

Improving out-of-hospital care in Harrow

North West London

Between 2 July and 8 October 2012, NHS North West London is consulting on plans to improve hospital and community services as part of the ‘Shaping a healthier future’ programme.

We want to hear your views on the proposed changes.


This document summarises the proposals for Harrow residents needing care in their own home, in GP surgeries and in other locations in the community.


People are living longer with more long-term conditions and the population is increasing so we need to make changes to meet the health needs of local people. We want to provide more care closer to home so people can get easier and earlier access to care. This will mean we can help people stay healthy and potentially life threatening diseases can be picked up at an earlier stage – when treatment is much more likely to be successful and can avoid patients ending up in hospital. Treatment and support in people’s homes and in the community allows people to maintain their independence, to recover more quickly and reduces the risk of acquiring healthcare infections.

Our Vision

1.  **Easy access to high-quality care**

2.  **Simpler planned care pathways**

3.  **Quick responses to urgent health problems**

4.  **Co-ordinated care for people with a long-term condition**

5.  **Less time spent in hospital**

How we will achieve our vision

- Within three years we will be spending between £17 million and £19 million more per year on health services in the community
- This will provide around 150 additional health workers including GPs, nurses and other health care professionals
- We have established quality standards for all services in the community to achieve
- We will ensure care is provided in the most appropriate care setting - we have already developed high-quality facilities such as The Pinn Medical Centre and the Alexandra Avenue Health and Social Care Centre. In the next few years we want to develop a further health centre in East Harrow

This factsheet includes examples of how we are improving services in Harrow. A key part of this work is making sure that services work together in a more co-ordinated way. To ensure this happens we are developing:

- Six new health networks across Harrow made up of health and social care services, including GPs and mental health. The networks allow our GP practices and other care providers to work more closely together to increase the level of care provided in the community
- Improved local health centres which will form a key part of each network by providing a local site to perform tests and treat more complex conditions in the community so that patients don't need to go to hospital





Easy access to high-quality care

- Our aim is that urgent cases will be dealt with within four hours and non-urgent cases within 24 hours, or patients can have an appointment with their own GP within 48 hours
- From early next year, patients will be able to dial 111 to be directed to the most appropriate care, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The number is manned by local healthcare professionals who can provide advice and book appointments on the spot
- Practices will be encouraged to work in networks to provide extended opening hours, provide follow up for long term conditions and implement care plans for vulnerable patients
- The urgent care centre (UCC) at Northwick Park Hospital, led by experienced local doctors and nurses, sees about 70,000 patients each year. This will continue to provide much better care for the 70% of people who currently attend A&E but don't need these specialist services, allowing the A&E to concentrate on patients requiring their expertise (see text box to the right for more on UCCs)
- We will provide more mental health care from our GP surgeries for people with common mental illnesses such as depression. This will help people to return to their normal lives and allow mental health staff to support patients who need more specialist help

Urgent care centres

Under the 'Shaping a healthier future' proposals, all nine hospitals in North West London will have an urgent care centre (UCC) that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For Harrow, this is at Northwick Park Hospital. These centres will be able to treat most illnesses and injuries such as:

- chest infections
- minor scalds and burns
- simple fractures
- stomach pain
- infections of the ear, nose and throat.

UCCs are staffed by experienced GPs, supported by nurse practitioners. They have emergency department experience and have had training in a broad range of specialities, including, for example, children, elderly care and psychiatry.

UCCs do not provide treatment for medical and surgical emergencies that are likely to need admission to hospital. If patients at a UCC suddenly need more urgent or complex care, they will be transferred to a hospital with an Accident and Emergency (A&E) department. Currently, far too many people go to A&E departments for minor issues and A&Es do not treat underlying health problems.



Simpler planned care pathways

- GPs and consultants will work closely together to plan care for their patients, e.g. mental health consultants will be available to take calls from GPs at set times of the day to provide advice
- Patients will receive treatment in local health centres, instead of hospitals, for procedures such as removal of lumps, chemotherapy and exercise testing for heart disease.
- Services currently available in the community will be expanded including cardiology, paediatrics and dermatology and other services such as gynaecology will be made available in community health centres



Co-ordinated care for people with a long-term condition

- An Integrated Care Pilot (ICP) will be rolled out across Harrow to help people aged over 75, or with diabetes. The ICP makes sure hospitals, community-care services, social care and local authorities all work together to identify the patients most at risk of needing a hospital admission. They will proactively work to keep people out of hospital with a co-ordinated care plan, developed with the patient. By early 2013 this will be expanded to include respiratory and cardiovascular patients.
- Nearly £1 million will be invested in providing dedicated community nurses to work with all patients who have had three or more emergency hospital admissions in the previous year to provide a care plan and the support they need to avoid unnecessary hospital visits.



Quick responses to urgent health problems

- We have already invested £2.5 million in the STARRS (Short term assessment, rehabilitation and reablement service) rapid response team which visits patients at home within two hours to assess them and provide short-term emergency care to help prevent them ending up in A&E. The team includes GPs, social workers, nurses and mental health professionals and we plan to expand this service
- The STARRS team also provides people with the support they need to leave hospital sooner with the right support at home or in the community including rehabilitation.



Less time spent in hospital

- Our 'hospital at home' team provides one point of contact for patients so that they don't end up being passed from pillar to post. They provide care in a patient's home to help avoid unnecessary admission into hospital or other long-term care. They also help people to leave hospital sooner where appropriate and work with other health and social care providers to provide co-ordinated care.
- We are piloting a psychiatric liaison service at Northwick Park Hospital which will work with staff in the UCC and A&E to assess a patient's mental health needs and promptly refer them onto specialist services when appropriate. The service will help to prevent hospital admission and for those patients who do need to be admitted, mental health specialists will work with hospital staff, mental health teams, social care and voluntary services to support the patient when the time comes for them to leave hospital.



The 'Shaping a healthier future' proposals include delivering more services outside of hospitals, closer to people's homes and changes to some services at the following hospitals – West Middlesex, Central Middlesex, Charing Cross, Chelsea and Westminster, Ealing, Hammersmith, Northwick Park, and St Mary's.

Further details of the changes proposed can be found at www.healthiernorthwestlondon.nhs.uk.

You can also request a copy of the consultation document by:

Email: consultation@nw.london.nhs.uk

Phone: 0800 881 5209 (Freephone)

Post: **FREEPOST SHAPING A HEALTHIER FUTURE CONSULTATION**

(This must be written in capital letters and on one line. No stamp required).

Harrow

35 GP Practices

6 Health Networks

