Help us shape our plans for urgent care

What is urgent care?

Urgent care is medical treatment that you need quickly, but your condition is not serious or life-threatening. It’s things like bad falls, tummy pains, a child with a worsening fever, or cuts, bruises and sprains that need immediate attention. Sometimes this can be called ‘minor injury or illness’.

When people need urgent health care, they are not always sure where to go. This often means that they go to Accident and Emergency, when really this should only be used for the most serious accidents and illnesses, such as broken bones, injuries that cause unconsciousness, serious bleeding, or severe illness.

Urgent care does not usually need Accident and Emergency - GPs can often offer this care, although they are not always open in the evenings or at weekends.

There are also ‘minor injury and illness units’ in some of the community hospitals in Leicestershire and Rutland, but people are not always sure which hospitals, or when they are open, so they are not very well used. In Leicestershire, there is also the Walk-In Centre in Loughborough, which many people use. In Leicester, there is the urgent care centre in Leicester Royal Infirmary. These are both open seven days a week, plus Bank Holidays.

People are particularly unsure what to do if they need this kind of healthcare outside normal GP surgery hours. Where should they go? Many GPs are now offering extended opening hours, but people are not always sure when they are. And what about Sundays or the middle of the night? There is an out-of-hours service which you can access if you ring your GP outside normal hours, but people are not always aware of this. The out-of-hours service usually tells you the best place to go to get help, or sometimes arranges for an on call GP to visit you.

It can all feel confusing.

Why are we looking at urgent care services?

When we carried out our public consultation about community health services last year, lots of people asked us about care for minor injuries and illness, or ‘urgent care’. We agreed to do a review of these services.

We want to improve people’s access to urgent care, and also to make the system simpler, as part of our pledge to bring ‘care closer to home’.
During 2009, the financial situation has also changed. This means that we have to look very carefully at the best way to spend our money to ensure that people have the services they need in a cost-effective way.

We now have some ideas about what the future could look like, and we want to find out what people think before we decide our final proposals.

**What could the future look like?**

One of the problems at the moment is that people are not sure where to go if they need urgent care. We want to make the services more streamlined, so that it is clearer where people can go.

We already have the walk-in centre in Loughborough, and we are also planning to open, very soon, an ‘8 to 8’ centre in the Oadby and Wigston area. This centre will be open from 8am until 8pm and people will be able to walk in and use it without appointments. There is also an urgent care centre in Leicester city, which county people are free to use.

In the future, these will be an important part of the services available to people if they need urgent care, and their opening hours mean that they will be open at the times when most people are likely to need to use them.

We are also working with local GPs to see if more of them can open their surgeries for longer, and if some can open on Saturday mornings, so that they can care for people with minor injuries and illnesses.

Over the next few weeks we will be discussing these ideas with the GPs, with community health staff, and with members of the public. We will then put together some proposals which we hope will make it easier for you to understand the services there are, and to use the right ones at the right time.

Please take a moment to answer the questionnaire on the next two pages.
Questionnaire on urgent care in primary care

Please take a moment to answer these questions:

**Part 1 – your views**

1. Do you know where your nearest minor injury unit is?  Yes       No
   If yes, please name it -----------------------------------------------------------------

2. Have you ever used your nearest minor injury unit?     Yes       No
   If yes, please name it _______________________________________

3. Have you ever used your GP for a minor injury?         Yes       No

4. If you needed urgent help with a minor injury or illness, would you use:
   (tick one or more)     Loughborough walk-in centre
                          Oadby and Wigston 8 to 8 centre (when it is open)
                          Leicester city urgent care centre
                          Other minor injury/illness unit
                          Local GP in the week
                          Local GP Saturday morning service

5. If you chose other minor injury/illness unit, please name ___________

6. How easy is it at the moment to understand the best place to go for urgent care?
   Very easy      Quite easy     Don’t know      Quite difficult      Very difficult

**Part 2 – About you**

Please complete as much of the information about yourself as you feel comfortable with, as this will help us understand who is giving us feedback. The information you provide will be kept in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2000.

7. Gender
   Male ☐          Female ☐          Prefer not to say ☐

8. Age group
   Under 16 ☐          16 to 24 ☐
   25 to 34 ☐          35 to 59 ☐
   60 to 74 ☐          75+ ☐
   Prefer not to say ☐

9. Ethnic group
Asian or Asian British  ☐  Black or Black British  ☐
Chinese  ☐  Mixed/dual heritage  ☐
White  ☐  Other ethnic group  ☐

10. Do you consider yourself to have a disability  Yes ☐  No ☐

11. Sexual orientation
Bisexual  ☐  Heterosexual  ☐  Transgender  ☐
Gay  ☐  Lesbian  ☐  Prefer not to say  ☐

12. Religion and belief
No religion  ☐  Bahai  ☐  Buddhist  ☐
Christian  ☐  Hindu  ☐  Jain  ☐
Jewish  ☐  Muslim  ☐  Sikh  ☐
Prefer not to say  ☐  Other (please state)  ☐

13. First four letters/numbers of postcode (we will not be able to identify your address from this but it helps us understand approximately where replies are from)

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Please return by email to: jo.lilley@lcr.nhs.uk or send to the freepost address below by 28 January 2010.

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