

# Have your say on...

The future of the NHS Walk-in Centre service at the Waldron Health Centre, New Cross and proposals to improve primary care in Lewisham



# Introduction

NHS Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) wants to improve urgent and non-urgent primary care across the borough and as part of this we are looking at the future of the NHS Walk-in Centre service, at the Waldron Health Centre in New Cross.

We think the way people access primary care services could be improved. People tell us the way it works currently is confusing, and means people are not always seen in the right care setting or at the right time.

Our contract for the NHS Walk-in Centre at the Waldron Health Centre expires on 31 December 2017 and we are considering what to do about it and how to improve provision and access to urgent and non-urgent primary care beyond this date.

This document sets out what we propose to do and why, and we now want to know what you think.

We would like to know the views of local people, patients and carers, staff, and community organisations. Please read this document, fill in the questionnaire at the back and send it back to us. We'll also be out and about in Lewisham talking to local people about the proposals on the following dates for drop-in sessions:

## Friday 1 September 2017, 1pm to 4pm

Ground Floor, Waldron Health Centre

## Saturday 9 September 2017, 9am to 1pm

Ground Floor, Waldron Health Centre

## Tuesday 12 September 2017, 10am to 1pm

Ground Floor, Waldron Health Centre

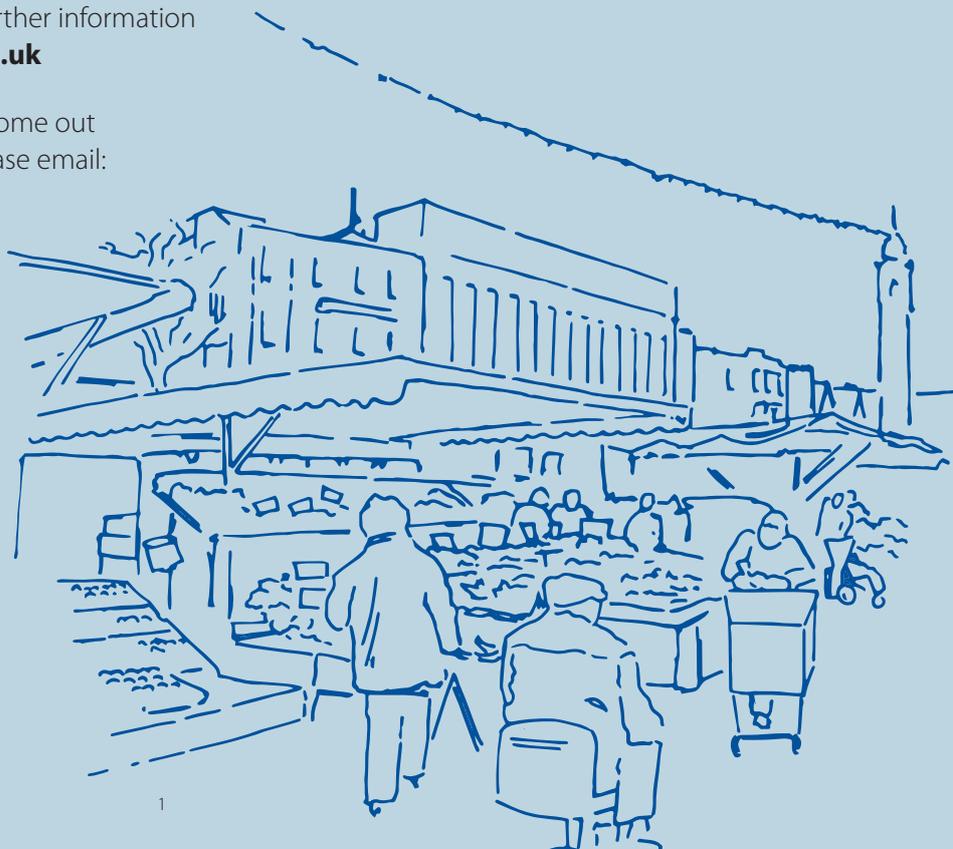
Visit our website for additional sessions and further information about the proposals: [www.lewishamccg.nhs.uk](http://www.lewishamccg.nhs.uk)

If you have any questions or would like us to come out and talk to your group about the proposal please email:

[lewccg.consultation@nhs.net](mailto:lewccg.consultation@nhs.net)

or call **020 7206 3200**.

**All comments must be received by 5pm on 30 October 2017.**



# What is primary care?

Primary care services provide the first point of contact in the healthcare system, acting as the 'front door' of the NHS and around 90% of patient interaction is with primary care services. Primary care includes GPs in general practice, community pharmacy, dental, and optometry (eye health) services. They work together to provide universal general health services.

Locally, primary care is available through:

- **GP surgeries** for registered patients.
- via the **out of hours GP service**, delivered by South East London Doctors Co-operative (SELDOC). This is a GP-led service, which provides out of hours primary care services, 365 days a year. The service runs from 6.30pm - 8pm on weekdays and 24 hours at weekends and public holidays. SELDOC has a team of out of hours GPs, advanced nurse practitioners and pharmacists to support the service. When needed, SELDOC can arrange appointments at one of their base centres or organise a home visit.
- by calling **NHS 111**, the free NHS non-emergency number. NHS 111 provides help with urgent healthcare needs. It directs people to the right local service, first time. An adviser asks a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately directs you to the best medical care. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- the **Urgent Care Centre** at University Hospital Lewisham treats people with minor injuries and conditions. The service is provided by emergency nurse practitioners and doctors and also advises people to use other health services including GPs, pharmacists or other community service providers as appropriate. The service is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- **High street pharmacies** - the 'Pharmacy First' scheme provides advice, treatment and medicines for common ailments from all Lewisham pharmacies for people registered with a Lewisham GP.
- **GP Extended Access Service** at the University Hospital Lewisham provides a further 25,426 bookable GP, Nurse and Video consultation appointments per year for people registered with a Lewisham GP.
- the **NHS Walk-in Centre** at the Waldron Health Centre.
- other primary care services available across Lewisham for general dental and optometry (eye health) care.

**We are proposing to close the Walk-in Centre service at the Waldron Health Centre and improve provision and access to urgent and non-urgent primary care services in Lewisham by increasing use of the GP Extended Access Service.**

# Walk-in Centres

Walk-in Centres were designed as a complementary service to traditional GP and A&E services. However, they are not designed for treating long-term conditions or immediately life-threatening problems.

## NHS Walk-in Centre, New Cross

The Walk-in Centre is open from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, including public holidays. In 2016/17 it saw 29,528 patients, at a cost of approximately **£1m. After contributions from other CCGs, the cost to Lewisham CCG was £748,000.**



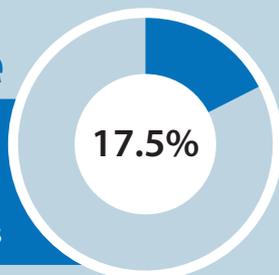
The centre is for patients who are unable to get an urgent appointment with their GP and who have a minor injury or medical condition that is not life-threatening but needs to be seen.

It does not offer any advice or consultations by telephone and does not have access to GP medical records for any patients.

Lewisham is the only local remaining CCG with a Walk-in Centre meaning people from other parts of south east London are using it. **Last year 17.5% of people using the Walk-in Centre were from neighbouring south east London boroughs.**

## % of people

Using the Walk-in Centre from neighbouring south east London boroughs



The contract for the Walk-in Centre ends on 31 December 2017 and cannot be renewed. If it were to continue running, we would need to set up a new contract, but we don't think the Walk-in Centre is the best way to care for the people of Lewisham.

## Walk-in Centres do not encourage better health.

The easy availability of walk-in appointments is discouraging residents from visiting or registering with a GP. This means that people are missing out on services that help prevent ill-health – such as immunisations; screening services (which are vital if we are to catch diseases such as cancer at an early stage); and good management of long term conditions. The walk-in staff often see patients who wouldn't need urgent care services if their condition was properly managed with the involvement of a GP.

## A&Es, urgent care centres and walk-in centres do not provide the best care for many conditions.

A busy A&E or Walk-in Centre is not necessarily the best place for many people (for instance people with a mental health problem) to receive care. GPs can and do provide this service. They are also often not the right environment to find out about underlying causes. For instance is there a reason why someone has injured themselves? It could be for any number of reasons including domestic abuse, drug or alcohol problems. GPs can also identify vulnerable children and older people in need of help. A GP has a much better understanding of their patient's situation and can refer to their notes – so they can take a more holistic view. A GP working with their teams can also ensure patients receive the full range of preventative and other health services, such as immunisations and health checks. GPs and nurses tell us there are too many people visiting Walk-in Centres who are not managing (or being helped to manage) their long term condition so they end up in crisis – seeking urgent help.

**The system is complicated.** Patients often do not understand where they need to go and can get passed from one service to another.

Because patients can be treated in a number of different places, at times **none of the different NHS staff have a clear picture about whether a patient's needs are being met.**

**The current service is confusing** (both for patients to understand and for staff to deliver), wastes resources, and doesn't offer patients the quality of service they need.

# Who uses the Walk-in Centre?

The centre is mainly used by people who live in the north of the borough.

Of those attendances to the Walk-in Centre fewer than half (43.5%) are registered with a Lewisham GP and a quarter of those attendances are from one of the four GP practices based in the Waldron Health Centre.

This suggests that people are using the service because they can't get an appointment with their GP, they think they won't be able to get an appointment, or they don't want to wait for one.

**Of those people using the Walk-in Centre fewer than half (43.5%) are registered with a Lewisham GP.**

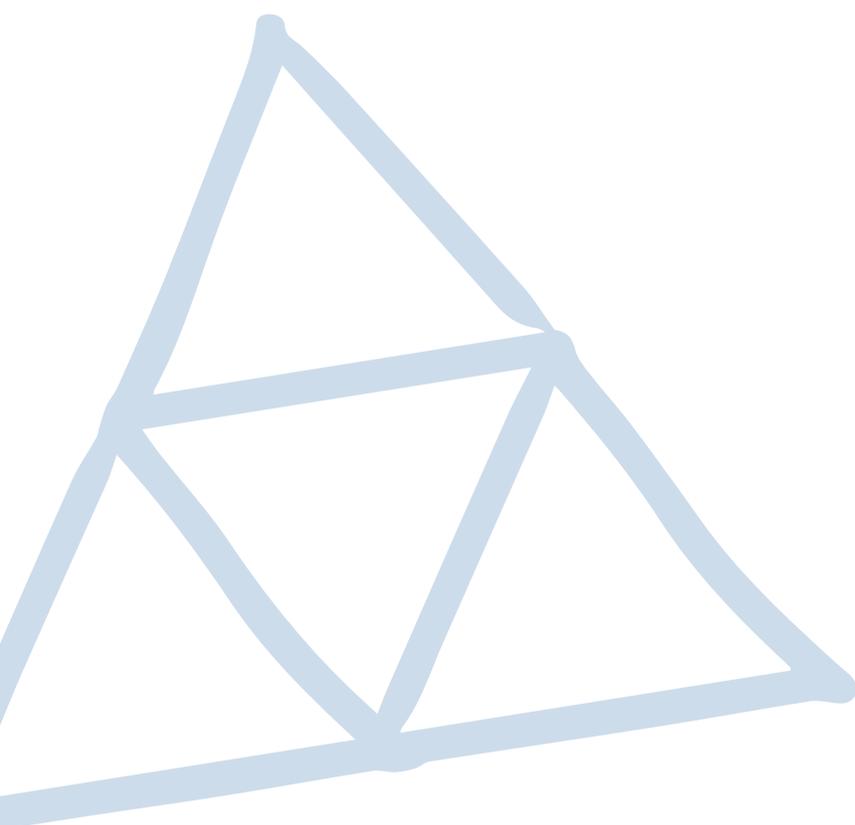
**Over a quarter (28.6%) of people using the Walk-in Centre aren't registered with a GP anywhere. This cost and Lewisham CCG almost £300,000 last year.**

The majority of people who attend the Walk-in Centre do so for treatment that could either be provided by their own GP or a practice nurse or by alternative services or with advice and support to self-care.

Instead of reducing the number of people going to A&Es with minor ailments, walk-in centres often encourage people to:

- ask for advice regarding minor issues that are better dealt with at home or at a pharmacist or a GP
- ask for a second opinion when they have already seen their GP.

The easy access to advice at walk-in centres means that people can avoid registering with a GP. It is important for people to be registered with a GP so they can benefit from care that encourages healthy living, early detection and prevention of diseases and a holistic approach to health.



# Why do people use the Walk-in Centre?

- Our clinicians looked at a snapshot of people using the Walk-in Centre. The majority went for problems such as wound care (dressings), limb pain, sore throats, coughs and rashes, which would normally be dealt with by self-care or seeing a GP or nurse.
- The majority of people using the Walk-in Centre are aged between 25 and 64 years old, with the second biggest user group being people aged between 16 and 24 years old.
- People aged over 65 years made up just 3.5% of people using the Walk-in Centre in 2016/17.
- The largest users of the service were people who identified their ethnicity as White British or White other. People who identified as Black, Black British, African or Caribbean were the second highest users.

TOP 6

## The top six conditions seen in the walk-in centre

1. Wound care (including dressings)
2. Limb pain
3. Sore throat
4. Cough
5. Skin issues/rashes
6. Urinary tract infections

## We asked patients using the Walk-in Centre why they chose to go there:

- 46% said they went directly to the Walk-in Centre because they didn't think they'd be able to get an appointment at their GP practice.
- 33% said they had contacted their GP that day but no appointments were available.
- 5% reported they were unable to get through on the telephone to their GP practice.
- 21% said they used the walk-in centre because it was convenient and close to work, college or other facilities.
- 4% said they had called NHS 111 before attending the Walk-in Centre.

## When asked what they would do if the Walk-in Centre was not available, people said:

- 40% would have used A&E if the walk-in centre was not available.
- 27% would just wait and see their own GP.
- 23% indicated "other" courses of action. Among those who chose this option the most common answer was that they would go to, or look for, a different walk-in centre. There are no other walk-in centres in south London.

## When asked about bookable appointments:

- 82.2% of people reported they would consider using another service which offered bookable appointments at another location, if their own GP practice did not have appointments available.

# What would closing the Walk-in Centre mean?

We think this would:

- encourage people to use their GP as their first point of contact. This is essential if we are to help people keep healthy and better manage long-term conditions.
- improve the likelihood of Lewisham residents registering with, and accessing, health services (including urgent care) through their GP practice.
- reduce the confusion over urgent primary care services, making it easier for people to know where to go when they need help.
- make the system more efficient by removing duplication of services and a reduction in the number of people being passed from one NHS service to another.
- mean funding was freed up to spend on Lewisham residents. At the moment, Lewisham CCG pays for the Walk-in Centre, which is used by people from all over south east London. This means they are paying for the care of people who don't live in Lewisham.
- mean all people who require an urgent appointment would need to book one with the GP Extended Access Service.

**Note:** The NHS Walk-in Centre contract expires on 31 December 2017. We've already extended it once, and can't do so again. If it were to continue running, we would need to set up a new contract, but we don't think the walk-in centre is the best way to care for the people of Lewisham, which is why we want to close it.

## Improving primary care

We are committed to improving access to GP appointments and advice. Our priority is making sure that primary care services are easy to use, joined up and focus on helping people stay well. In order to do this, we need to:

- Remove the overlap and duplication in the services.
- Provide clear and straightforward messages to people on how to access urgent and non-urgent primary care.
- Get better value for money for all of our population.
- Improve the provision and access to GP services for all Lewisham residents through our GP Extended Access Service.



### Why register with a GP?

By registering with a GP, people can benefit from:

- appointments about a range of conditions and concerns – not just urgent care. Often these conditions are the underlying cause of urgent care needs.
- health promotion and protection services (helping keep people in good health – for instance by immunising them).
- screening services (helping to identify diseases early so they can be treated quickly and successfully).
- better information and help about how to manage long term conditions so that people lead as active and as comfortable a life as possible.
- improved access to social care and other services such as respite care.
- a continuity of care – so that people can build trusting relationships with healthcare professionals that understand their circumstances.
- specialist services, for instance for skin diseases and tuberculosis (TB).

# GP Extended Access Service

The GP Extended Access Service provides GP face-to-face consultations, GP video consultations and nurse appointments. This year, the service plans to deliver around 25,426 bookable appointments per year. In 2018, this will increase to 29,914 bookable appointments.

## What's the difference between the Walk-in Centre and the GP Extended Service?

	Walk-in Centre	GP Extended Access Service
<b>Location</b>	Waldron Health Centre, New Cross	University Hospital Lewisham
<b>Hours</b>	8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, including public holidays	8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, including public holidays
<b>Access to patient records</b>	X	✓
<b>Bookable appointments</b>	X	✓
<b>Walk-in appointments</b>	✓	X
<b>Types of appointments</b>	GP appointments Nurse appointments	GP appointments Nurse appointments Video consultations
<b>How do you get an appointment?</b>	Walk-in and wait (up to 2 hours)	An appointment can be booked via your GP practice or by calling 111 – a booked appointment means you don't have to wait to be seen.

## Improving GP care

We know GP services need to improve. People have told us that they have difficulty getting through over the telephone and booking appointments with their GP practice. We have been supporting GP practices to address this by funding improved telephone and call management systems.

We have helped practices to make it easier for people to book appointments, order repeat prescriptions and access their medical records online. Lewisham has the third highest number of people registered for GP online services in London.

For 2018 all GP practices in Lewisham are working to improve the overall experience for people making appointments.

However, we know that there is more to do to improve primary care in Lewisham and this is a key priority for us.

# Engaging with local people

We want to hear from as many people as possible. We are committed to providing the opportunity for everyone to have their say. We are also working with GPs, patient groups, local Healthwatch organisations and community and voluntary organisations to make sure we reach as many local people as possible. If you would like us to come and talk to your group about these proposals please get in touch.

## Supporting the homeless

Recognising the differing health needs of people who are homeless, Lewisham CCG has bought additional enhanced primary care services for people living at the three local homeless hostels; one of which is close to the Walk-in Centre.

These services offer a package of support including being able to register at a GP practice for a short period of time.

Over the next 12 weeks we are engaging with local people in order to explain our proposals, outline how people might be affected and encourage them to respond.

All responses will form a report, which will go to our Governing Body to consider and make a decision. We will put that report and details of whatever decisions are made on our website:

## Equality impact assessment

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a process to make sure that a policy, project or proposal does not discriminate or disadvantage against the following characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

As part of this work, we will carry out an initial EIA and publish a draft on our website. We will take into account people's responses to our proposals and this will inform a more detailed final EIA, which will go to our Governing Body to consider before any decision is made about these proposals.



# What do you think?

We welcome any feedback or ideas you have.

**All comments must be received by 5pm on 30 October 2017.**

## Questionnaire

### Tell us about you

We want to see what sorts of people are responding to our proposals.

For example, have we heard from men and women, people of different ages and nationalities or only from people who are all very similar? We need to hear the views from people who reflect Lewisham's population as much as possible.

This helps us to understand if our proposals might have more of an impact on some groups of people than others.

The information we ask for helps us to ensure the best possible services are available to everyone. It helps us to plan and direct resources to improve services.

**These questions are optional – you don't have to answer them if you don't want to.**

#### 1. What gender are you *(Please tick ✓)*

Male  Female  Transgender  Prefer not to say

#### 2. How old are you? *(Please tick ✓)*

15 or under  16-24  25-29  30-34   
35-39  40-44  45-49  50-54   
55-59  60-64  65+  Prefer not to say

#### 3. What is your ethnic group? *(Please tick ✓)*

White English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British <input type="checkbox"/>	White Irish <input type="checkbox"/>
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller <input type="checkbox"/>	White Other <input type="checkbox"/>
White & Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black African <input type="checkbox"/>
Other mixed / multiple ethnic background <input type="checkbox"/>	White & Asian <input type="checkbox"/>
Indian <input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>
Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>
Other Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	Black African <input type="checkbox"/>
Other Black/ African / Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>
Arab <input type="checkbox"/>	Other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/>

#### 4. What do you consider is your religion (even if you are not currently practicing)? *(Please tick ✓)*

Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)   
Buddhist  Hindu  Jewish   
Muslim  Sikh  Any other religion   
No religion

#### 5. Do you have a disability? *(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No  Prefer not to say

## Tell us what you think about our proposals

1. Do you live in the borough of Lewisham? *(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No

If no, where?

2. Are you registered with a GP? *(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No  Don't know

3. Have you used the walk-in centre in New Cross in the last 12 months? *(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No  Don't know

4. Having read this document, do you understand why the local NHS wants to close the walk-in centre?  
*(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No  Don't know

5. Do you support the proposal to close the walk-in centre? *(Please tick ✓)*

Yes  No  Don't know

6. What do you think we need to do to increase understanding and use of the GP surgeries and the GP Extended Access Service in Lewisham?

7. On a scale of 1 (not confident) to 10 (really confident) how confident do you feel about being able to get an appointment at your GP surgery or using the GP Extended Access Service, if it replaces the Walk-in Centre? *(Please tick ✓)*

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

8. Do you have any suggestions about how we can improve access to primary care in Lewisham?

9. Is there anything else you think it is important for us to know before we make a decision?

# Thank you for taking the time to let us know what you think.

If you're not completing this questionnaire online, please send it back to use as the below address so that it arrives by 5pm on 30 October 2017.

**Walk-in Centre Consultation  
NHS Lewisham CCG  
Cantilever House  
Eltham Road  
London SE12 8RN**

This document is about changes we want to make to some health services in Lewisham. We want to know what you think. If you would like to know more, please email **[lewccg.consultation@nhs.net](mailto:lewccg.consultation@nhs.net)** or call **020 7206 3200** and tell us what help you need. Let us know if you need this in large print, easy read or a different format or language or you would like to someone to come and talk to your group about this.

