

## Healthwatch Leicestershire and Healthwatch Rutland Briefing and update: Urgent Care/Minor Injury and Illness Services

Consultation 26 February to 23 April 2014

### Introduction

Urgent care is treatment for minor illnesses and injuries, without an appointment, at hospitals, walk-in centres and GP surgeries. It refers to health conditions which are urgent, but are neither life-threatening nor emergencies. They include things like bruises, sprains, minor burns, cuts and wounds, coughs, colds, vomiting or stomach troubles. East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group (ELR CCG) wants to make sure good quality urgent care is available when people need it, and believes there are compelling reasons to make changes.

### Why do we need changes?

At the moment urgent care services in East Leicestershire and Rutland differ in effectiveness and in what they offer from place to place. Their opening times are confusing for patients and clinicians alike.

Local doctors and other health professionals have listened to people's views on these services, while carefully examining the effectiveness of the care on offer, how the services are used and how much they cost to run. We think that there is room for significant improvement.

Like many other areas across the country, it is important that we ease pressure on busy accident and emergency departments. One of the ways we can help achieve this locally is to make sure that there are other good services available every day.

The Urgent and Emergency Care Review (NHS England, January 2013) also highlights the need to improve urgent care, and sets out what good care looks like:

*"Services must provide care that is efficient, consistently high in quality and safe, seven days a week. It must be simple and it must help patients and clinicians make good choices. It must also provide the right care in the right place, by those with the right skills, the first time."*

We want to make changes to ensure better quality care is available that meets these aims. So we would like to know what people think about our plans for the future of these services.

### The consultation document and questionnaire

The consultation document sets out the urgent care services available today, how they are used, and three options for improving them. It also asks people to answer some questions. After reading the background information, we would like people to choose one option and tell us why they prefer it. It also invites them to suggest further improvements.

### Pre-consultation engagement

We have worked hard to gather and understand people's views, and people told us they supported local urgent care services, and asked us to consider how we could improve opening times and access, as well as highlighting the need for better information about local services. We have taken these views on board. Leicestershire Healthwatch and

Rutland Healthwatch have given us some important insights into patients' needs which have also shaped our thinking.

All these views of local people have shown us the need for improvements. Now we would like the public's help again to make sure the decisions we make are the right ones.

### **A consultation update – Oadby, Wigston, Blaby and Lutterworth**

There have been one or two changes since we spoke to local people about this subject, which have led to us revising our options for the future. We are now including Oadby and Wigston in all of our proposals, because we will take over responsibility for the local walk-in centre from April this year. It is NHS England's responsibility at the moment and their staff have been working closely with us on this consultation. Including Oadby and Wigston in our options would offer more choice to patients in the surrounding area.

We have also re-examined how to help people in the Lutterworth area. The walk-in service at Feilding Palmer Hospital, Lutterworth, was temporarily suspended last year, and many local people have been going to Rugby St Cross Hospital instead, as it is only about eight miles away. We are now offering Lutterworth people a choice of local urgent care services based at any East Leicestershire GP surgery.

### **What is currently available?**

We offer urgent care in the following places, which are open for different hours and days of week. They do not all provide the same diagnosis and care services.

Location	Service available	Opening times
Rutland Memorial Hospital, Oakham	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	Minor Illness (nurse-led), Monday to Friday 8.30am to 6pm  Minor Injury, 9am to 5pm No services at weekend or Bank Holidays
Market Harborough District Hospital	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	7 days a week, 9am to 9pm
Melton Mowbray Hospital	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	Weekends and Bank Holidays, 9.30am to 1.30pm
Latham House Medical Practice, Melton Mowbray	Minor Injury Service	Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6.30pm
Oadby and Wigston Walk-in Medical Centre	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	7 days a week, 8am to 8pm
GPs across ELR opting to offer Minor Injury Service	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6.30pm
<b>The following service is temporarily suspended:</b>		
Feilding Palmer Hospital, Lutterworth *	Minor Injury and Minor Illness	7 days a week, 9am to 9pm

\* Minor injury services provided from the unit in Lutterworth have been suspended since April 2013. In the past the service here has always been provided by staff working on the

adjacent hospital ward, who also have minor injury experience. When a walk-in patient arrived for minor injury treatment the staff had to leave their ward to treat them. With an average of only 13 patients a week using the unit, this meant that staff did not regularly practice their minor injury skills, which had the potential to affect the quality of care. The temporary closure was also partly due to difficulties in recruiting appropriately qualified and experienced staff for these dual roles.

### **What local people told us**

When we asked people for their views on minor injury units last year, many people told us it is important to have them close to home and to be seen quickly by appropriately trained staff with the necessary medical equipment.

Many of the people, who had used minor injury services before, think the current services are good, but would like opening times to be extended. However, they are confused about where, when and how they can access different urgent care services. Additionally, patient feedback shows people want these services to be provided locally, such as in GP surgeries and community hospitals. Good transport links and parking are also important.

Patients recognise that keeping urgent care services local helps people avoid going to A&E for anything other than emergency care. The way people use these services also tells us when it is best to have services open and when the demand is likely to be low.

We heard from some local people that they have difficulty being seen by their GPs, and as a result we are working hard with local practices to improve appointment systems and information about available services. All these views have played an important part in helping us to shape the options for improvement.

### **Average costs for a visit**

It costs the local NHS between £20 and £47 every time someone uses the current minor injury and minor illness services in East Leicestershire and Rutland. These are very similar to the average costs elsewhere in the country.

However, when someone goes to A&E for minor injury or illness treatment it costs the NHS about £81, almost twice as much as if they had used their local urgent care or GP service. Avoidable A&E attendance can also increase waiting times and puts extra pressure on busy A&E staff attending to patients needing emergency treatment.

What is more, when people choose to use their local services, not only are they normally seen faster than at A&E, and in a more appropriate setting, but it also alleviates pressure on A&E staff. Going to an urgent care centre will also be helping the NHS to spend its budgets more effectively.

At the moment the costs of our units in Market Harborough, Lutterworth, Oakham and Melton Mowbray include payment for illness services during the day. The NHS also pays GP practices to provide the same illness services in the daytime. So by opening minor illness units at times when people can see their GP, the local NHS is paying twice for making the same type of service available.

The following table shows what we are spending on these services in the current year.

<b>Urgent Care Current Budget (2013-14)</b>	<b>Market Harborough (£'000)</b>	<b>Melton Mowbray (£'000)</b>	<b>Oakham (£'000)</b>	<b>Oadby and Wigston (£'000)</b>	<b>Total (£'000)</b>
ELR Minor Injury Units	500,627	351,415	117,432	988,000	<b>1,957,474</b>
ELR GP Enhanced Service	93,664				<b>93,664</b>
All A&E / other UCC Attendances	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Current Budget</b>	<b>594,291</b>	<b>351,415</b>	<b>117,432</b>	<b>1,022,500</b>	<b>2,051,138</b>

### **Developing the options**

Local GPs, other clinical experts and healthcare managers examined current services, their quality, effectiveness and costs, as well as how they are used. They compared what was available with national and locally agreed aims. Options for change began to emerge from these discussions.

We then asked people to give us their views on these services. From 16 April to 31 May 2012 we invited people to help us identify the services they wanted from their community hospitals and MIUs. A survey was sent out to people online, and a paper version was given to those who do not use the internet or email, to make sure as many people as possible had the opportunity to take part. Staff working in these services and other healthcare functions were also invited to take part. Organisations, such as the voluntary sector, were invited to send us the views they had previously collected about these services.

We also welcomed the involvement of Leicestershire Healthwatch and Rutland Healthwatch, who gave us further insights from a patient's point of view and who have been involved in the review throughout.

Towards the end of 2013 we extended the scope of our review to include Oadby and Wigston Walk-in Medical Centre, for which we will be responsible from April 2014. So we invited local people to take part in a survey about their use of this centre. Their responses helped us develop our options.

We also re-examined the future of the minor injury and illness service at Feilding Palmer Hospital, Lutterworth, temporarily closed last year due to low use and concerns over staffing levels and ensuring continued patient safety.

So in December 2013 we launched a further survey, asking people to comment on whether our three draft options were the right ones to take out to a full public consultation. Following this survey, which ended in January 2014, we further revised the draft options.

Public health experts at Leicestershire County Council analysed the make-up of the population in different area, and the location of places where urgent care is available. The aim of this study was to help identify the right places for future urgent care services that would best meet people's needs. We also commissioned a review of public transport services that could help people get to GP surgeries and urgent care centres. Since then there have been some changes to public transport services, however we continue to work with Leicestershire County Council to measure their effects on our options.

### The three options

The mainstay of weekday urgent care services would be our 34 GP practices. For minor injury and illness patients would probably want to be seen by their own GP, but would also be able to go to any ELR surgery. All our urgent care centres would have the same daytime 9-5 opening hours in the week, and be open at weekends and Bank Holidays 10-3. There would be no evening services.

### OPTION 1:

#### Weekdays - daytime

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at any ELR GP practice during normal surgery hours, 8.30am-6.30pm
- Minor injury only services at **3 urgent care centres** in Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray and Oakham, 9am-5pm
- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at **1 urgent care centre** in the Oadby & Wigston area, 9am-5pm.

#### Weekends and Bank Holidays - daytime

- Minor injury only services at **3 urgent care centres** in Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray and Oakham, 10am-3pm
- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at **1 urgent care centre** in the Oadby & Wigston area, 10am-3pm.

### OPTION 2:

#### Weekdays – daytime:

- ELR GPs provide minor illness services, *but not minor injury care*, in their normal surgery hours, 8.30am-6.30pm

#### Weekdays - morning to evening:

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at **4 urgent care centres** - Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Oadby & Wigston, 8am-8pm

#### Weekends and Bank Holidays - daytime:

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at the same **4 urgent care centres**, 9am-5pm.

### OPTION 3:

#### Weekdays – daytime

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at any ELR GP practice during normal surgery hours, 8.30am-6.30pm

#### Weekdays – evenings only:

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at **4 urgent care centres** – Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray, Oakham, Oadby & Wigston, 6pm-9pm

#### Weekends and Bank Holidays – daytime to evening:

- Minor injury *and* minor illness services at the same **4 urgent care centres**, 9am-7pm

### Notes on the options

**Exact opening times** at any venue will remain a matter of discussion until they are agreed with healthcare providers. Outside of these hours patients will have use of the NHS 111

free helpline service, which offers an assessment and advice on the most relevant local care options available.

**Weekend GP opening** is excluded from all the options, and is still subject to national discussions. A pilot scheme is being trialled in some parts of England.

### **What would each option cost ?**

All of our three options for the future come within 5% of the earmarked budget, so future costs should not be seen as a major issue when choosing the preferred option. This consultation is about finding the option which best provides the urgent care patients need, improving services in a cost-effective way and using resources wisely, but it is not about cutting costs.

The following table show the projected costs for the three options.

<b>Urgent care Forecast Spending (2015-16)</b>	<b>Total (£'000)</b>
Option 1	<b>2,119,854</b>
Option 2	<b>2,048,320</b>
Option 3	<b>2,082,749</b>

### **Events and the 'listening booth**

A series of public 'open-door' events is being arranged, where people can drop in and see key information before providing their comments and preferred option. Along with the 'listening booth', a portable kiosk where people are encouraged to get involved and comments, will be taken around the east Leicestershire and Rutland area. The consultation document and posters will be available at all GP surgeries, health centres, libraries, community hospitals and other locations, and there will be an online questionnaire, details of which will be circulated to hundreds of stakeholders and all 4,000 NHS CCG membership scheme members in East Leicestershire and Rutland.

### **What are the next steps?**

The answers to this consultation and questionnaire will be independently analysed and the results will be combined into a report. The findings will be thoroughly examined and discussed by doctors, healthcare professionals and managers. They will produce a recommendation, which will go before the ELR CCG Governing Body for approval. If approved, a service specification will be drawn up for would-be providers. Any necessary procurement of services will begin and, if needed, changes in existing provider contracts will be negotiated. The new arrangements for minor injuries and illness will begin in 2015.