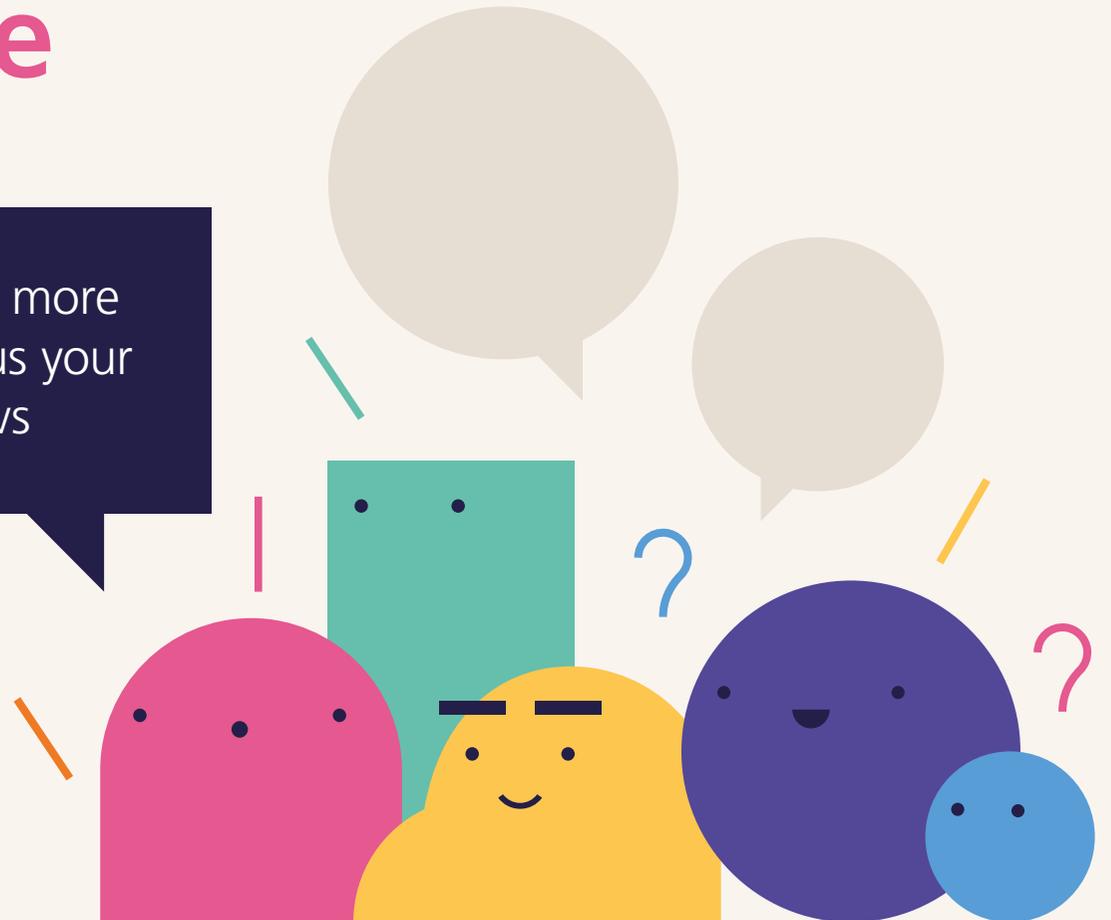


# Making it easier to access **urgent care** in Wirral

Find out more  
and tell us your  
views



# Welcome

**On behalf of NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group, we would like to thank you for taking the time to read this booklet, which provides you with an opportunity to have your say about some important changes we want to make to urgent care services in Wirral.**

At some point, we all need to know where to go when we need healthcare quickly; we call this **urgent care**. By this we mean those illnesses or injuries that are not life threatening but that require an urgent clinical assessment or treatment.

Over the past two years, we have been doing a lot of work to understand how urgent care services in Wirral are used and we are now ready to propose a new way in which people can access urgent care in future.

We believe there is a more effective way to provide urgent care services, which is better for patients. The proposed model will enhance patient safety and improve patient outcomes through delivery of a clearer, consistent model of urgent care in Wirral, with closer integrated working between organisations involved in delivering urgent care.

In February 2018, we asked for people's views on these services and we were told that our current system is confusing and often people don't know which service to use and when. This is because we have a range of venues which offer different services and opening hours.

We also know that people cannot always get an urgent appointment at their own GP practice and this, combined with the confusion about alternative services, results in many people choosing to go to our only Accident and Emergency Department at Arrowe Park Hospital.

Wirral is not unique in facing these issues. A lot of work is taking place across the country to make urgent care services work better for the benefit of patients and to ensure Accident and Emergency Departments deal with the most poorly and vulnerable people.

To change this, we want to simplify services and make it as easy as possible for you to make the right choice when you need care or treatment. We also want to improve access to GP appointments to ensure that everyone who needs an urgent appointment can get one within 24 hours, mostly on the same day. This will help to make sure people can get urgent care as close to their homes as possible.

In order to progress this further we would like your views on what we are proposing, which we believe will help people to make the right choice and therefore receive the right care when they need it. The views of people across Wirral are very important to us, and this document explains the changes we are proposing to make and why.

There are lots of ways in which you can have your say, which are also included within this document. The closing date for comments is **midnight on 12th December 2018**, and no decisions will be made until we have reviewed all the feedback after the consultation. We look forward to hearing from you.



**Dr Sue Wells**  
Chair,  
NHS Wirral Clinical  
Commissioning  
Group



**Simon Banks**  
Chief Officer,  
NHS Wirral Clinical  
Commissioning  
Group

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This consultation is about **urgent care** – this means illnesses or injuries that are **not life threatening**, but where you need an **urgent clinical opinion**.

## Things you need to know

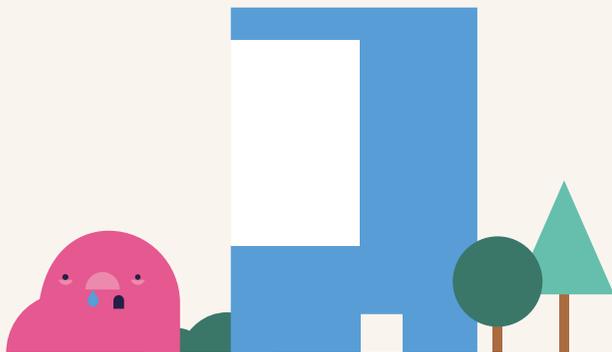
-  Services are being redesigned with clinicians to:
  - improve patient safety and experience
  - get you the treatment you need when you need it
  - give the people of Wirral the best value for money
  
-  Our proposals aim to offer simpler options closer to home, including urgent bookable appointments within 24 hours, a specific urgent care service for children, a dressings (wound care) service and an Urgent Treatment Centre on the Arrowe Park site.
  
-  Arrowe Park's A&E is **not** closing, and is **not** part of this consultation
  
-  We want to deliver more local services based on your needs, ensuring you receive the care, support and treatment that matters to you.



# Why things need to change

**We all need an urgent clinical opinion at some point, so it's important to make sure Wirral's healthcare services, for **urgent** but **non-life-threatening illnesses** or **injuries** meet your needs.**

We also need to make some changes to local services to fit in with national requirements and changes to urgent care.



## **Our current system is confusing**

We previously surveyed local residents, and one of the main things we discovered was that some people were confused about where to go to get help with urgent care in Wirral.

Some people go to Accident and Emergency (A&E) when they need help because they're not sure where to go, or because they can't get an appointment anywhere else. A&E isn't always the right place.

## **We need to ease the pressure on A&E**

A&E departments are under more pressure than ever. More people are living longer with conditions, which if not managed, require emergency treatment or admission to hospital.

We also know that many people who use urgent care services are seeking treatment for less serious conditions that can easily be treated with over the counter medications or by asking their local pharmacist for advice.

**Almost half of patients who went to Arrowe Park Hospital's A&E last year had an illness or injury that could have been treated elsewhere.**

This puts undue pressure on Wirral's only A&E, and means that some of the most vulnerable and poorly people in Wirral are experiencing long waits for the care they need.

**We need to look at services in Wirral that offer help with urgent but non-life-threatening illnesses, to keep our A&E department for those that need it most.**

## **Moving care closer to home**

We want to have more health and care services delivered closer to where people live. This will mean that in future, services will be more joined up and relevant to the needs of people, with an increased focus on helping people to stay well and healthy.

Our vision is to introduce four health and wellbeing centres in Wirral where we can provide more services in a location that is recognised and valued by the people who use them. The staff in these centres would work together in neighbourhood teams to help people and would include NHS staff as well as colleagues from social care, therapies and have links with charitable and voluntary organisations.

Our proposal for urgent care services is the first step to introducing the health and wellbeing centres which will take time as we review services across Wirral.

## We need to meet changing healthcare needs

In Wirral, just like across the rest of the country, there is a rising need for healthcare.

There are many reasons for this, including people living longer, and people requiring complex care and treatment for conditions such as diabetes. Wirral has an older population compared with the rest of the country, so there is a greater need to care for people as they get older.

## What's happening nationally?

New national changes are also having an effect on how we organise ourselves locally.

These include:

An improved  
**NHS 111** service  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



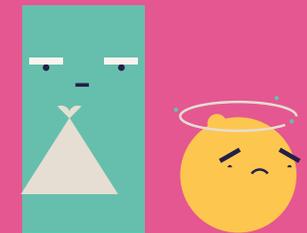
**More routine appointments with GPs** From 8am to 8pm,  
7 days a week.



Throughout the country, there'll be more **local pharmacists** who are able to prescribe simple medications to patients.



An **Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)** for injuries and illnesses that require urgent care, but that are not life threatening.



And there'll be **Advanced Paramedics**, able to assess and treat people in their own homes (often preventing them having to go to hospital).



# How do things look now?

**Currently, choices for urgent care in Wirral are varied.**

## GPs

GPs provide many urgent care services to patients every day. We know that different GP practices have different systems for booking appointments, and that you can't always get an urgent appointment.

## NHS 111

The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (telephone and online), offering advice and directing patients to local services when necessary.

## GP Out-of-Hours

Wirral GP Out-of-Hours service is accessed through NHS 111. It provides urgent clinical help and advice outside of GP opening hours for patients who are unable to wait for their GP practice to re-open.

## Pharmacies

Your local pharmacists are trained in helping people with less serious illnesses and injuries. They can assess symptoms and recommend the best course of treatment or simply provide reassurance - for instance, when a less serious illness will get better on its own with a few days' rest. And if symptoms suggest it's something more serious, they have the right clinical training to ensure you get the help you need. By using our pharmacists, more people can receive advice and treatment in their own community, and we can help keep A&E free for the most serious cases.

## Walk-in Centres

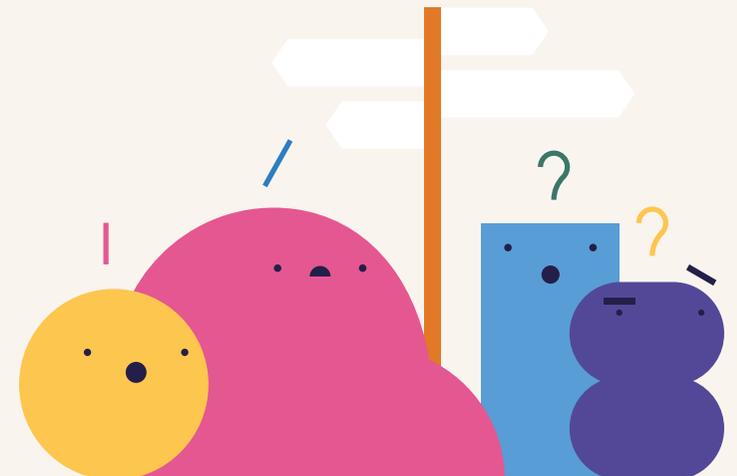
There are three Walk-in Centres in Wirral. These are located at Arrowe Park Hospital, Victoria Central in Wallasey and the Eastham Clinic. They have varied opening hours, are nurse-led, and offer a range of services to treat less serious illnesses and injuries.

## Minor Injuries/Illness Units

These are drop-in, nurse-led services which are sometimes supported by GPs. They are based at Moreton, Miriam Health Centre (Birkenhead) and Parkfield Medical Centre (New Ferry). They have varied opening hours and can treat a range of illnesses and injuries.

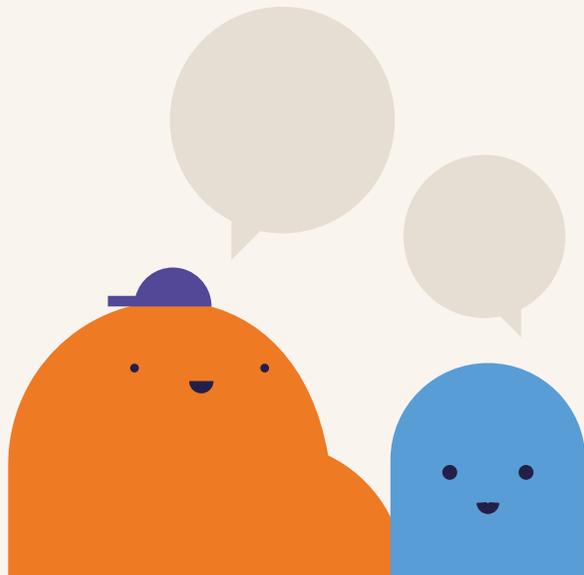
## Accident and Emergency (A&E)

Based at Arrowe Park Hospital, the A&E department is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and treats patients with wide ranging clinical needs from life-threatening conditions such as a stroke, to patients who could have sought advice and treatment elsewhere or self cared, e.g. sore throat or flu-like symptoms.



# What we've been told

Earlier this year we listened to people's views about how Urgent Care services work in Wirral.



## 80% of people that gave a view agreed that change was needed.

People told us that they wanted clearer healthcare choices and better access to GP appointments. They also told us that waiting times at A&E and Walk-in Centres were a concern and they wanted to see a reduction in the number of people using A&E unnecessarily.

- The three most important things for improving urgent care services in Wirral were:
  - Access to care in an emergency
  - Urgent care services that are easy to get to and use
  - Knowing where to go or who to contact when you need care, treatment or advice
- People also told us that they understand the pressures that A&E staff are under at Arrowe Park.

We were also told that urgent care services are important to those people with a mental health condition. **We are not proposing to change how mental health services are accessed as part of this consultation.**

**Taking into account what we know, and what people have told us, we're proposing a new system for Wirral. It includes national changes and looks at the way people in Wirral use urgent care services, to help them make the right choice.**

You can find a summary of the results of our listening exercise, key facts and figures, and our full case for change on our website [www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk](http://www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk)



# Our proposals to make urgent care services better

Our vision for Wirral's urgent care services is for a responsive, reliable and efficient system that fulfils these **7 principles** which have been developed following conversations with local people, local NHS staff and other stakeholders.

- 1 Standardised and simplified access:** knowing where to go and who to contact. Receiving the same standard of care wherever you go
- 2 Services that take into account your physical, mental, social and wellbeing needs at every step of treatment.** We want patients to feel supported, to understand their treatment, and feel comfortable to discuss any wider needs they may have
- 3 Convenience:** easy to find services close to home, where you're treated quickly and effectively
- 4 Achieving the 4 hour waiting standard** in Wirral's only A&E. Ensuring that A&E staff can focus on the most poorly and vulnerable patients
- 5 Staff who have the right information about their patients, helping them to deliver appropriate care and reassurance**
- 6 NHS partners working together,** providing a more efficient service that uses tax payers' money wisely
- 7 Services which staff are proud to be part of,** where they feel empowered to deliver high quality care.

**Combining national requirements and local need, this is how we propose to achieve it:**

## More promotion of self-care – ‘helping you to look after yourself’

In Wirral, we’ll be promoting self-care across the community.

Self-care is about:

- ✔ keeping fit and healthy
- ✔ understanding when you can look after yourself
- ✔ understanding when a pharmacist can help
- ✔ when to get advice from your GP or other healthcare professional.

If you have a long-term condition, it’s also about understanding that condition and how to manage it.

## Pharmacists who are able to help you more

More pharmacists will be able to prescribe simple medications to patients, so you don’t always have to go to another service.

## Making more GP appointments available

GP practices across Wirral provide the vast majority of healthcare for people, and we are **not** proposing to change the way in which people access a GP.

However, we recognise that for many people, their GP is their first contact point when they feel unwell, so we’ve thought about how we can make more urgent appointments available to people who need them.

## An improved NHS 111 service

NHS 111 is changing to offer more **clinical assessments by doctors and nurses over the telephone and online**. You may receive advice or a prescription, and will not have to wait for a call back. For many people, this will be the only contact they need.

NHS 111 will also continue to act as the point of contact for people who need to use the GP Out of Hours service and they will also be able to book urgent appointments with a GP or experienced nurse.

## An Urgent Treatment Centre

The introduction of an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) is a national requirement. It will provide a higher and more consistent level of clinical service than the current Walk-in Centres and Minor Illness/Injury Units. The UTC will be led by GPs and will provide access to a range of healthcare staff.

It is our intention to locate a UTC for Wirral on the Arrowe Park hospital site by developing the existing Walk-in Centre located next to the A&E department.

Having the UTC located on the Arrowe Park site means that patients arriving for urgent care will be assessed and directed to either A&E or the UTC to be seen by a GP or experienced nurse. This is called clinical streaming.

We have considered whether other existing sites in Wirral including Walk-in Centres and Minor Injury/Illness Units could provide UTC facilities.

Whilst they could deliver these services with some development work, we do not believe that they offer the same benefits to patients.

Also, if we have the UTC as well as our other current services then the amount we spend on Urgent Care would be exceeded and we would have insufficient clinical staff to cover

all services. This proposal is not about saving money and we won't be spending any less on Urgent Care but we must ensure that the delivery of a UTC and our proposed model of care is within the amount we have available to spend. Keeping our services as they are would also continue to confuse people about the choices available to them.

#### Benefits of the UTC on the Arrowe Park site:

- Patients who become very unwell when attending the UTC at Arrowe Park will benefit from a quick transfer to the A&E department to be cared for by specialist doctors and nurses. Having a UTC located elsewhere would rely on ambulance transport and could present a risk to patients, given the time it would take to get them to A&E. Many serious conditions such as stroke and heart attacks require rapid assessment and treatment to achieve the best outcomes for patients.
- Having the UTC at the Arrowe Park site means that patients can benefit from the full range of diagnostic facilities including MRI and CT scanning. These facilities are not available at other sites.

Therefore, our proposed model of care and options for consultation are based on our intention to locate the UTC on the Arrowe Park site. This is because we want to achieve the best clinical care for patients and to provide

clear choices when patients have an urgent care need.

Patients may also be offered bookable appointments at the UTC via NHS 111 or their GP if required.

### Extending urgent appointments to those who need them

We also need to think about our other existing services in the community, including Walk-in Centres and Minor Injury/Illness Units.

We are proposing that, **as well as** your usual GP service and NHS 111, we make urgent appointments available within 24 hours (usually on the same day) to anyone who needs them, in local areas across Wirral.

This appointment would be provided at another GP practice and we will also be able to offer an appointment at the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) at Arrowe Park Hospital. This means that you won't have to wait for an unspecified amount of time, and you can try and fit your appointment around your day.

We know that over 50% of all people using Walk-in Centres and Minor Injury/Illness Units are attending for dressings (wound care - for example if you are having regular dressings for ulcerated legs or need a wound redressed following an injury) or are parents seeking

help when their child is unwell. We are proposing to have a specific urgent care service for children which can be accessed via a bookable appointment or walk-in option. We are also proposing a dressings (wound care) service which would be accessed via a bookable appointment.

#### These services would be located at an NHS clinical site in each of the following areas in Wirral:

- South Wirral
- West Wirral
- Birkenhead
- Wallasey

#### We haven't decided on the exact locations yet and we would like people's views on what is important to them before we make any decisions. These would include the following:

- Accessible by public transport
- Distance from home
- Accessible for people with mobility requirements
- Parking
- Flexible and convenient appointments

The **consultation questionnaire** provides more detail on these and your feedback will help us decide on the most appropriate venue in each area.

As a result of this proposal, we would no longer have routine walk-in facilities at our current urgent care locations as follows:

**Walk-in facility**

Eastham Clinic  
Victoria Central Wallasey

**Minor Injuries/Illness unit**

Miriam Medical Centre Birkenhead  
Parkfield Medical Centre New Ferry  
Moreton Health Clinic

IMPORTANT – All other clinical services provided at these locations would not be affected by these changes (for example blood tests at these venues).

**The only routine walk-in facility for Wirral will be at the UTC located at the Arrowe Park site. Children will also be able access an urgent walk-in service locally.**

# What your services could look like

**Urgent appointment within 24 hours, mostly on the same day in your local area, across Wirral. Bookable via your GP or NHS 111.**



**Urgent care service for children 0-19 years (walk-in or bookable) and dressings (wound care).**

*Locations for these services will be decided at a later date.*



**Urgent Treatment Centre**  
(Walk-in or bookable appointments)

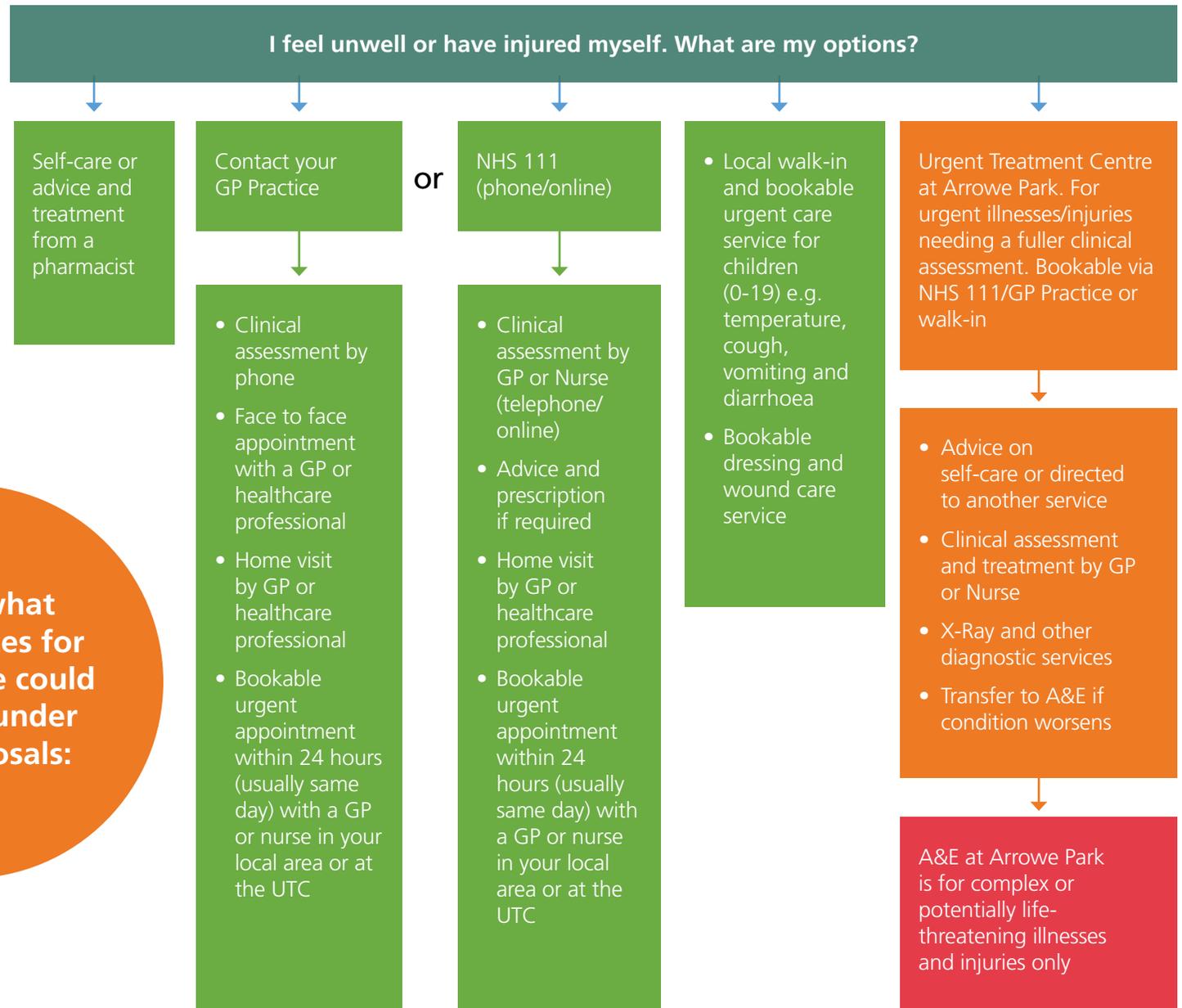


**Arrowe Park A&E**



# What will my options be under the new proposals?

This is what your choices for urgent care could look like under our proposals:



# We need your views on our proposals

If this overall model of care was adopted, we'd have to think about the resources we have available.

National guidance requires us to open the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) for a **minimum of 12 hours**, but we'd like to extend this to **15 hours or 24 hours a day** to provide more access for patients. Extending the opening hours of the Urgent Treatment Centre would impact on how long we can provide the urgent care service for children as well as a dressings (wound care) service each day.

We want your views on this.

This is what it would look like:

## Option 1

- **A&E** - 24 hours
- **Urgent Treatment Centre – 24 hours** at the Arrowe Park site. Walk-in and bookable appointments. Led by GPs with a team of healthcare professionals. Access to X-Ray. Access to A&E Consultant/ Service
- **Community:** In your local area, there will be **urgent bookable appointments via NHS 111/your GP:**
  - GP or nurse appointments - **within 24 hours (8am-8pm)**
  - Access to same day urgent care for children (0-19yrs) – **available up to 8 hours a day (walk in also available)**
  - Access to dressings (wound care) – **available up to 8 hours per day.**

## Option 2

- **A&E** - 24 hours
- **Urgent Treatment Centre – 15 hours** at the Arrowe Park site. Walk-in and bookable appointments. Led by GPs with a team of healthcare professionals. Access to X-Ray. Access to A&E Consultant/ Service
- **Community:** In your local area, there will be **urgent bookable appointments via NHS 111/your GP:**
  - GP or nurse appointments - **within 24 hours (8am-8pm)**
  - Access to same day urgent care for children (0-19yrs) – **available up to 12 hours a day (walk in also available)**
  - Access to dressings (wound care) – **available up to 12 hours per day.**

## Both options would be supported by:

- ☑ Improved NHS 111 service (telephone and online) with assessments by doctors and nurses, including ability to prescribe
- ☑ Local pharmacists
- ☑ More promotion of self-care – 'helping you to look after yourself'.

# What are the pros and cons of each option?

## Option 1: 24 hour opening of the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

Having the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) open for **24 hours** would mean that patients can be either seen and treated at the UTC or transferred to A&E for the treatment they need. This would mean:

- A clear and consistent offer for patients, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Bookable appointments at the UTC via NHS 111 or your GP if required
- Most patients seen within two hours
- Access to X-Ray, MRI, CT scanning and tests
- Reduced pressure on A&E.

Urgent GP appointments will be available in your local area 8am-8pm each day in addition to appointments in your practices.

In your local area, available **for up to 8 hours each day**:

- Urgent care services for children (walk-in and bookable)
- Dressings (wound care) - bookable.

## Option 2: 15 hour opening of Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

**15 hour opening** of the UTC ensures that it is open during the busiest times, but it would mean:

- If you attend A&E when the UTC is shut, and the doctor or nurse feels your situation is not serious, you may be referred to another service e.g. an appointment in your local area the following day
- People attending the Arrowe Park site at night would still go to A&E and may have an overnight stay
- It would be harder for us to reduce the pressure on A&E, meaning longer waiting times, especially when the UTC is shut
- People may still be confused about opening hours.

Urgent GP appointments will be available in your local area 8am-8pm each day in addition to appointments in your practices.

In your local area, available **for 12 hours each day**:

- Urgent care services for children (walk-in and bookable)
- Dressings (wound care) - bookable.

# What we're asking in this consultation

We would like your views on the following:

1

How long do you think the new Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) should be open (24 hours or 15 hours)?

National guidance requires us to open the Urgent Treatment Centre for a **minimum of 12 hours**, but we'd like to extend this to **15 hours** or **24 hours a day**.

2

What do you think about having an urgent appointment in your local area which you can book, instead of a walk-in option?

Bookable appointments mean you won't have to wait for an unspecified amount of time, and you can fit your appointment around your day. The Urgent Treatment Centre will provide a walk-in facility as well as bookable appointments. Everybody that needs urgent care will still get it.

3

What do you think of a local walk-in option for children with symptoms such as a temperature, in addition to bookable urgent appointments?

Aimed at children between 0-19 years with minor injuries and ailments, including high temperature, vomiting, diarrhoea, small cuts and bruises, coughs/colds, sprains and strains.

4

What is important to you when thinking about where the Children's Urgent Care and Dressings (wound care) service should be located?

We want to hear your views on things like parking, convenience and accessibility to help us decide on the best locations for these services.

5

Do you think that the model we are proposing improves on what we have now?

We want to create a model of care that is easy to understand, that gives you more options closer to home, and that meets your changing healthcare needs.

Better urgent care services can also help reduce pressure on Wirral's only A&E.

# Patient stories

Here are some examples of how people in Wirral would access urgent care under the new model:

## Lizzy and Michelle

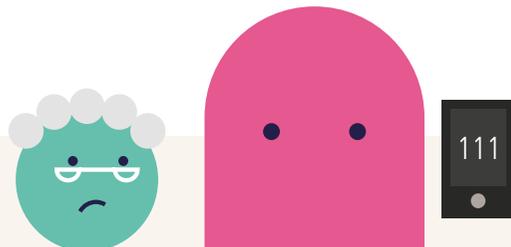
*Lizzy is 75 and lives on her own. She has some difficulty with mobility.*

*Lizzy's daughter Michelle is worried when she notices that Lizzy is a bit confused, has a slight temperature and is complaining of pain in her tummy. Lizzy doesn't want to go into hospital, as last time she became very confused and distressed.*

*Lizzy's GP practice can't offer her an urgent appointment, but they can offer her a 1.30pm appointment with another GP local to her.*

*Lizzy is diagnosed with a urinary infection and is given appropriate medication and advice by the GP.*

*The GP also gives Lizzy some information on social groups in the local area that can help with her general wellbeing, and help keep her as active as possible.*



## Jenny and Lois

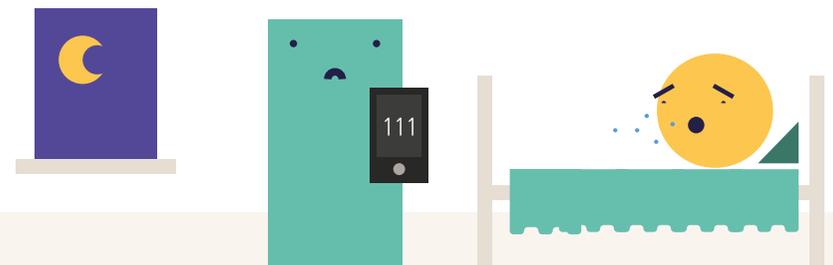
*Jenny's 3-year-old daughter, Lois, has been coughing throughout the day, and by teatime it is getting worse. Lois also has a high temperature.*

*Jenny gives Lois medicine before bed, but her cough worsens, and Lois becomes upset.*

*By 9.00pm, Jenny is worried, and doesn't want to wait until the morning to seek help.*

*Jenny rings NHS 111, and speaks directly with a GP, who gives a clinical assessment over the phone. The GP gives Jenny advice about what to look out for should Lois's symptoms get worse, and also offers her an appointment in her local area first thing in the morning.*

*This is ideal for Jenny, as she can still get to work after the appointment.*



## Steve

*Steve has spent the weekend gardening.*

*He wakes up on Sunday morning with back pain.*

*He decides to use the walk in facility at the Urgent Treatment Centre, as he is not sure whether he needs an X-Ray.*

*Steve is seen within an hour at the Urgent Treatment Centre.*

*If his only option had been A&E, he may have had a much longer wait.*

*Steve is assessed by an experienced nurse, who reassures him he does not need an X-Ray.*

*The nurse gives him advice and information on pain relief.*

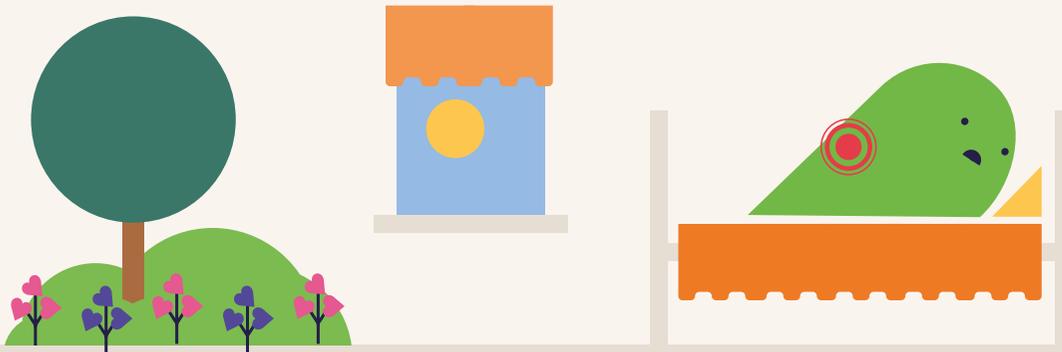
# What happens next?

## How will we use your comments?

Our consultation runs from **Thursday 20th September to Wednesday 12th December.**

At the end of the consultation, we will analyse your feedback and write a report. In February 2019, the NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body will meet in public to consider the consultation responses as well as other information before making a decision.

We will share the decision publicly, and make sure it is available on our website. We will also share news of its publication on our facebook and twitter accounts.



# Find out more and share your views

## Visit our website: [www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk](http://www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk)

- ✔ to share your views and fill in an online survey
- ✔ for more information including: Frequently Asked Questions, Case for Change, Quality Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment.
- ✔ for a summary of our listening exercise
- ✔ to view animations of typical patient experiences under the proposed model.

## You can:

Meet us face to face across Wirral at shopping centres, health facilities and community locations (details on our website).

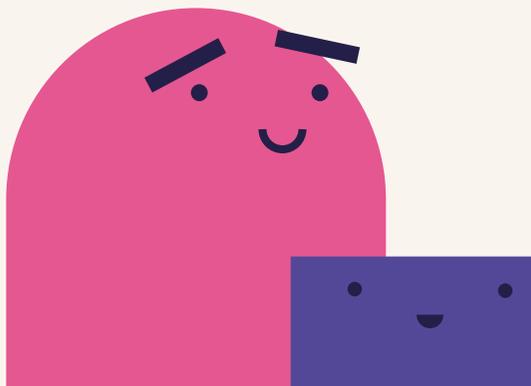
Email us at [wiccg.urgentcarereview@nhs.net](mailto:wiccg.urgentcarereview@nhs.net)

Call us on **0151 541 5416**

Come along to a **Public Question Time** event

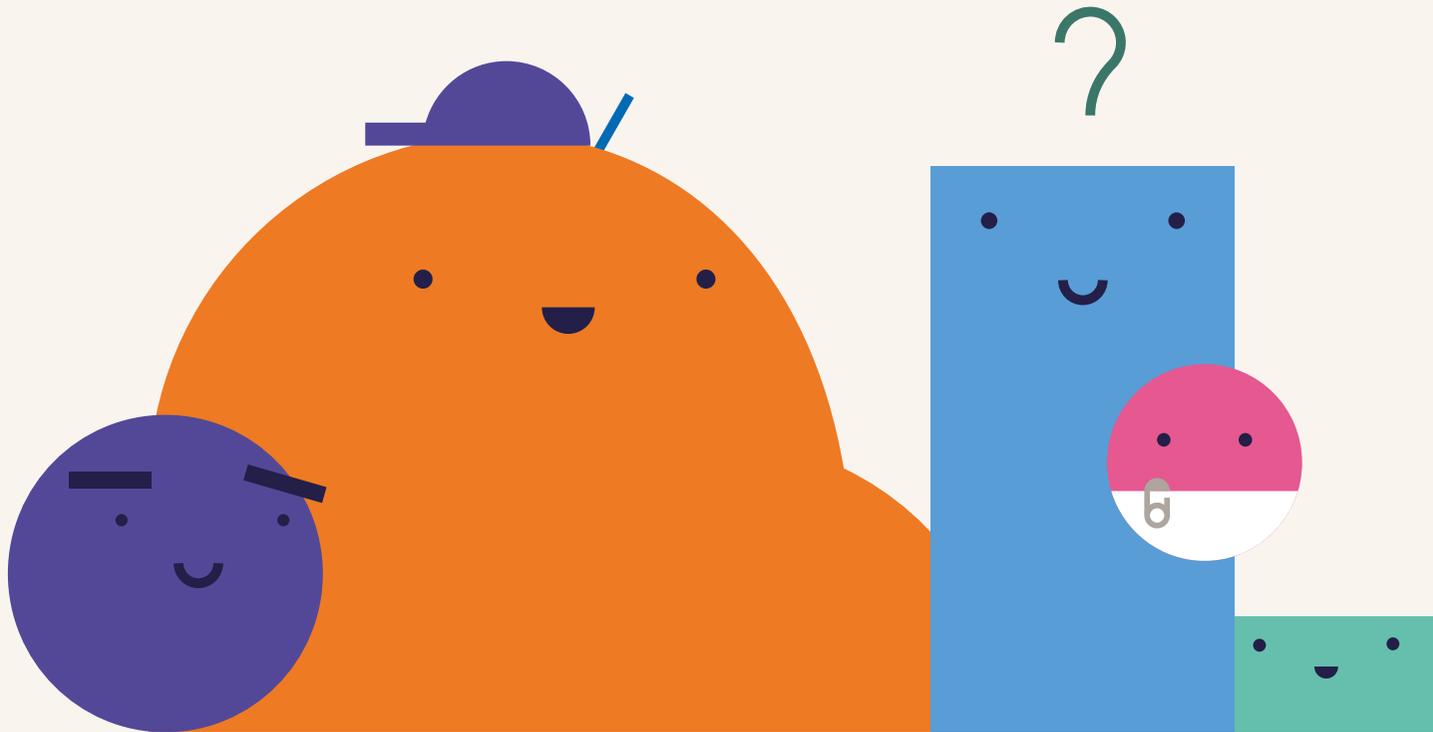
### Write to us:

Urgent Care Consultation  
NHS Wirral CCG  
Marriss House  
(formerly Old Market House)  
Hamilton Street,  
Birkenhead  
Wirral, CH41 5AL



You can also contact us for a hard copy of the survey, or for alternative formats of our consultation materials.





[www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk](http://www.wirralurgentcare.co.uk)