

Welcome to our first GP practice newsletter

HUC provide integrated urgent care services to 3.5 million patients across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, Luton & Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and west Essex. We also manage Luton Town Centre Surgery and Cheshunt Minor Injuries Unit, in partnership with Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT) and Lea Valley GP Federation.



We are keen to work closely with local communities to ensure we provide high quality care for the people who use our service. At HUC, our dedicated local teams continuously liaise with a wide range of stakeholders as part of our drive to innovate and improve the services we provide. The feedback from GP practices is vital in this process. That is why we are now publishing a quarterly newsletter specifically for GPs and other practice staff with key service updates, patient feedback and performance details across the organisation.

We hope you find the information in this newsletter useful. If you are interested in any specific areas of our services, please let us know and we will try and include this in our next edition.

Warm wishes,

The HUC team

General Information

Did you know?

An integrated urgent care service (IUC) combines NHS111 and the Out of Hours service elements with a Clinical Assessment Service (CAS) in the contact centre, which is made up of GPs and other healthcare professionals.



An IUC means that a patient can:

- Be given self-care information and reassurance from a fully trained Health Advisor
- Be transferred to a qualified Clinician to perform an over the phone consultation
- Be transferred to a healthcare professional, for example a nurse or dentist, to complete an over the phone consultation
- Be referred to an appropriate service, e.g. an out of hours GP, community pharmacy or A&E
- Have an ambulance dispatched to their location

What is the Clinical Assessment Service (CAS)?

At the heart of the IUC sits the CAS. It is made up of a range of healthcare professionals e.g. a GP, nurse, pharmacist, dental nurse or triage nurse. Our services all have a CAS within the contact centre, however the service specification is different in each area. For example, our Hertfordshire IUC was the first service nationally with a 24 hour GP. All category 3 and 4 ambulance calls are revalidated by the CAS GP to ensure patients receive the most appropriate care for their condition.

In October:

1. Our services answered over **71,000 calls to NHS111**
2. Over **30,000 patients were seen in the Out of Hours** period at a treatment centre
3. Over **8,000 calls were transferred to a CAS Clinician**
4. As a result of early CAS Clinician input, **over 4,500 ambulances were prevented**

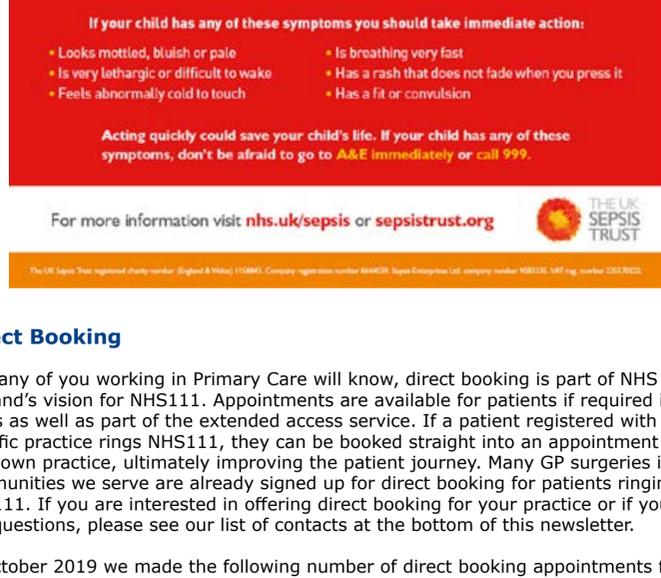


Innovations at NHS111

Sepsis kits in our services

Sepsis is a condition that is very difficult to diagnose. Around 52,000 people die of Sepsis in England every year, according to the Sepsis Trust. At HUC, we provide sepsis kits in all visiting cars and at bases in some services to facilitate an early diagnosis of the condition.

The kit only recently helped to save a life in Bedfordshire: a mum presented with an 18-month-old child at base, showing a high fever, cold hands and feet and signs for an ear infection. Even though observations were normal, the GP decided to keep her at base to see if she responded to medication given and at that point, she stopped breathing. After calling an ambulance and while performing chest compressions, the GP used the sepsis kit, which indicated low lactate levels, i.e. a likelihood of sepsis. An injection of penicillin was administered. After release from hospital the child is now doing much better and on her way to recovery.



Direct Booking

As many of you working in Primary Care will know, direct booking is part of NHS England's vision for NHS111. Appointments are available for patients if required in hours as well as part of the extended access service. If a patient registered with a specific practice rings NHS111, they can be booked straight into an appointment at their own practice, ultimately improving the patient journey. Many GP surgeries in the communities we serve are already signed up for direct booking for patients ringing NHS111. If you are interested in offering direct booking for your practice or if you have any questions, please see our list of contacts at the bottom of this newsletter.

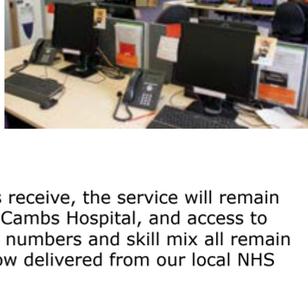
In October 2019 we made the following number of direct booking appointments for:

- Luton & Bedfordshire - **2,816**
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough - **778**
- Hertfordshire - **5,514**
- West Essex - **1,109**

Local Updates

Wisbech IUC now joined with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough service

The IUC service in the Wisbech locality has now transferred to HUC. Historically, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS111 service, provided from 2012, and the IUC service going forward since 2016 did not include that locality, which was joined with the Norfolk service provided by a different organisation. However patients now receive the same service as all other patients within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough since 8 October, including direct and easier access to the mental health Crisis First Response Service via NHS 111 option 2.

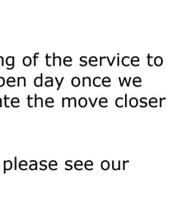


This change does not impact on the service patients receive, the service will remain the same. This includes a local OOHs base at North Cambs Hospital, and access to visiting GPs for home visits. Opening times, staffing numbers and skill mix all remain the same. The NHS 111 element of the service is now delivered from our local NHS 111 call centre in Peterborough.

If you have any specific queries about the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough service, you can find contact details at the bottom of this newsletter.

Contact Centre move for Luton & Bedfordshire

As you may be aware, our contact centre for the Luton & Bedfordshire service is currently based at Gilbert Hitchcock House in Kimbolton Road in Bedford. We have been informed that the building will be redeveloped to accommodate three GP practices soon. As a result, we are taking this opportunity to permanently move to much improved modern facilities and estates for our colleagues and we are excited to announce that we are working towards a mid-January moving date to the Enhanced Services Centre within Bedford Health Village.

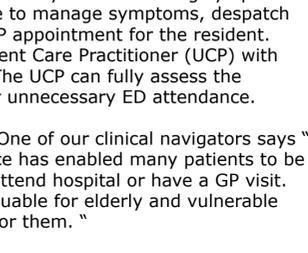


The move will be managed carefully and there will be a dual running of the service to ensure minimum disruption to service delivery. There will be an open day once we have moved and we will invite all stakeholders to join us to celebrate the move closer to the date.

If you have any questions about the Luton & Bedfordshire service, please see our contact list below.

Early Intervention Vehicle (EIV) in East and North Hertfordshire

A visiting car service, the EIV is a dedicated resource for residential and nursing homes four days a week that can be utilised for residents who may have had a fall and/or require medical attention, e.g. for minor wounds, minor allergic reactions, asthma and others. Care homes in East and North Hertfordshire can dial NHS111 option 6, which directs callers to a trained call handler who takes patient demographics and rules out any immediately life threatening symptoms. A clinical navigator is available who may give advice to manage symptoms, despatch an ambulance if required or book an out of hours GP appointment for the resident. They may send the EIV, which is manned by an Urgent Care Practitioner (UCP) with appropriate equipment, including lifting cushions. The UCP can fully assess the resident and treat them where able with the need for unnecessary ED attendance.

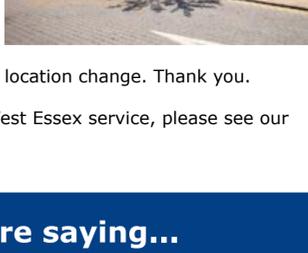


In October, we have had 35 cases utilising the EIV. One of our clinical navigators says "I can only say good things about the EIV. The service has enabled many patients to be assessed and managed safely without the need to attend hospital or have a GP visit. As winter pressures set in again, the service is invaluable for elderly and vulnerable patients, enabling both a safe and timely outcome for them."

If you have any questions about the EIV or our Hertfordshire service, please see our contact list below.

Epping base move in West Essex

We would like to advise you that the Evening and Weekend GP service as well as our Out of Hours service have now moved to better, more modern facilities on the ground floor of St Margaret's Hospital in Epping. There is ample free car parking on site. Patients should enter the main doors named "Epping Forest Entry". Should the doors be closed, patients should press the button marked "OUT OF HOURS" to the left of the main doors and the receptionist will answer. GP surgery colleagues booking appointments should advise patients of the location change. Thank you.



If you have any questions about this move or the West Essex service, please see our contact list below.

What our patients are saying...

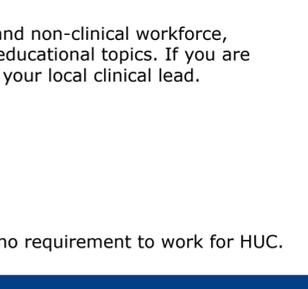
"Went to an emergency out of hours GP. Very helpful staff. We have used NHS 111 several times as son (two years) has had breathing issues. Extremely helpful service for us. At one point last year they were life saving as son had sepsis and NHS 111 got an ambulance as soon as possible. Thank you!"

"I've used the 111 service several times in the last few years for myself and my family. I've always found it incredibly helpful to get excellent advice, set up urgent appointments or just get reassurance. I've nothing but praise for this service."

"What a marvellous service! I had an upper respiratory infection and had it not been for GP out of hours, I'm sure I would have ended up in hospital or A&E. As it was, I was able to get out of hours medication and started on the road to recovery."

Join us!

We are keen to work with passionate healthcare professionals as part of our exceptional and dynamic medical team to improve clinical outcomes and create a smooth patient journey across multiple organisations.



Whether you are a pharmacist, nurse, paramedic or a doctor looking to do additional work, there might be just the right opportunity for you at HUC.

Click [here](#) to find out more about our opportunities.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Educational Events

HUC regularly hosts training events for our clinical and non-clinical workforce, including Basic Life Support training and dedicated educational topics. If you are interested in attending any of these, please contact your local clinical lead.

Some examples of training events coming up:

- Severe Ischemic Chest Pain
- Telephone Triage
- Changes to NHS Pensions
- Basic Life Support and Anaphylaxis Training

The training counts towards your CPD. Open to all, no requirement to work for HUC.

Key Contacts at HUC

We are keen to hear from you and to work closely with the healthcare communities we serve. If you have a specific enquiry, please download the Key Contacts below or for general enquiries, please email info@hertsurgentcare.nhs.uk or go to our website www.hucweb.co.uk

[Key Contacts](#)

Thank you for your continued support. If there is anything you would like to see more of in this newsletter, please get in touch with the Communications team communications@hertsurgentcare.nhs.uk