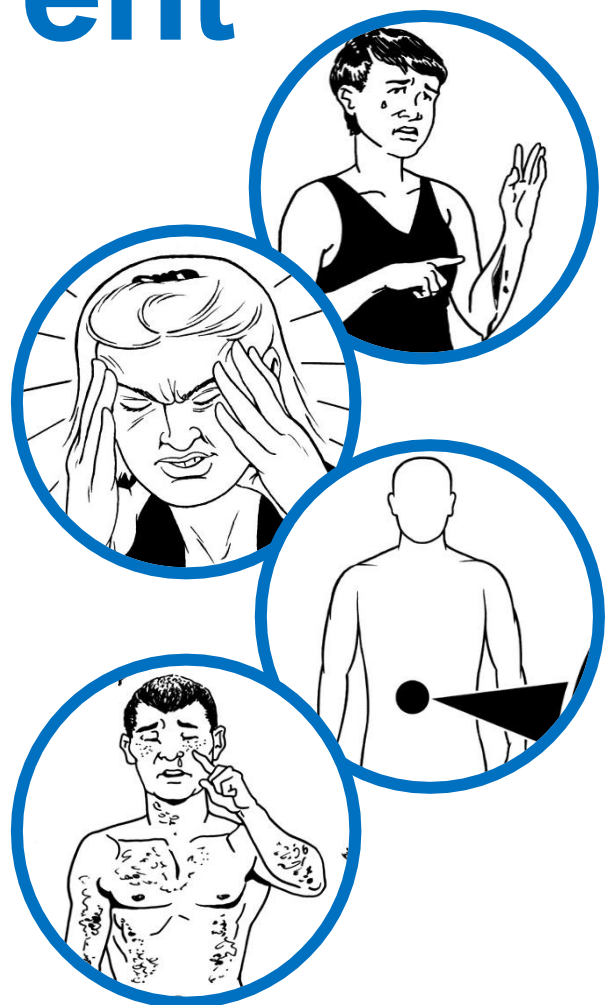


# Improving urgent and emergency care services in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

We want to make sure  
that local urgent and  
emergency care services  
are fit for the future.  
We want to listen to  
people who use and  
work in these services.

**EASY READ**

October 2021



# What is this about?



**Together We're Better** is the health and care partnership for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Since 2016, we have been working to make health and care better for everyone who lives here.



We are proud of our health and social care services. But we know there is more that can still be done to make services better.



We started talking to you about **urgent and emergency care** services in 2019. This work had to stop during **COVID-19** (coronavirus).



Now we can start again, but we know a lot has changed. We want to listen to people who use and work in these services.

# What is urgent and emergency care?



**Urgent care** is for illnesses and injuries that need urgent attention, but your life is not in danger. Things like:

- Cuts that need stitches
- Bones that might be broken
- Minor head injuries
- Fevers, skin infections and rashes.

At the moment, **walk-in centres** and **minor injuries units** offer urgent care services.



**Emergency care** is for illnesses and injuries that put your life in danger unless you get treatment very quickly. Things like:

- Finding it hard to breathe
- Losing a lot of blood
- Bad chest pain
- Stroke
- Very bad allergic reactions.

**Emergency departments (known as A&E)** provide this care.



Sometimes people don't know if they need **urgent care** or **emergency care**, so they don't know the best place to go for help.

# Why do services need to change?



To make it easier to find the right place to go, the NHS in England is changing how urgent care is given. We need to design our local services to meet the national plans.



Our staff work hard to make sure our services are safe. But we think we could make some changes to improve care. Things like having the same service at every site and making access simpler. The changes will also follow the national plans.

**People who use and work in urgent and emergency care have told us what challenges they face locally, that we need to plan for now:**



Across the country, there are not enough of the specialist staff, doctors and nurses to work in urgent and emergency care.



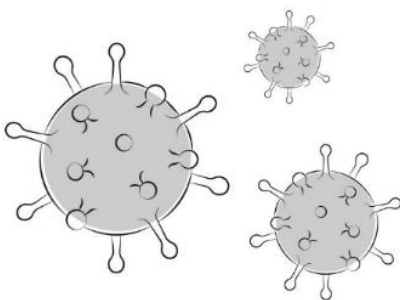
Every year, more people are using our emergency departments. Some could be using different services to meet their needs.



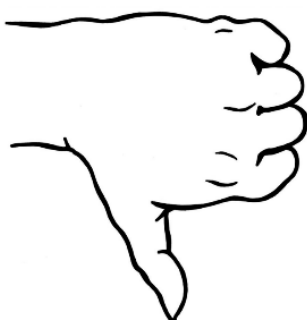
Many people aren't sure of the best place to go when they need treatment. It can be confusing when our sites have different opening times, services and tests. We want urgent care services to be the same wherever you go.



All our urgent and emergency care services are busier. This means people can sometimes wait a long time to be seen. It can also mean long waits for ambulances.



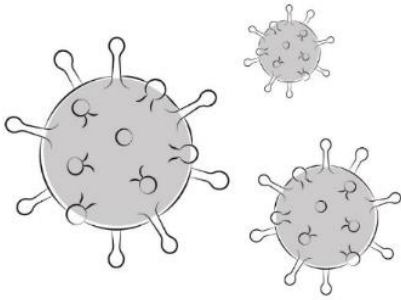
To keep staff and patients safe from COVID-19, we need more space for social distancing and more time for extra cleaning. Our staff can't work if they are ill or self-isolating.



All of this puts all our health and care services under pressure. It can mean long waits and a poor experience for people who use and work in our services.



# What has changed since COVID-19?



COVID-19 made it difficult to run some services. Some services had to close for a while during COVID-19.



**Leek Minor Injuries Unit** closed for a while, but has now reopened. **Cannock Minor Injuries Unit** is still closed at the moment.



But it also made us find new ways of doing things – like offering **timeslots** at emergency departments through NHS 111.



Your experience of using health services may have changed, so we want to know what it has been like to use urgent and emergency care services during COVID-19.

# What will urgent treatment centres be like?



Across England, local areas will set up new **urgent treatment centres (UTCs)**.

They will be for people who need treatment quickly – usually within 24 hours – but don't need to go to an emergency department.



Urgent treatment centres will be open for at least 12 hours every day.



They will usually be led by GPs, working with nurses and other medical staff.

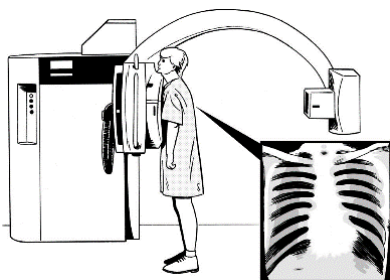


When the new urgent treatment centres open, the walk-in centres and minor injuries units will close.



### **UTCs will give care for things like:**

- Cuts that need stitches
- Bones that might be broken
- Sprains and strains
- Minor head injuries
- Minor burns and scalds
- Stomach pains
- Ear and throat infections
- Eye problems
- Fevers
- Skin infections and rashes.



They can also do tests like X-rays and heart monitoring.



You will be able to get mental health support quickly in a crisis.





Urgent treatment centres will offer the same services across the country. This will make it easier for people to know where to go.



Urgent treatment centres will offer more services than walk-in centres and minor injuries units. This means more patients can get help without going to a hospital.



This should help take the pressure off emergency departments. It should mean a better experience for people who use and work in our services.



We want urgent treatment centres to work well with the other local services – like emergency departments, ambulances, GP practices and pharmacies.

# Using NHS 111



When you need urgent or emergency care, the best place to start is **NHS 111**:

- Visit the website: **[www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)**
- Download the NHS app
- Phone 111.

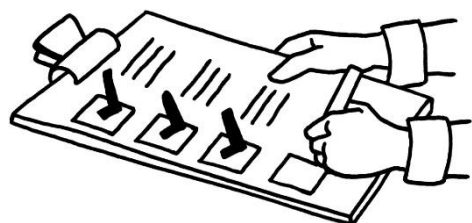


We now have a lot more doctors and nurses working at NHS 111. These doctors and nurses can assess what you need, and where you should go for treatment.



If you need to go to an emergency department, a walk-in centre, a minor injuries unit or GP out of hours – they can book you a timeslot. In future, they will be able to book timeslots into urgent treatment centres as well.

# How far did the plans get in 2019?



**In 2019, we agreed that urgent treatment centres must:**

- Give high-quality care
- Be easy for people to get to
- Meet local needs.



We also think urgent treatment centres should be in a different place to our emergency departments to make it less confusing.

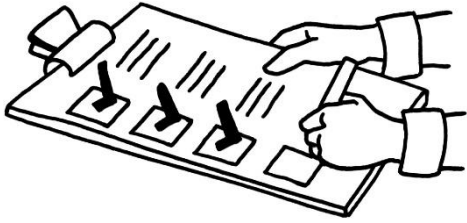


We still have to make some important decisions about UTCs – like how many we need, and where they will be.



Your comments and feedback will help us make these decisions, by giving us information on things like travel times.

# What happens next?



**We want to make sure that the urgent treatment centres:**

- meet your needs
- are fit for the future
- are good value for money.



We want you to give us your views and comments, because this will help us make the best decisions. So it is really important to us that we understand your needs.



Once we understand your needs, we can design services that follow the national plans. Then we can look at the buildings needed to support them.



It will take time to do this work, and we will want your help before we decide anything.

# How can I get involved?



We are listening to the comments from people who use and work in urgent and emergency care services. We will still look at what you told us in 2019, but first we need to check if anything has changed.



We want to know your experiences of urgent and emergency care services during COVID-19. Please tell us what we need to think about as we develop UTCs and short-list our ideas for how services could look.



## To have your say, you can:

- [Answer our online survey](#) before 31 October 2021.
- Join one of our online events during October 2021.



We will keep you updated as we work on our ideas. Our doctors and other staff will look at the feedback from the survey and event. We will put updates on our website.

We want to make sure that local urgent and emergency care services are fit for the future. This booklet is a summary of the work we are doing in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and how you can share your comments. **Please contact us if you need more information, if you need this in another format, or if you need help with the survey:**



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