



Adult Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 13 September 2017
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA – urgent business

**14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR
(PART 1)**

(Pages 1 - 4)

The Vice Chair has agreed that an item of Any Other Business be included as part of the agenda for the meeting of the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee which is scheduled for next Wednesday (13th September). The item relates to Eastham Walk In Centre. A report has been prepared by Wirral CCG in order to provide members with some background information prior to the meeting. The report is attached.

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Report Title	Temporary suspension of Eastham Walk in Centre service
Lead Officer	Nesta Hawker, Director of Commissioning
Recommendations	To note the content of the report

1. INTRODUCTION

This report details urgent action undertaken by Wirral Health partners (NHS Wirral CCG, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust) to mitigate a specific risk to patient safety arising by the continued under performance of the constitutional standards (4 hour target) applicable to the Emergency Department at Arrowe Park Hospital. A further deterioration of performance in July 2017 resulted in intervention from NHS England and NHS Improvement, the regulatory bodies for commissioners and providers. Following discussion with NHS England and NHS Improvement the clinical resource located at the Walk in Centre Service at Eastham has been temporarily reallocated to the Walk in Centre at Arrowe Park. This is to facilitate the introduction of Front Door Clinical Streaming which will reduce pressure within the Emergency Department and thereby reduce the clinical risk that prolonged waits for the most poorly patient's presents. This action is in lieu of a wider Urgent Care review, led by NHS Wirral CCG which will be subject to a full public consultation from November 2017.

2. RATIONALE FOR THE DECISION

Urgent and Emergency Care is a national service improvement priority for the NHS with a focus on improving national Accident and Emergency (A & E) performance whilst making access clearer for patients. NHS England (NHSE) has completed a review of urgent treatment services in the NHS and patients and the wider public have shared their experiences and told of a confusing mix of walk in centres, minor injuries units and urgent care centres in addition to the numerous GP practices offering varied levels of clinical services. This confusion is further compounded by varied opening hours, in the type of clinical staff available and what diagnostics (eg: X Ray) may be available.

In response to this NHS England has set out a series of standards for the development of urgent treatment services in each area with the expectation that these will be implemented nationally over the next two years. In March 2017, NHSE also signaled a commitment to introduce front door clinical streaming services in all Accident and Emergency Departments to help deal with increasing demand and the pressure this creates on clinical services.

The situation on Wirral mirrors that of the national position and we currently have a varied provision of urgent care services which includes walk in centres, GP practices, minor injuries units and the Emergency Department at Arrowe Park Hospital. There is an NHS constitutional standard by which a minimum of 95% of patients arriving at an Accident and Emergency Department must be seen, treated and either discharged or admitted to hospital within 4 hours. This has proven to be a consistent challenge in Wirral and the Emergency Department at Arrowe Park Hospital has not met this constitutional standard for some time and despite the best efforts of staff we are not seeing any sustained improvement. As a result of this we have concerns about patient safety due to the continued pressures being experienced within the Emergency Department.

In response to this, NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group has prioritised the transformation of local Urgent Care Services in its operational plan and we have commenced a programme which has included preliminary work over the last nine months to assess the current position in more detail and this has included undertaking workshops with NHS staff, stakeholder groups and patient representatives, this work highlighted issues of confusion in relation to choice similar to those demonstrated nationally. The next steps for this process will be to determine proposed models for the application of the NHSE national standards to our local provision before commencing a comprehensive engagement and consultation exercise from November 2017 as part of our wider work in relation to urgent care.

However, the CCG must continually ensure that the services it commissions provide safe and high quality services for the people of Wirral and in July 2017 the performance at our local Emergency Department deteriorated further and is amongst the worst performing in England. This was reviewed as a matter of urgency by NHS England and the local NHS leadership (NHS Wirral CCG, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust) in early August due to concerns about the safety of the local urgent care system. In response to this a nine point action plan, aligned with national guidance issued from NHS England, was developed to rapidly progress improvements and one of these was to bring forward the introduction of Front Door Clinical Streaming to the 4th September 2017. To facilitate the introduction of this new process it was decided to reallocate the clinical resource located at the Eastham Walk in Centre to the Walk in Centre at Arrowe Park. This decision does not result in the closure of the Eastham Clinic which continues to provide a comprehensive range of clinical services including Phlebotomy (Blood Testing) and Dressings clinics.

3. FRONT DOOR CLINICAL STREAMING

Clinical streaming is the process by which patients who arrive at an Emergency Department are assigned to one of a number of parallel clinical workstreams following an initial clinical assessment.

From 4th September 2017 people attending the Emergency Department will be assessed at the front door and in some cases will be directed to the adjacent Walk in Centre. They will be seen and treated by either a GP or a senior advanced or enhanced nurse practitioner, (Advanced and Enhanced Nurse practitioners are those nurses who have received additional medical training and treat minor injuries as well as prescribing simple drugs to deal with most common illnesses). This will be available 24/7 which aligns the service with that of the Emergency Department this will be for patients who have minor injuries or illnesses. This new service will help to ensure that people with serious or life threatening conditions are seen and treated more quickly in the Emergency Department which will improve the safety and quality of services and overall performance.

The current walk in service at Eastham has accounted for less than 20% of all Walk in Centre activity in Wirral (2016/17), and we feel that this decision is proportionate given the national requirement to introduce clinical streaming to reduce the demand on A & E services and the urgent patient safety issue in Wirral. A proportion of the historic activity at the Eastham Walk in Centre was for wound dressings and this has not been impacted by the reallocation of staff and this service remains at the Eastham Clinic.

4. IMPACT OF CHANGE AND CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

This decision was not taken lightly and in normal circumstances this change would require a formal consultation process. However, the urgency by which we had to make this short term change on an issue of patient safety meant that we could not complete our usual engagement and consultation process. This is in accordance with statutory guidance and as already indicated we will be completing a full consultation on Urgent Care Services over the coming months. The short timescale was also driven by the need to brief the staff impacted by this change before we could notify any other stakeholders.

We have completed both Equality and Quality Impact Assessments for this change and we will also closely monitor the impact of this change as part of our usual processes. This enhanced quality monitoring will be regularly reviewed by our Urgent Care Transformation Steering Group which includes Healthwatch Wirral.

5. CONCLUSION

Wirral Health partners, in response to an urgent patient safety issue have accelerated the introduction of Front Door Clinical Streaming at Arrowe Park Hospital to reduce pressure on the Emergency Department. To facilitate this, the clinical resource from the current Eastham Walk in Centre has been reallocated to the Walk in Centre at Arrowe Park. The Eastham Clinic remains open and provides a range of NHS services.

This temporary decision to mitigate the risk to patient safety is a short term action in lieu of a wider Urgent Care review which will be subject to a full public consultation commencing in November 2017.

Members are asked to note this report.

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