

## Community urgent care consultation

### Frequently asked questions

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- South Ilford (Cranbrook, Loxford and Clementswood) is an area of high deprivation, with a changing and diverse population. Language can be a barrier to accessing health and other services. Isn't a walk-in service a better option for this community?
- GP services (primary care) in the south Ilford area is poor and local people and their representatives have been calling for improvements. How can you make changes to community urgent care services before you make these improvements?

### How will services change at Loxford Polyclinic?

Loxford Polyclinic currently provides a walk-in urgent care service. It is open 8am to 8pm every day and the latest data shows it sees around 11,000 people a year.

We currently commission 14,000 appointments a year, and these are not all used at the moment. There is no proposal to reduce these.

As part of our overall proposals, based on national guidance and local people's feedback, we want to change the urgent care service at Loxford Polyclinic so it becomes a bookable service, not a walk-in service.

Local councillors have suggested we could install a phone at Loxford so that people could, if necessary, call 111 direct from the polyclinic and book an appointment, if appropriate. We think that's a good idea so we are looking into the practicalities. The ambition is to have a kiosk where the patient would 'check-in' for their pre-booked appointment, as is common now at many GP practices and some local blood test services.

Loxford Polyclinic remains an important part of our plans to move services out of hospitals and into community settings, and we will continue to provide services from the location.

### Are you reducing or downgrading the service at Loxford Polyclinic?

No. We will still commission 14,000 appointments at Loxford Polyclinic – we will not reduce the number of appointments. People who use this service will still have an appointment with a clinician who will listen to them, and give them advice or a treatment plan.

We believe that changing to a bookable service will bring benefits for local people as it means that we reduce the time they spend waiting around to be seen because they get the right care in the right place, first time.

By calling NHS 111, people will get advice on the telephone first. We expect at least 50% of callers to speak to a doctor, nurse or paramedic when they call NHS 111 as part of improvements already underway. We know 40% of callers in our area already speak with a clinician when they call NHS 111.

If they need to be seen on the same day, NHS 111 will book them an appointment at a time and location convenient for the patient. They will be seen within a maximum of 30 minutes of their appointment time.

For people living around the Loxford Polyclinic site, they will still be able to be seen at Loxford Polyclinic. If they need an x-ray or blood test, they will be booked an appointment at an Urgent Treatment Centre. We know some people walk into Loxford Polyclinic and have to then make a second journey to King George Hospital (or currently Barking Community Hospital) for tests or x-rays.

There will be an Urgent Treatment Centre at King George Hospital and under Option 1, Barking Community Hospital will also be an Urgent Treatment Centre. We know a number of Redbridge residents already use Barking Community Hospital as it offers an x-ray service, is easily accessible by road and public transport from south Ilford, and has a large car park.

### **Why can't Loxford Polyclinic become an Urgent Treatment Centre?**

The national standards for Urgent Treatment Centres say these facilities must be upgraded to provide more access to tests including X-ray, urine testing and blood testing than a GP can offer at a practice.

We do not currently run X-ray services from Loxford Polyclinic (or South Hornchurch Health Centre in Havering). It would too expensive to buy and install new X-ray machines at these sites. We would also need specialist radiology and nursing staff on these sites to run the X-ray services. This would be expensive and it will be challenging to recruit more of these specialist staff in our area.

### **Are you already making the change at Loxford Polyclinic?**

No. We continue to run a walk-in service at Loxford Polyclinic. Our public consultation will run until it closed at 5pm on Tuesday 21 August. No decision about future services will be made until we consider the feedback from the consultation.

### **Where will the 12 bookable locations be – they are not all named in the consultation document?**

We have named six locations in our consultation document. These are:

- King George Hospital (Urgent Treatment Centre)
- Queen's Hospital (Urgent Treatment Centre)
- Loxford Polyclinic
- Barking Community Hospital
- South Hornchurch Health Centre
- Harold Wood Polyclinic

Other locations that are currently used for community urgent care centres are not owned by the CCGs. It would not be fair to commit to a service at GP practice site, e.g. Southdene surgery in South Woodford, at this stage. We would need to discuss and agree this with all parties when we are negotiating with future providers.

However, our data analysis shows the vast majority of people are within a 15 minute drive of an existing community urgent care service and we are committed to maintaining this accessibility. We will also look at public transport links and available parking at proposed locations when we are in negotiations.

### **If I live in the western side of Redbridge (Wanstead and Woodford), where will I be seen?**

We know 1/3 of Redbridge residents consider Whipps Cross their local hospital. You will still be able to walk in and wait at the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) at Whipps Cross Hospital. If you need to be seen, NHS 111 will offer you an appointment at a location and time that is convenient for you.

Currently people in the Wanstead and Woodford area are able to book appointments at the GP access hub at Southdene surgery in South Woodford.

This site is not owned by the CCGs. It would not be fair to commit to a service at the surgery at this stage. We would need to discuss and agree this with all parties when we are negotiating with future providers.

However, our data analysis shows the vast majority of people are within a 15 minute drive of an existing community urgent care service and we are committed to maintaining this accessibility. We will also look at public transport links and available parking at proposed locations when we are in negotiations.

NHS 111 cannot currently book Redbridge residents into the Urgent Care Centre at Whipps Cross Hospital. However, as a direct result of feedback from a Redbridge resident at one of our engagement events, we have committed to exploring how we can make that change. We will need to work with our NHS 111 provider, Barts Health and the UCC provider to ensure this can be managed safely and equitably for Redbridge residents.

### **Why are you proposing fewer places to walk in and wait? Isn't this worse for patients, not better?**

National guidance (the Five Year Forward View) sets out a move towards a simpler and more effective urgent care system. We want people to get the right care in the right place, first time. Key principles are:

- NHS 111 as the first call you make – more people speaking to doctors or nurses by telephone and if you need to be seen, direct booking into services close to home
- Bookable urgent care appointments – convenient time and location
- Urgent Treatment Centres (improved tests and x-rays, patients able to book appointments AND walk in and wait)

Local people have told us they are confused by the current mix of services. This sometimes mean they go to A&E and other services (including walk-in services) when they don't need to, which means more people are waiting for longer in the wrong place.

Our proposals mean patients will get advice from NHS 111 first and if they need to be seen, a convenient booked appointment time at their nearest location. They will be seen within a maximum of 30 minutes of their appointment time. This means the vast majority of people will be seen much more quickly and avoid long and sometimes unnecessary waits. We will not reduce the number of appointments available at Loxford Polyclinic. We think is much better for patients.

The majority of patients who walk in and wait are children and young adults (under 34). We know that some people who use walk-in services are not registered with a GP. We want to encourage everyone to be registered with a GP.

This is better for your overall health as your GP can help you manage long-term conditions and should be your first point of contact. This should mean health issues are managed without becoming more serious and needing urgent or even emergency care.

### **Do you think this will be better for older people and those with young children – aren't they the most frequent users of urgent care services?**

Waiting around for hours when you are older or have small children is not a good experience for unwell patients. We believe that by providing an improved NHS 111 service which offers people a timed booked appointment at a service closer to home is better for all patients. We recognise the extra needs of older people and parents of younger children. NHS 111 already prioritises these patients and they are fast-tracked to speak directly to the doctors and nurses in the 111 team.

### **South Ilford (Cranbrook, Loxford and Clementswood) is an area of high deprivation, with a changing and diverse population. Language can be a barrier to accessing health and other services. Isn't a walk-in service a better option for this community?**

Nationally and locally, we want everyone to call NHS 111 first. It offers a translation service and a text message service (for deaf and hard-of-hearing patients). It's available 24/7. We know we need to do more to promote NHS 111 nationally and locally, so it becomes better known and people have more confidence in it. We are committed to doing this, and welcome support from our local partners in the Council, Healthwatch and voluntary and community sector.

Walk-in services are most frequently used by young adults (under 34) and some people who use walk-in services are not registered with a GP.

As part of our commitment to improving health equalities, we believe an accessible NHS 111 and encouraging local people to register with a GP is better for their overall health. A GP can help you manage your long-term conditions and this means your health issues can be managed without becoming more serious and needing urgent – or even emergency – care.

### **Local people and their representatives say GP services (primary care) in the south Ilford area are poor and have been calling for improvements. How can you make changes to community urgent care services before you make these improvements?**

We have many good GPs and practices in Redbridge, but we recognise that there are some that need to improve.

We want to transform primary care, to provide more proactive care for patients and focus on prevention and self-care. We also want to actively manage patients' long-term conditions to reduce unnecessary hospital admission or referrals.

To support local primary care we have developed a transformation programme which includes the development of GP networks, workforce initiatives, and delivering integrated partnership working.

Recruitment of new GPs and keeping our good and experienced GPs is a priority across our three CCGs. We are making progress including:

- 14 new GPs have been recruited and of these 6 or 7 will be placed in Redbridge
- 10 overseas GPs have been recruited across North East London and 6 of these are for BHR. It is expected that 3 of these will be for Redbridge
- There is a significant focus on workforce development for primary care across BHR and this is wider than GPs as we need to extend the primary care workforce
- We have recruited physician associates and pharmacists who are working in practices across BHR and they can pick up a range of activities in practices which release GP time to increase patient contacts
- There is a nurse development programme in place as there is a need to focus on practice nurse development, particularly for Redbridge

This work will continue but we need to also make improvements to community urgent care now – to address local people’s feedback and to meet national standards. This is why we are consulting on these proposals now.