

The future of urgent care services in North Tyneside

November 2017



Background

- June 2015 - Emergency Department (ED) services transferred from Rake Lane, Wansbeck and Hexham to the Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital (NSECH) at Cramlington
- Rake Lane ED replaced with a 24/7 urgent care centre (UCC) for minor injuries and minor ailments only.
- Patients who present at Rake Lane UCC with serious illness / injury are immediately transferred to NSECH



Background

- The opening of NSECH left North Tyneside with a number of overlapping urgent care services:
 - Rake Lane Hospital (24/7)
 - Battle Hill Health Centre (8:00 to 20:00 hours)
 - Shiremoor Paediatric Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) (closed October 2016)
 - GP Out of Hours (GP OOH) (18.30 – 08.00 weekdays, 08.00 – 08.00 weekends)
- The CCG launched the Right Care, Time & Place initiative in 2015/16 to begin consultation on rationalising the remaining urgent care services in the borough.



Right Care, Time & Place

- Jan 2015 – May 2016 – The CCG carried out a series of engagement exercises culminating in a 3 month public consultation.
- Views were sought on proposals to bring all of the existing urgent care services in the borough together onto a single site.
- The public expressed a preference for the service to be located at Rake Lane but Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHCFT) declined to allow other providers to bid to operate from their premises.



Right Care, Time & Place

- The CCG undertook a procurement. At the end of that process, the CCG was unable to identify a provider capable of delivering the full service specification.
- The process was paused in July 2017.
- A draft service specification has been developed to reflect feedback from the market and new national guidance.
- The CCG is proposing a second round of procurement in December 2017 with the aim of mobilising a new service by 1st October 2018.



Right Care, Time & Place

The proposed new service would consist of:

- An Urgent Treatment Centre open from 08.00 – 22.00
- An Out of Hours Home Visiting Service operating 18.30 – 08.00 on weekdays and 08.00 – 08.00 at weekend
- The model has been changed because the market told us that it could not provide the workforce to deliver a 24/7 walk-in urgent care service. The recruitment of GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) and radiographers was seen as particularly challenging.



Right Care, Time & Place

The CCG is currently engaging with the public on 2 issues:

1. the shortened overnight access to the existing urgent care service at Rake Lane.
2. to seek views on the proposed changes to the service model.



Shortened Overnight Access to Rake Lane UCC

- December 2016 – Northumbria Healthcare proposes a temporary suspension of urgent care services at Rake Lane between 24.00 – 08.00.
- Only a small number of people were using the service overnight and the majority of these had only very minor ailments / injuries
- The clinical workforce has become increasingly stretched and it is difficult to justify a decision to withdraw clinicians from ED in order to staff an under-utilised minor injuries service overnight



Shortened Overnight access (cont...)

- An average of 2.8 people used the urgent care centre at Rake Lane between 24.00 and 08.00 in the 6 months prior to the suspension.
- 63% of patients using the service during this time required no investigation or treatment, or only the most minor forms of healthcare (e.g. oral administration of medication, application of steristrip dressing etc.)
- Patients with serious illnesses / injuries are transferred to NSECH



Shortened Overnight Access (cont...)

- Since the closure:
 - The average number of North Tyneside residents attending NSECH between 24.00 – 08.00 each night has increased by 0.3 (1 extra patient every 3 days)
 - The average number presenting at the RVI has increased by 0.2 (1 extra patient every 5 days)
 - There has been a small increase (approximately 2 patients every 3 days) in those accessing telephone-based healthcare via the GP OOH service
 - No increase in complaints, incidents or other negative quality indicators



Shortened Overnight Access (cont...)

- North Tyneside still has a 24/7 urgent care system but it now operates on an 'appointments only' basis overnight.
- Patients can access urgent care from the GP OOH service by ringing NHS 111
- Patients with a serious illness or injury, or those who still want to access urgent care on a walk-in basis, can still attend ED at NSECH and / or the RVI Hospital in Newcastle overnight.



Impact of the new proposals

- The CCG is proposing to replace the existing urgent care centres at Rake Lane and Battle Hill with a single centre (the location of which is to be determined).
- The new centre will open from 08.00 – 22.00, meaning that walk-in access to urgent care in North Tyneside will end two hours earlier than it does at present.
- An average of 1.6 patients per evening use the existing urgent care service at Rake Lane between 22.00 – 24.00.
- Our experience over the past year indicates that it is unlikely that many of these patients will reappear as ED attendances if that service was removed.



Conclusion

Board members are invited to give their views on:

- The changes to the proposed future model of urgent care for North Tyneside
- The continued shortened overnight access to walk-in services in North Tyneside.

The CCG will reflect on the outcomes of the engagement exercise which will inform the new urgent care model and specification.

