

Extended Primary Care Access Service Review

Introduction

In spring 2016, DDES CCG undertook a public consultation in relation to urgent care services. There were previously four urgent care services that operated within the DDES geography. Three options were considered as part of the public consultation, with option three receiving the most public support and also supported by the CCG executive and the Governing Body. As a result, the new service model was implemented in April 2017

	Minor Injury Units	Urgent Care	Out-of-hours services	Existing GP services	
Option 1	MI units available 12 hours per day (instead of 24 hours per day)	No Urgent Care Centre in hours	OOH services (out of hours urgent care) remain local 8pm-8am weekdays and 24/7 weekends	GP practices open longer, 8am-8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm Saturday and Sunday (or provided in a hub arrangement)	
	Minor Injury Units	Urgent Care	Out-of-hours services	Existing GP services	Enhanced GP services
Option 2	MI units available 12 hours per day (instead of 24 hours per day)	No Urgent Care Centre in hours	OOH services (out of hours urgent care) remain local 8pm-8am weekdays and 24/7 weekends	GP practices open longer, 8am-8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm Saturday and Sunday (or provided in a hub arrangement)	Option 1 PLUS Enhanced GP Service - Urgent care provided from your GP practice or in a hub arrangement 8am-8pm
	Minor Injury Units	Urgent Care	Out-of-hours services	Existing GP services	Enhanced GP services
Option 3	Option 1 + 2 PLUS MI units available 24 hours per day	No Urgent Care Centre in hours	OOH services (out of hours urgent care) remain local 8pm-8am weekdays and 24/7 weekends	GP practices open longer, 8am-8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm Saturday and Sunday (or provided in a hub arrangement)	Option 1 PLUS Enhanced GP Service - Urgent care provided from your GP practice or in a hub arrangement 8am-8pm

As a result nine hubs were developed in the following locations, with each providing appointments up to 8pm on week nights and 8am -1pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Sedgefield - 6pm - 8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm weekends

Newton Aycliffe – Jubilee Practice

Spennymoor – Spennymoor Health Centre

Sedgefield – Skerne Medical Practice

Dales - 6pm - 8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm weekends

Bishop Auckland – Bishop Auckland Hospital

Upper Dales – Weardale Practice

Lower Dales – Richardson Community Hospital

Easington - 8am - 8pm weekdays and 8am-1pm weekends

Seaham – Seaham Primary Care Centre

Peterlee – Peterlee Health Centre

Current situation

It was agreed that the CCG would report back to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) six months post implementation to feedback on the impact of the service changes, highlight any issues that have arisen and explain how the CCG was responding to any issues.

At the six month review stage it was identified that despite a few minor issues relating to signposting from the NHS 111 service in the first weekend, the changes had been made successfully with minimal disruption to the 'system'.

It was also agreed as part of the changes to service made in April 2017 that a review would be carried out once services were embedded. The feedback at the six month point was useful, but it was considered too early at this point to make any changes to services, particularly as the services had not operated during the winter period where demand for urgent appointments can be higher.

It was clear at the six month point that the available capacity was not being fully utilised although the issues were slightly different in each locality. Service providers were highlighting at this point the impact of this in retaining staff, as staff wanted to feel that they were being fully utilised. The low utilisation rates have raised concerns about value for money of the PCS services.

There have been changes in demand for out of area services. There were changes to services in Hartlepool and Stockton that took place at the same time as the changes in DDES with UTCs opening at North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals. Sunderland CCG is currently consulting on changes to the urgent care service they commission that border the DDES area, such as Houghton. Sunderland CCG are proposing to reduce urgent care centres, increase primary care access and to change access arrangements so they are appointment based as opposed to walk in services.

Engagement

The CCG carried out engagement with patients using the nine extended primary care access (EPCA) hubs and also some of the out of area services. Feedback from patients using the hubs was very positive as was their experience of using the NHS 111 service. A detailed report on the feedback from patients was shared with the OSC.

The CCG shared the feedback from patients and data that showed how patients were using services with local GPs at our commissioning meeting. This meeting is also attended by the patient reference group chairs for each locality.

We discussed the information and considered what service model would deliver the best service for patients. We also asked if we changed the number of hubs, what else we might need in place to support patients in their local area.

The following is what they felt would be the best model for each area which takes into account the population, transport, pharmacy provision etc.

Dales - Reduce to one site (Bishop Auckland) with outreach services for frail/housebound patients including home visits and pre bookable appointments

Sedgefield - Reduce to two sites (Spennymoor and Newton Aycliffe) during weekday evening and retain three sites at weekends, provide pre bookable appointments and offer an outreach provision

Easington - Reduce to two sites on a weekend (8am – 1pm) and one site during the week (12 noon – 8pm), to act as an overflow to GP Practices through the week. So if the GP Practice has no appointments then they will book patients into this service acting as an overflow. This service will provide outreach / home visiting additional service across the full locality, based on the outcome of the consultation.

Feedback from Overview and Scrutiny

When the CCG attended the OSC in July 2018, the committee raised concerns about the number of patients that the CCG had engaged with and also that they were concerned that patients were being incorrectly signposted to other service which made the usage of some of the hubs appear low. As a result of their recommendations, the following work was carried out:

- Consultation, communication and engagement strategy has been developed
- Met with OSC 14th August and provided an evidence log
- Healthwatch agreed to provide independent advice
- Developed a myths buster which is supporting our review
- Worked with NHSE on the assurance process and have NHSE support on our approach
- Undertook significant further patient engagement
- Discussion with local councillors
- Discussion with our patient reference groups

We presented back to OSC in September 2018 and members welcomed the further information presented. Members of the Committee considered that the information provided greater clarity regarding the rationale for the proposals and also explained

the existing range of services provided as part of the Primary Care Support Service including how patients access services. We shared details of an audit that demonstrated that very few patients were being diverted out of their local area and almost all that were had been sent to alternative services for valid reasons.

The OSC supported the CCGs proposal to carry out a public consultation on changes to services and asked the results to be brought back to the Committee for consideration before a decision upon the proposed review is made.

Consultation Process

The CCG intends to carry out a 6 week public consultation starting in late October/early November. Meetings will be held across the DDES area where the proposals for change will be presented. There will be a range of ways for people to share their views with us. We will be doing work with hard to reach groups and ensuring that we engage with as many of our population as we can.

Further details

For further details please contact DDESCCG.enquiries@nhs.net