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Santa's Grotto

On Friday 15th December Santa and Mrs Claus visited the children at Colchester Hospital, handing out presents from their grotto and around the wards. They visited children in their hospital beds to wish them a Merry Christmas!

A big thank you to staff at Colchester Borough Homes who helped to wrap presents and decorate the grotto with donations from Fenwick, It's all Fun and Games, Perrywood Garden Centre, Entertainer Toys, and Tesco.

Clinicians ask people not to go to A&E if they're experiencing diarrhoea or vomiting

Clinicians at the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are urging the public to help prevent the spread of the highly contagious diarrhoea and vomiting bug, Norovirus.

Over recent days, there have been some cases confirmed by health professionals at Colchester Hospital. They're now asking the public for

their help to stop the spread of the winter bug by staying away from the hospital, where possible, if they've had any diarrhoea or vomiting symptoms. If you do have to visit hospital wards, please ensure you wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water and use the alcohol-based hand rub that is available at the entrance to hospital wards.

In addition, clinicians are asking people to follow the below advice:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water. If you are in an NHS facility as well as washing your hands you should use the hand gels available.
- Ensure that toilet areas in your home are kept clean, particularly if you have been experiencing symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting.
 - Wash any clothing or linen that could be contaminated with norovirus.
 - Disinfect any hard surfaces that could be contaminated (this includes toilet door handles, sinks and taps).
- Stay away from hospitals, work, school or social gatherings until you have been free of symptoms for at least 48 hours.

[Read more.](#)

Patients received Christmas surprise

Patients at Clacton Hospital received some early Christmas presents when staff from the ASDA store in Bull Hill Road, dressed as Santa's elves, dropped by to deliver a selection of festive gifts.

Nearly 40 patients on St Osyth Priory and Kate Grant wards were handed gifts which included books, toiletries, socks, flannels and Christmas decorations.

Kerry-May Surtees, Integrated Care Manager for Community Hospitals at Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE), said: "We are extremely grateful to ASDA for this wonderful gesture. All the patients were very pleased with the gifts they received. You could tell there had been a lot of thought put into the parcels."

Local health and care services under

significant pressure

Health and care services across north east Essex are currently experiencing significant pressure, with unprecedented levels of demand for Accident and Emergency (A&E) and GP services.

Clinicians at Colchester Hospital say they're seeing many more patients than they have space for. They are reminding local people with minor illnesses or non-life threatening conditions to seek alternative treatment or to visit their local pharmacist for advice and support if they need it.

[Read more.](#)

Young people are savvier and more generous
when giving to charity at Christmas

18 – 24 year olds would be first to give up their smartphones to raise money for charity – but are more likely to make checks on their chosen charity first.

New research from the Charity Commission and the Fundraising Regulator highlights the generosity of the British public at Christmas – and suggests that younger people are savvier about the charities they donate to than other age groups.

44% of 18 – 24 year olds said that they would give up their smartphones for the month of December to raise £500 for a charity of their choice. This is compared with under a third of the rest of the population. Youngsters also intend to make the highest financial donation to charity this Christmas, with an average pledge of £31.29.

[Read more.](#)

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