

St Thomas' Hospital
Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7EH

Councillor Lury
Chairperson
Healthy Communities
Scrutiny Sub-Committee
160 Tooley Street,
London SE1 2QH

Main switchboard: 020 7188 7188

22nd January 2015

Dear Councillor Lury

People without homes that Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital provides care for in the Accident and Emergency Department .

At the Healthy Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting on November 11th 2014, we provided information on the access to emergency health services for people with mental health needs at Guy's and St Thomas Hospital. As requested by the committee, this paper provides supplementary information regarding the care provided for people without homes who attend our A&E department.

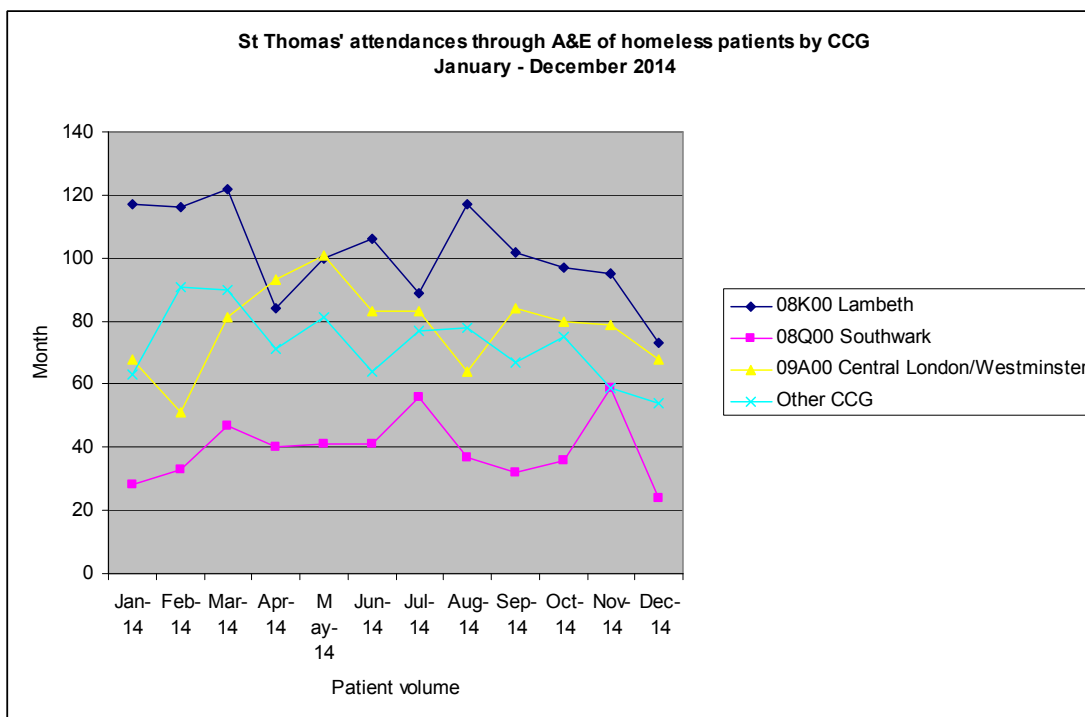
Background

It is recognised that nationally the annual cost of unscheduled care for homeless people is eight times that of the housed population and homeless people are overrepresented amongst frequent attenders in A&E. This is particularly true for Guys and St Thomas' Hospital as one of London's largest providers of unplanned secondary care to homeless people.

Prevalence

Recent data demonstrates that between January and December 2014 there were 3497 recordings of unhoused people treated through the Guys and St Thomas' A&E department, which remained consistent in distribution across the year, with a significant drop-off during December 2014. It is important to note that this figure is generally regarded as an under-representation with a further 800 patients offering address details suggestive of homelessness.

The graph below demonstrates the split by CCG, with a significantly higher proportion of homeless patients being recorded as Lambeth CCG (35%), as opposed to Southwark (14%) and Central London / Westminster (27%). Of particular note, is the high volume of other CCG approximately 25%, which represents a large split of geographical locations from across England and Wales.



Working with other Agencies

Kings Health Partners has recognised the need for a more coordinated approach to the care of unhoused people and is piloting a flag-ship service with the development of Pathway Nurse Homeless Health Practitioners who coordinate a multi-agency response across Lambeth and Southwark.

This team hosted by Guy's and St Thomas is working collaboratively with organisations such as The Passage, St Giles Trust, St Mungos Broadway and Groundswell, in order to provide this multi-agency approach. The team also liaises closely with a number of other agencies across the health and social care sector including: the Health Inclusion Team; Westminster Homeless Health Team; the START team; JHT (Westminster homeless mental health team); Lambeth, Southwark and Westminster outreach teams; Lambeth, Southwark and Westminster housing commissioners; Housing Options in each borough; Hostel managers and area managers such as Look Ahead; Mungos Broadway; Thamesreach; London Ambulance Services; Police day centres; and also data providers like CHAIN.

We would be happy to provide further information on this issue if that would be helpful.

Yours Sincerely,

Nicola Wise
General Manager
Acute Medicine Directorate