end of the phone as he was simply brilliant.

Our NHS gets some bad press, and people slate it, but in mine and my girlfriends time of need they were exceptional.

I hope someday, somehow, this story gets back to that person on the other end of the phone - because you my friend are a hero, and I hope you know how much I appreciated your knowledge, your calmness and your professionalism.

I take my hat off to the ambulance service and thank all staff."

"You, my friend, are a hero!"

Get involved today and have your say!

➡ Paula - "We Will Not Be Using 111 Again"

A resident recalls her negative experience.

"I called the 111 service about two weeks ago - I've needed to use this service before, quite a while ago but can confidently say I will not be using it again.

I am 81 years old and my husband is 91. A couple of weeks ago my asthma flared up and I was prescribed steroids.

On that particular Saturday I took all my usual medication in the morning, and later realised I had not taken the steroids - I told my husband and went to take them. In the afternoon I noticed the medication on the kitchen counter and a horrible realization came over me as it became clear I had taken five blood pressure tablets and not the steroids! In a bit of a panic I told my husband who immediately made me sit down while he called 111.

The 111 people insisted on speaking to me and went through a load of questions which I felt were not necessary and did not take account of the fact that we were both very scared. Eventually they said they would speak to a medical colleague and call me back.

"I felt the questions were not necessary."

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20 minutes later he phoned back saying he didn't think there was anything to panic about but he sent an ambulance round to take me to Croydon Hospital. It seemed to take forever.

The paramedics were excellent, very reassuring, made sure my husband and I were ok and took us to hospital where further tests could be done and I could be kept under observation. The staff at the hospital were brilliant - they really took excellent care of me and were able to discharge me at 3 am once they were satisfied no damage had been done. Fortunately my daughter and son-in-law were able to take us home.

We used 111 as responsible citizens not wishing to burden the 999 service. However, there is no sense of urgency with 111 dealing with people who are extremely worried. We will not be using 111 again."