



Urgent Care and GP Services at Hemel Hempstead Hospital Public Consultation

NHS
Herts Valleys
Clinical Commissioning Group

Your Care, Your Future
Working together for a healthier West Herts

Introduction

Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group is developing a new approach to urgent care in west Hertfordshire that takes into account developments in health services nationally and locally.

In line with our *Your Care, Your Future* aims we are looking at how we can make the best use of NHS resources to ensure patients receive effective, timely care appropriate to their needs and make sure that care is delivered in the right place and as close to home as possible.

This consultation focuses on the future access to services at the Urgent Treatment Centre and West Hertfordshire Medical Centre which are located in Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

We need to make a decision on future opening hours for the Urgent Treatment Centre which has been operating on reduced hours since December 2016.

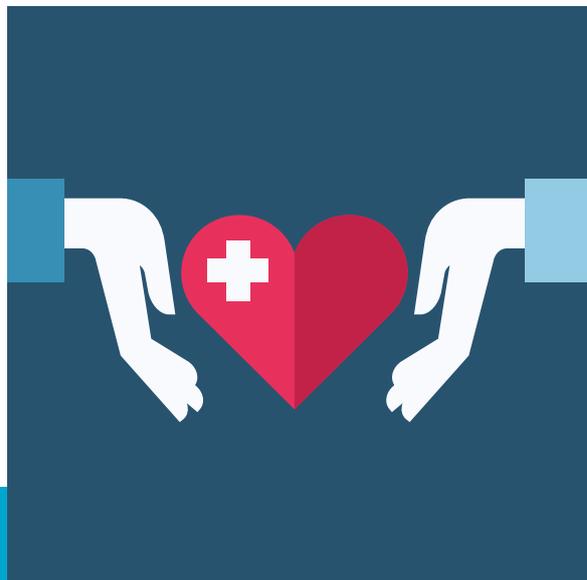
Difficulties with filling GP shifts overnight was resulting in ad hoc closures and led to the provider, West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust, notifying the CCG that they needed to temporarily reduce the contracted 24 hours and move to interim hours of 8am to 10pm.

The urgent need to address patient safety issues did not allow time for consultation about this temporary change. We are seeking the views of patients and others on options for permanent hours in line with the previous commitment to consult on this issue.

The West Herts Medical Centre operates on a fixed term alternative provider of medical services (APMS) contract which is due for renewal in October 2018. We need to make a decision on the contract for services to registered patients and want to take account of people's views.

This consultation is open to anyone with an interest in services provided at the Urgent Treatment Centre and West Herts Medical Centre at Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

This document provides more information about the future direction of urgent care and other services and explains the issues that need to be taken into account when making future decisions about services.



About us

Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is the local NHS organisations that plans and pays for local health care and makes sure that residents across west Hertfordshire receive good care.

We are led by local doctors representing the needs of their patients and the views of their GP colleagues, as well as 'lay' members, who are not doctors and represent local communities.



Herts Valleys
Clinical Commissioning Group

The challenges we face

Across the NHS services are under pressure. We have to make sure that doctors', nurses' and other specialists' time is used wisely and that patients get the right level of care for their needs in a timely way.

There is particular pressure on A&E services which should only be accessed for genuine emergencies where people's lives or limbs are at risk or on the advice of a medical professional.

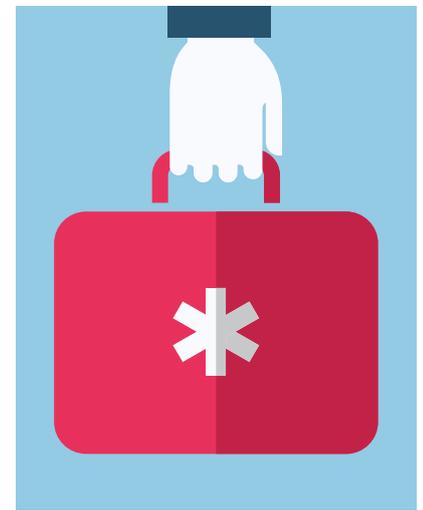
All less serious problems can be dealt with by urgent care services provided through GPs, urgent treatment centres or minor injuries units and NHS 111. We need to encourage patients and others to think about the best place to go for help with particular problems.

Historically there has been a variation between the services available at urgent care or urgent treatment centres and minor injuries units which can be confusing for patients.

Additionally some people aren't fully aware of the help available through services such as the non-emergency NHS 111 service. The CCG's emerging approach to urgent care aims to address this by bringing together various parts of the NHS, including hospital and ambulance services, to create a more joined-up system that is easier to understand.

Our approach to urgent care is linked to our plans for GP extended access.

We need to find a solution that is lasting and realistic and that also fits with the overall direction for NHS services locally and nationally.



What is the difference between emergency and urgent care?

Urgent care services are available to treat people who need immediate attention for an illness or injury that isn't life threatening.

The chart below outlines the difference between urgent and emergency care and where to go with particular problems.

Emergency

Risk to life or limb

- Severe chest pain
- Suspected heart attack
- Breathing difficulties
- Severe bleeding
- A serious head injury
- Suspected stroke including paralysis

Urgent

Immediate attention but no threat to life or limb

- Sprains, strains and muscle, back or joint pain
- Fractures or broken bones
- Cuts, wounds, bites and stings
- Minor burns and scalds
- Minor head and eye injuries
- Objects stuck in ears and noses
- Skin complaints
- Minor illnesses

Urgent Care Services

In west Hertfordshire there are a number of non-emergency services that can offer rapid care or advice from health professionals.

Hospital based services

Urgent Treatment Centre

- GP led
- Temporary hours 8am to 10pm (official contract 24 hours)
- Supports full range of urgent care issues
- UTC: booked appointments, more on-site tests

West Herts Medical Centre

- GP led health centre
- 8am - 8pm every day
- 8,000 walk-in; 2,000 registered patients
- Front desk shared with adjacent UTC.
- Fixed term contract ends October 2018

Minor Injuries Unit (St Albans)

- Nurse-led
- 9am to 8pm every day; X-rays 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday
- Treats many issues but not minor illnesses
- Sees patients from 2+ years (4+ for x-rays)

Telephone service – NHS 111

- Free 24/7 NHS non-emergency number.
- Calls answered by trained healthcare adviser, backed by a clinical GP-led team.
- Provides advice on self-care or signposts to best service for patient's assessed needs.
- Can book people into appointments or arrange visits from GPs or nurses 24/7.
- Will call ambulances directly in serious cases.

Community-based services

GP

- Extended GP access to GP appointments - 50% coverage of evening and weekend by March 2018 and full coverage by October 2018.
- GP out-of-hours available via NHS 111 or surgery redirect. May offer home visit to patients.

Pharmacists

- Free, confidential advice to help with many common illnesses and complaints.
- Late opening pharmacists and available weekends too.

Our plans for urgent care services

We are developing a new urgent care strategy for west Hertfordshire with the aim of ensuring that patients receive effective care first time, in the right place and in a timely way.

Our urgent care strategy follows NHS England's national plan for strengthening urgent care services so that more patients with non-emergency care needs can be treated locally to help release pressure on hospitals and particularly on A&E departments. This will allow hospital staff to focus on emergencies and life threatening situations and enable all who arrive at A&E to receive the appropriate level of treatment and care.

We are developing shared procedures with all local NHS services so that patients who are assessed as having a non-emergency condition are seen in urgent care services rather than in A&E.

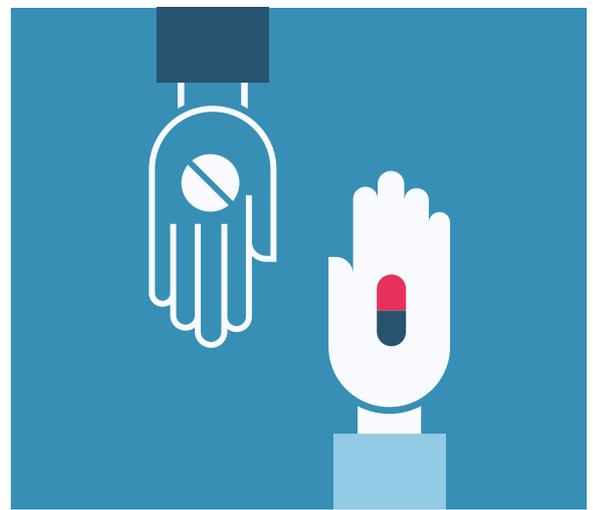
Our plans have a number of key elements:

NHS 111

- There will be a greater focus on the NHS 111 service - as the 'front door' into urgent care for everyone.
- The local NHS 111 service has been enhanced to ensure that people calling the service have clinical assessments by a team of health professionals from different specialisms at the earliest possible stage.
- The clinical assessment team can arrange for people to speak directly a GP, can book people into appointments or arrange visits from a GP or specialist nurse. They can also call ambulances if needed.

Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs)

- UTCs are a key part of the national plans and are designed to diagnose and deal with the most common ailments seen at A&E. They aim to provide a standardised service in place of the current mix of walk-in urgent care and minor injuries services.
- On 1 December 2017 the urgent care centre at Hemel Hempstead Hospital became a UTC in the first wave of a national roll-out. The UTC provides an enhanced service including booked appointments through NHS 111 and increased on-site testing for conditions such as sepsis and thrombosis to provide patients with results from the centre itself, reducing waits at or trips to Watford General Hospital.



- While anyone can use the Hemel Hempstead UTC we are developing urgent care services in other parts of west Hertfordshire, tailored to local needs. In keeping with our commitment to provide care close to home we will look at how we can increase local access to services such as diagnostic tests. We will consult separately on the development of these local services.

GP extended hours

- We are increasing access to GP services outside normal practice hours across the patch.
- We are making good progress on plans for all west Hertfordshire residents being able to see a GP locally during evenings and at weekends by 2019, making a significant difference to the ability of patients to access primary care services.
- We will provide over 50% coverage of extended hours by March 2018.

West Herts Medical Centre (WHMC)

- As part of plans to streamline and simplify services for patients and make better use of the resources, we aim to merge walk-in services at the WHMC with the UTC.
- Merging the services will give all patients the benefit of the enhanced services at the UTC and means we can make better use of available GPs.

Key factors in looking at future options

In looking at future options for the Urgent Treatment Centre and West Herts Medical Centre at Hemel Hempstead Hospital we need to bear in mind the following considerations.

We need to make the best possible use of our limited clinical workforce:

- GPs are at the heart of urgent care service but they face huge demands on their time. The national shortage of GPs is reflected locally in west Hertfordshire where the number of GPs per patient is below the national average. The local and national work to address the shortfalls won't deliver quick results and we need to assume our workforce challenges will be with us for years to come.
- A GP who does shifts in an urgent treatment centre, A&E, NHS 111 or in the out-of-hours GP service does this on top of their practice responsibilities which will increase with the move to seven day working. If a GP works overnight they cannot be in their practice seeing patients from 8am the next morning.
- Activity levels in the UTC are significantly lower at night. The table below shows that when the urgent care centre at Hemel Hempstead Hospital was open 24 hours few patients attended between 10pm and 8am. Demand during core hours has remained the same.

Hours	April to November 2016	Average number of patients	April to November 2017	Average number of patients
12am to 3am	2.6%	2	n/a	n/a
>3am to 6am	1.9%	2	n/a	n/a
>6am to 8am	3.6%	3	n/a	n/a
>8am to 12pm	27.1%	23	32%	27
>12pm to 3pm	18.1%	15	21.2%	18
>3pm to 6pm	17.6%	15	20.6%	18
>6pm to 10pm	24.6%	21	26.1%	22
>10pm to 12am	4.4%	4	n/a	n/a
Total	100.00%	85	100.00%	85

The change in hours hasn't led to a corresponding increase in A&E attendances at Watford General Hospital or other local hospitals or additional pressures on the out-of-hours service.

Access to urgent care

Irrespective of the future hours of the UTC, overnight services for people who need urgent care or who need to speak to or see a GP are available through NHS 111 and the out-of-hours service.

Patient safety

Patient safety is of paramount importance. We need to put in place a service that we know we can deliver and that patients can rely on. We need to avoid ad hoc closures of the service with little or no warning as has been the case when the UCC in Hemel Hempstead was open overnight.

Consultation

1. Urgent Treatment Centre Opening Hours

We are seeking feedback on the following three options for opening hours for the UTC at Hemel Hempstead Hospital.

For each option access to the UTC will be in addition to the following other urgent care services:

- NHS 111 - available 24/7
- GPs out-of-hours service (via NHS 111)
- Walk-in services at Watford General Hospital as well as at other nearby hospitals such as Luton and Dunstable and The Lister (Stevenage).



	UTC Opening hours	Staffing	Comments
Option one	UTC open 8am - 10pm*; current temporary hours	UTC to be GP-led, with nursing, advanced nursing and reception support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GPs will cover the UTC opening hours as well as existing services such as NHS 111, the UTC and GP out-of-hours. Current opening times make it feasible for GPs to work in the UTC and still be available in surgery the following morning. 2. No walk-in service overnight at the UTC. 3. There is a possibility that people may go to Watford or other A&E departments out of hours for non-life threatening issues.
Option two	8am - midnight*; an additional two hours over and above the current temporary hours	GP-led, with nursing, advanced nursing and reception support. Shift patterns to take into account additional two hours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More convenient for patients to be able to attend the UTC until midnight. 2. We need to consider GPs' ability to cover a shift that means them working until 1am* if they are due to see patients in their surgery from 8am the following day. 3. Demand and use of resources. The activity chart on page 6 shows that few patients arrived at the UCC after 10pm.
Option three	24 hours a day. As per substantive contract.	GP-led, with nursing, advanced nursing and reception support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continued GP shortages mean that difficulties with filling overnight shifts at the UTC could still be an issue. Staffing difficulties may increase in the context of GPs working extended hours in practices. 2. If an inability to fill shifts leads to ad hoc closures this would be inconvenient for patients and could be detrimental if the service is withdrawn unexpectedly. 3. The table on page 6 shows that activity levels are very low overnight. We need to consider if this is the best use of professional staff time. 4. Having a 24 hour service in Hemel Hempstead might reduce the number of people going to A&E for help with non-life threatening problems.

*Services stay open for an hour after the stated closing time to treat patients who are already there.

Consideration of a nurse-led service

The team has assessed a further option for an overnight nurse-led service to help overcome the issues around GP availability. We concluded that this is not a viable option as it is not clinically sound. Low attendances (as shown in the activity table on page 6) would mean that nurses working the night shift at the UTC wouldn't see enough patients to maintain their competency and skill levels. In addition, we have patient safety concerns about running a more limited service overnight compared to the service available to patients during the day.

2. Future contract for services to West Herts Medical Centre registered patients

As stated previously, in order to streamline services and make better use of clinicians' time we aim to merge the walk-in part of West Herts Medical Centre into the UTC to create a single service. The budget for treating non-registered patients will be reallocated to the UTC.

There are two options relating to the remaining service for the 2,000 patients who are registered with West Herts Medical Centre.

	Description	Details	Considerations
Option one	Do not renew the contract and support patients to re-register with other practices	There would be a year's transition payment for GP practices accepting the registered patients to allow them to take on any additional activity. This would be in addition to the payments made to practices in accordance with size of patient list.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are a number of practices near to WHMC, one of which is very close. 2. Other practices have indicated support for taking on WHMC patients. 3. Patients would still be able to use the walk-in service at the UTC to see a GP - although walk-in appointments cannot be pre-booked. 4. Other practices offering extended hours would mean that patients would still have access to appointments at evenings and weekends through their new practices. 5. Patients would have to move to a new GP who would not be so familiar with their medical history.
Option two	Renew the contract when it expires in October 2018.	Put out the WHMC contract for registered patients to a commercial, competitive procurement. This would be a new alternative provider of medical services (APMS) contract starting from November 2018. Again this would be time-limited (five years) with a decision needed at the end of the contract about whether to renew it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This would be the least disruptive option (short-term) for patients registered with WHMC. 2. This would be a five year contract and the CCG would need to consult again at the end of that period about renewing the contract. 3. Having 2,000 registered patients would mean this is a small practice - the average practice has 9,000 patients. The number of patients affects how much funding a practice receives and this in turn affects the range of services they can provide. 4. A small practice may find it more difficult to recruit and keep GPs and staff shortages may pose more of a problem than in larger practices. 5. We may not attract potential providers who are willing to invest time and money in bidding for a time-limited contract and taking on what is a small patient list size.

How to have your say

You can give us your views anytime between 31 January and 28 March 2018 and you can take part in the following ways:

- **Fill in the questionnaire that starts on the next page** and put this booklet in the sealed box that is in the Urgent Treatment Centre / West Herts Medical Centre reception or put it in an envelope and post it to us at the following address:

**Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group
Hemel One, Boundary Way, Hemel Hempstead HP2 7YU**

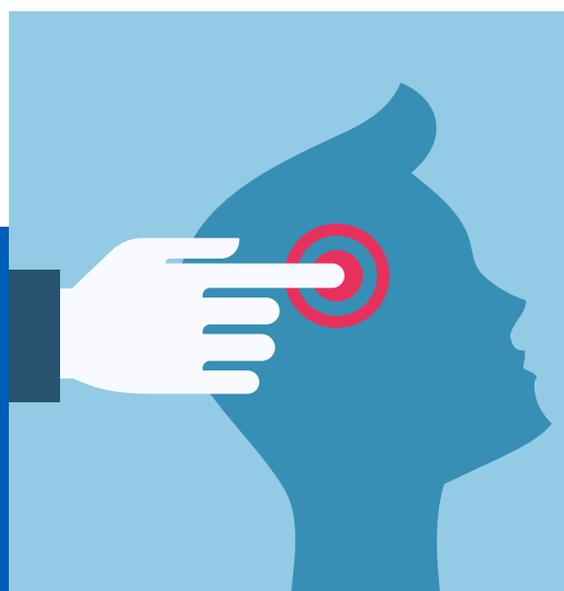
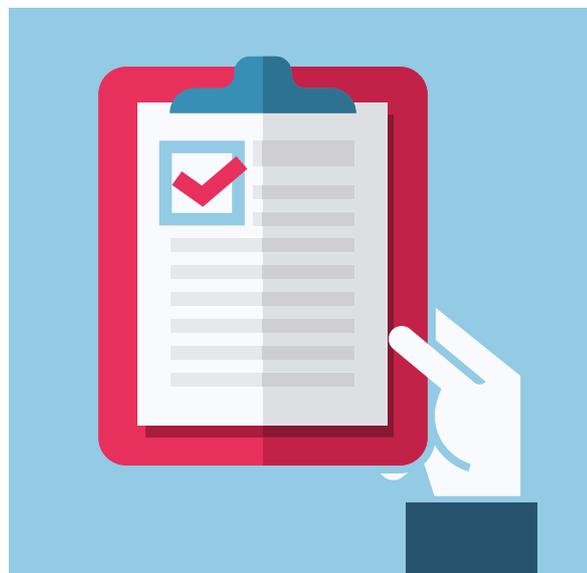
- **Fill in and send an online questionnaire** at www.hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk/urgentcareconsultation
- **Come along to a public meeting or a drop-in session** (for West Herts Medical Centre registered patients). All public meetings run from 7 to 9pm as follows:
 - **Monday 12 February** - Berkhamsted Civic Centre, 161 High Street, Berkhamsted
 - **Wednesday 21 February** - South Hill Centre, Cemetery Hill, Hemel Hempstead
 - **Tuesday 20 March** - Hertsmere Borough Council, Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood
 - **Wednesday 21 March** - St Albans District Council Offices, St Peters Street, St Albans (part of the St Albans Patient Group public meeting)
 - **Thursday 22 March** - West Herts College, Watford Campus, Hempstead Road, Watford
- **If you're responding on behalf of an organisation** and want to send your comments in writing you can email communications.hvccg@nhs.net or write to us at the address above.

If you need this booklet in large print or in a different format please email the address above or telephone 01442 288885

What will happen with your views

Your views will help inform our decisions about opening hours for Hemel Hempstead Urgent Treatment Centre and the contract for West Herts Medical Centre.

An independent research company will review and analyse all the comments we receive from individuals and organisations, including verbal feedback at events as well as written responses. They will compile all feedback into a summary report. This will be presented to the Herts Valleys CCG board meeting in public on 26 April 2018 when a decision on both issues will be made.



Health care priorities

1. We are interested in understanding people's priorities and preferences when it comes to accessing health care services.

Could you tell us which of the following elements of accessing health care services are most important to you? Please rank the options from 1 to 6, using each number only once, where 1 is the most important, and 6 is the sixth most important?

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| a) I can rely on GPs being available to see patients at my local surgery or health centre during regular hours | <input type="text"/> |
| b) Out-of-hours GP appointments are available for those that need them urgently | <input type="text"/> |
| c) I can get access to urgent care at the time that I need it without having to travel too far | <input type="text"/> |
| d) I can get an appointment with a GP in my local surgery within 48 hours | <input type="text"/> |
| e) I can get an appointment to see a GP at evenings and weekends | <input type="text"/> |
| f) I can see the same GP, or a GP I know and trust, for each appointment | <input type="text"/> |

2. Are there any other issues that are important to you in terms of accessing health care?

Urgent Treatment Centre opening hours

NHS Herts Valleys CCG is consulting on the future opening hours of the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) at Hemel Hempstead Hospital. The background to this, options for the future opening hours and the commentary on each of the options, are explained in the consultation document.

Taking into account the information provided on the options in the consultation document, including the advantages and disadvantages of each option, please let us know your views by answering the questions below.

3. To what extent do you support or oppose Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 1: 8am to 10pm opening hours?**

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly support | <input type="checkbox"/> Support | <input type="checkbox"/> Neither support nor oppose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly oppose | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

4. If you would like to explain your view on Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 1**, please do so here.

5. To what extent do you support or oppose Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 2: 8am to midnight opening hours?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither support nor oppose
<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

6. If you would like to explain your view on Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 2**, please do so here.

7. To what extent do you support or oppose Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 3: 24 hour opening?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly support	<input type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither support nor oppose
<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know

8. If you would like to explain your view on Urgent Treatment Centre **Option 3**, please do so here.

9. Do you have any other views on the future opening hours of the Urgent Treatment Centre?

West Herts Medical Centre (WHMC)

So that all walk-in patients can benefit from the enhanced service provided at the Urgent Treatment Centre, we aim to merge the walk-in part of West Herts Medical Centre (WHMC) into the Urgent Treatment Centre to create a single service.

West Herts Medical Centre is run on a time-limited alternative provider medical services contract (APMS), as explained in the consultation document, and this comes to an end in October 2018. This means that there are two options relating to the service for patients registered at WHMC. These options, and the background to this, are explained in the consultation document.

Taking into account the information provided on the options in the consultation document, including the advantages and disadvantages of each option, please let us know your views by answering the questions below.

10. To what extent do you support or oppose West Herts Medical Centre **Option 1: Do not renew the contract and support patients to re-register with other practices?**

Strongly support Support Neither support nor oppose
 Oppose Strongly oppose Don't know

11. If you would like to explain your view on West Herts Medical Centre Option 1, please do so here.

12. To what extent do you support or oppose West Herts Medical Centre **Option 2: Renew the contract when it expires in October 2018?**

- Strongly support Support Neither support nor oppose
 Oppose Strongly oppose Don't know

13. If you would like to explain your view on West Herts Medical Centre Option 2, please do so here.

14. Do you have any other views on the future of West Herts Medical Centre?

Other comments

15. Do you have any other comments about urgent care in West Hertfordshire?

About you

This section contains several questions about you, which help us to understand whether we have heard from a mix of people and to help us to consider any consistent feelings about the proposed changes that may be expressed by different groups. This section is not compulsory and your views will still be taken into account should you choose not to fill it in.

16. Please tell us the first part of your postcode (e.g. HP1) of your home address if you are replying as a patient or of your organisation address if you are replying on behalf of a group or organisation.

17. Which GP surgery are you registered with (*if you are responding as a patient or private individual*)?

18. Please tell us in what capacity you are responding to this consultation (*tick all that apply*):

- Registered patient at WHMC
- Employee of WHMC or UTC
- Carer or family member of patient registered at WHMC
- Resident of west Hertfordshire
- Work in west Hertfordshire
- Member of a group or organisation
- Official role representing patients or residents (*eg. Patient representative or local councillor*)
- NHS Employee
- Other (*please specify*)

If you are responding as a member of a group or organisation, please select the type of group or organisation from the list below

- Patient representation group
- Healthcare or social care provider
- Charity, voluntary or community group
- Professional body
- Local authority
- Political group or organisation
- Educational institution
- Other (*please state*):
- Not applicable

Group / organisation name (if applicable)

19. What gender do you identify yourself as?
 Female Male Other Prefer not to say

20. How old are you?
 Under 16 16-25 26-40 41-65
 66-74 75 or over Prefer not to say

21. Do you live with a disability or long term condition?
 Yes No Prefer not to say

22. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
 Heterosexual Gay man
 Gay woman / lesbian Bisexual
 Prefer not to say Other (*please specify*)

23. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

White

- English/Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other white background (*please describe*)

Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Black African
- White and Asian
- Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background (*please describe*)

Asian / Asian British

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background (*please describe*)

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black / African / Caribbean background (*please describe*)

Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group *(please describe)*

- Prefer not to say

24. What is your religion or belief?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Christian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No religion or belief | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i> | |

25. Do you have caring responsibilities? *(if yes, please tick all that apply)*

- None
- Primary carer of a child/children *(under 18)*
- Primary carer of a disabled child *(under 18)*
- Primary carer of a disabled adult *(over 18)*
- Primary carer of an older person
- Secondary carer *(another person carries out the main caring role)*

We would like to keep you informed on local NHS developments.
Please add your contact details below *(email is preferred)*:

Thank You

Thank you for completing the consultation questionnaire.

The consultation closes on **28th March 2018**.

Consultation responses will be independently reported and NHS Herts Valleys CCG will consider the feedback when making a decision.

The decisions taken will be published on the Herts Valleys CCG website.