



*Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group
Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford Clinical Commissioning Group*

Improving urgent care

Public engagement report

August to November 2016

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Summary

Extensive public engagement was undertaken from August to November this year on what matters to people when they need same-day health or social care advice, care or treatment.

This report explains the background to the engagement, who we engaged with and how, and details the responses to questions about 111, the NHS telephone service, the GP walk-in centres at Eastbourne and Hastings, same day assessments and appointments, using technology (web chats and video calls) and community pharmacists.

People's responses to the questions and their comments will be built into our final service redesign plans which we anticipate will be agreed in January 2017 for implementation from April 2018 and beyond, ensuring we have a range of appropriate, high quality services available 24/7 to help people get the right advice, treatment, care in the right place, first time.

Introduction

What is urgent care?

Urgent care is a term that describes the range of services provided for people who require same day health or social care advice, care or treatment.

This is different from emergency care provided in our emergency departments (A&E), other hospital departments, 999 and ambulances which are set up to respond to serious or life threatening emergencies.

Why do we need to improve?

Following a national review in 2014, NHS England set out very clear commissioning standards to ensure future urgent and emergency care services are integrated and offer a consistent service. These commissioning standards are informing how we – through *East Sussex Better Together* – best organise and provide local urgent care services.

A focus for this engagement has been on services that people use most frequently on an urgent, same-day basis.

- same-day GP and nurse appointments
- the use of walk-in centres (Eastbourne and Hastings)
- the use of NHS 111 urgent telephone service
- utilising technology to support people's urgent, same-day needs.

Previous engagement

At our Shaping Health and Care public events in 2015 and the spring of 2016 there was a focus on urgent care services; attendees told us:



- It is important to be able to **access urgent care over the phone**.
- Access to services in the **evening or at the weekends** is important and the ability to **find advice** when you need it.
- It is particularly important to be able to **access a same-day appointment or an appointment within 48 hours**.
- People were clear about the importance of having the **right information about urgent services** and to have **confidence** these services offer **quality advice**.
- The role of **digital technology** was highlighted and improving the availability of this information and advice is important.
- There are **mixed views about the importance of seeing your usual GP**, or a GP in your practice, or the option to use a **video call**.
- The importance of **GP appointments** generally was prominent but people also discussed the value of other professionals in **providing support as part of an urgent care network** of support and services (for example pharmacies).
- The **timing and accessibility** of appointments is important.
- There should be **better access to patient records** both for patients and professionals and these should be shared between services.
- The importance of **self-care and proactive prevention** was highlighted (for example access to non-medical support from **community or voluntary organisations**) and **education** so local people understood the services available that can best support them.

What's happened already?

Initiatives already underway as part of the *East Sussex Better Together* programme include:

- 'navigators' in the emergency departments at Eastbourne District General Hospital and the Conquest Hospital, Hastings, help people register with a GP or dentist if they don't have one; signpost to community and voluntary services; talk to people about pharmacy services, and how they might get the support and/or treatment they need in the future
- extended hours for the 'take home and settle' team whereby Age UK East Sussex is able to return home with people from hospital up to 8pm
- Patient Online providing local people with access to view their medical records online, order repeat prescriptions and book appointments
- Health and Social Care Connect, a single access point for streamlined access to community-based services, seven days a week.



- the crisis response team established to support people in their own homes for up to 72 hours to either avoid hospital admission or facilitate discharge while longer term support arrangements are put in place.

What matters to you? – public engagement on urgent care August to November 2016

Who we sought to involve

Parents of young children and people aged 20 to 29 are more likely to use services on an urgent basis. This phase of the urgent care public engagement focused on these groups.

In addition, a public survey was more widely available on the *East Sussex Better Together* website and through our networks so that anyone with an interest could respond.

The questions we asked

There were seven questions in the 'What matters to you?' survey (online and hard copy). For the purposes of this report the responses have been collated under four key areas:

- NHS 111 service and GP walk-in centres
- same-day assessments and appointments
- using technology
- Community pharmacy.

What we did

The urgent care 'What matters to you?' survey was available online on the East Sussex Better website and publicised to all ESBT stakeholders. Hard copies of the survey were taken to the engagement events and meetings with community groups.

We held mini marketplace stands, collecting comments and surveys in **eight public locations** to ask people how they think we could improve access and services when people need them on an urgent, same-day basis.



We visited a variety of venues to talk specifically to parents and people aged 20-29. We went to **leisure centres, children's centres and the two GP walk in centres**, mainly in the **evenings and at weekends** in these locations:

Eastbourne

Hailsham

Seaford

Bexhill

St Leonards

Hastings

Battle

Rye

We also joined other **community groups** to ask people for their views and to encourage completion of the survey:

- **East Sussex Carers Forum** (hosted by Care for the Carers)
- **East Sussex Seniors Forum (ESSA)**
- **The Good Life Show** – a county-wide conference style event for people aged 50+
- **Learning Disability Partnership Board** – the Involvement Matters Team.

Over the coming weeks we will also be engaging with Gypsy and Traveller communities and homeless people.



What people told us

In total **497 surveys were completed**. The results provide us with information about what matters to people when they need urgent care advice or treatment for themselves or a family member.

NHS 111 and GP walk-in centres

We asked people what would make them *more likely* to use the NHS 111 telephone service. Respondents could identify multiple options and selected the top three factors as:

- If they had **confidence** a healthcare professional would respond **quickly**. (72% of people)
- If they had more **information about the possible options** for assistance when they call 111 (43%)
- If their **health record** was available to the 111 service. (42%).

Accessing services through NHS 111 and at GP walk-in centres

We talked to people about the GP walk-in centres in Hastings and in Eastbourne and explained we are considering changing the way these services are accessed. For example, instead of walking in and queuing to see a GP, you would call NHS 111 and be given a telephone assessment. If necessary you would then be offered an appointment on the same day without the need to queue.

We asked people what things are important in a service that assesses your needs on the telephone. Again respondents could identify multiple options and these were the results:

- 87% of people said it is important to them to be able to receive advice, or be directed to a service locally, on the **same day when using the 111 telephone service**.
- 71% of people said **being able to speak to a local healthcare professional** was important, should it be needed.
- 68% of people said **a telephone service available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day** – was important.



- **42%** of people felt it was important to be able to receive information about self-help, such as relevant online information, locations of pharmacies, nearest available services and opening times.

Same-day assessments and appointments

Currently people may have to join a queue at a walk-in centre before they can be seen. We asked how helpful it would be if a same-day appointment could be booked (should this be needed) so they didn't have to queue.

- **95%** of people rated this 'helpful' or 'very helpful'.

We also asked how important it is to be able to walk in without booking or calling first and how helpful would it be if their own GP practice could direct them to an assessment service if they weren't able to offer a same-day appointment.

- **69%** of people rated it 'important' or 'very important' to be able to walk in somewhere for an assessment without the need to book first
- **82%** of people said it would be 'helpful' or 'very helpful' if their own GP practice could direct them to an assessment service, if they were not able to offer them a same day appointment.

Using technology: web-chats and video calls

We asked people what would make them want to use web chat typing or video calling (in addition to the 111 telephone service) to offer more ways to access urgent, same-day advice or care.

- **20%** of people surveyed would like to try an online web chat or video call to receive advice or an assessment.

These are the comments they made:

Communication in the services needs to be clear and advertise where these facilities are available. It's useful for...

- concerns about my baby/child
- unwell babies and children so they don't need to leave the home



- showing the clinician a rash
- whenever there is something visual about their concern
- for people with anxiety that prevents them from otherwise seeking advice
- reducing queues and time spent seeking advice
- helping those without transport or on low income
- offering an option when the GP practice is closed.

These are the things people are concerned about:

- **Accessibility** – broadband speeds, some concern that people have different needs; older people are far less likely to access a service in this way, so ensure the telephone option remains in place.
- **Having confidence** – people want to have confidence in these options, so that someone responds and that person will be a qualified professional. Also professionals operating the systems are properly trained; people don't want the focus to move from the patient to the technical aspects.

Community pharmacists

We asked people if they asked a pharmacist for advice.

- 77% of people told us they **currently ask pharmacists for advice and/or remedies**, as well as medicines.
- 23% of those surveyed said they **didn't use pharmacists or didn't know they could help**.

Comments and suggestions

As a result of the public survey, we collected in excess of 1,000 comments and a huge number of suggestions based on people's experiences about urgent care services; these comments will be on the *East Sussex Better Together* website.



Key themes included:

- People think **children** should be prioritised and would like to know paediatric **advice** is available on an urgent basis.
- **Identify people who have additional needs** and ensure routine examinations can be performed.
- Connecting with **large employers in the area** as a way of getting information out about local services that are appropriate for different needs and **education about healthy lifestyles**
- **Health records need to be shared** so urgent services know your medical history.

These messages came through clearly:

Communication is all important:

- Tell local people where they can go, for what types of problems.
- People need to understand the difference between urgent and emergency services
- Use clear language and no jargon.
- Advertise the information so people see it.
- Professionals need to communicate quickly and effectively with each other.

People were concerned about:

- **accessibility** (both eligibility and physical access)
- **good communication** (both out to the public and between professionals)
- **delays causing anxiety**
- **rural issues**; the difficulties people face when they don't live close to health care amenities
- the **misuse of services** and people not using the right services for their needs.

The things that people really value:

- their **community services** (diagnostics like x-ray, and minor injuries units in general)
- their **GP practice**
- high **quality services**, high standards of training for all staff.



These are the services or areas that people provided the most comments about:

Service / Area	Number of comments
Primary care (GP practices)	36
General comments about healthcare	29
NHS 111	15
Communication or/or education	15
Walk in Centres	13
Quality of services	10
Accessibility and equality	8
Concerns about people mis-using services	8
Emergencies / A&E department	8

A further 41 comments were also made about a wide range of issues, including finance, mental health, minor injury units, engagement, older people and technology.

What carers said

We know it's very important for carers to have access to a named GP in relation to the person they care for and that their long term and/or complex needs often have more significance in an urgent situation.

We attended the East Sussex Carers' Forum, hosted by Care for the Carers, and asked 'Do services meet your needs currently when you need advice urgently?' The feedback is below:

- Carers reported they have specific needs and are **often calling about complex and long term conditions.**
- **Delay is a significant problem** and can feel like a barrier to getting the help they need for the person they care for.
- **Crisis Response Team** – assistance from this team is accessed through their GP – or through 111 when their surgery is closed. Calling 111 and completing the assessment



process (also called telephone triage), elevates anxiety and causes frustration because it takes time to access the service they feel they need.

- **'Safe Spaces' cannot be used** if there are no staff available to supervise them, so they cannot access them. Safe Spaces are rooms in locations like hospitals, where somebody with a mental health condition can go to and be safe. The introduction of these rooms has significantly reduced the number of people being taken into Police custody unnecessarily.
- **Lack of clarity about what to do in a real emergency**, i.e. in a life-threatening situation. Some members of the group reported being told historically by health professionals, *not* to call for an ambulance. They are more likely to go through NHS 111 even when they feel the circumstances are becoming more serious. Breathing difficulties were given as the example. The difference between urgent and emergency need was clarified and the group were assured if they feel a situation is life-threatening, they should dial 999.

The group asked us to **promote the options and services** for when people need urgent advice, including what's available at evenings and weekends.

We also asked where they get their information and where they would like to see messages about support and services.

Carers told us to **place information where people go** – where people visit, physically, in their everyday lives. Places like:

- At **charities and community organisations** they visit, such as Care for the Carers.
- And in the community:

supermarkets	healthcare settings - hospitals and GP practices
hairdressers	pharmacies
betting shops	social care settings - day centres
rail stations	residential care homes
libraries	community centre notice boards
churches	



There were also some other methods they recommended we use:

- Provide **community and voluntary organisations** with information so they can signpost.
- The group is also active **online, using websites that are helpful to carers** and resources that offer information about conditions to assist them in relation to the person they care for.

What the Involvement Matters Team (IMT) said

We talked to the IMT, a local forum for people with learning disabilities, at the East Sussex Learning Disability Partnership Board. The team forms part of the board alongside other stakeholders which include county council, parent-carers, commissioners of services, providers of services and representatives from community and voluntary groups.

We asked 'what's important to you, when you need a service urgently?' and the following comments were recorded.

- **I don't like waiting in a waiting room.** After a long while I get very anxious and I get upset.
- When I called NHS 111 **the person on the phone kept asking me questions that I didn't know the answers to** because I didn't have my helper with me. They couldn't understand me.
- The group agreed **when they see their usual GP, there is enough time allowed** for them to explain the issue and to make a decision about what to do next.

We also asked 'would you use technology to get information, or be assessed by a doctor?

The IMT members said **they do not use devices** like smart phones or tablets to seek advice or an assessment.

There will be further engagement with this the forum.



What happens next?

People's responses to the questions and their comments will be built into our final service redesign plans which we anticipate will be agreed in January 2017 for implementation from April 2018 and beyond.

We want to thank everyone who contributed their time and views for this phase of the *East Sussex Better Together* urgent care transformation programme. The results of the survey provide us with clear information about what matters to people when they need urgent same-day care for themselves or their families. Their views and experiences will help ensure we have a range of appropriate, high quality services available 24/7 to help people get the right advice, treatment, and care in the right place, first time.

Staying involved

We will continue to engage with local people through our Shaping Health and Care events to update on the developments as the plans are taken forward.

To stay up to date with progress of the design and work, or to be directly involved – contact us to let us know whether you would like to subscribe to emails or to talk about the different ways you can have your say. It's not all about meetings, you can be involved virtually as well:

The Engagement Team 01273 485300

Email: HRCCG.yoursay@nhs.net or EHSCCG.yoursay@nhs.net

Appendices

Copy of the brief with information about this programme

Copy of the survey.

The survey statistics, including all comments and equality data, will be on the *East Sussex Better Together* website.