

**Update for Southwark Council's Health, Adult Social Care, Communities and Citizenship Overview and Scrutiny sub-committee (HOSC)**

**South east London NHS 111 service update**

**July 2013**

**1. Performance of the NHS 111 service in south east London**

- 1.1. The NHS 111 service was launched in Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich on 12 March 2013. Following the launch, there were a number of teething issues that led to variable performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 1.2. The most recent performance data (for June 2013) however, shows that the service has subsequently gone on to meet its access KPIs: with over 95% of calls answered within 60 seconds and 0% of calls abandoned - both of these meet KPIs based on national quality standards for the service. The rate of triaged calls resulting in an ambulance dispatch reduced to 8% during June 2013 (from 10-12% in previous months), which is a welcome development. Of these dispatches the rate at which the London Ambulance Service conveyed the dispatch remained over 75%.
- 1.3. Performance continues to be below national standards for clinician referrals and call-backs, however, NHS Direct are working with Commissioners to identify and resolve pinch points to improve performance. In June 2013, around 29% of triaged calls were referred to a nurse clinician for further assessment. 34.2% of the calls directed to a clinician were offered a call-back, and 63% of clinician call-backs were undertaken within 10 minutes. The average time for a call-back over this period was 12.5 minutes. Commissioners have put in place a safe and sustainable plan with NHS Direct to monitor these service levels. Furthermore, NHS Direct have established processes for managing clinical call backs, including queue prioritisation.

**2. Sustainability of NHS Direct**

- 2.1. Commissioners are aware that NHS Direct is seeking to withdraw from NHS 111 contracts across England. We are currently reviewing future delivery plans for the service and working with NHS Direct and NHS England to assess potential solutions including contingency arrangements. No final decision on a preferred option has yet been made, but we will be able to provide an update to the HOSC Chair as soon as decisions are made.
- 2.2. A National NHS Direct Liaison Group has been established to assist with this process and Dr. Angela Bhan (South east London NHS 111 Senior

Responsible Officer) is representing London commissioners on this Group. Our priority is as always to ensure the continuation of a stable, efficient and high quality 111 service for patients in South East London. We have assured ourselves that NHS Direct is safe to keep functioning at this point in time and we are closely monitoring the situation to ensure patients continue to get a quality and safe service, while planning ahead for any necessary contingencies.

2.3. NHS 111 services are operating as normal in south east London and patients should continue to contact 111 for help and advice.

### **3. Roll out of south east London NHS 111 to Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham**

3.1. As a result of the initial performance and capacity issues, a decision was made by south east London Commissioners to delay roll out to Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham.

3.2. In light of the matters raised above, south east London commissioners have taken the decision to suspend plans to roll out NHS 111 in the boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham. A stable, high standard of service is what we wish to be available for our patients across the whole area. It would not be appropriate to implement the service fully in Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham while future arrangements are likely to be subject to change.

### **4. Practical information for patients accessing urgent and OOH care in Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham**

4.1. The telephone advice aspect of NHS Direct has been decommissioned and replaced by NHS 111. The NHS Direct 0845 4647 number was switched off on 21 March 2013.

4.2. Patients who call NHS Direct since 21 March 2013 are asked to state their location via an automated message. Callers from a location in Southwark, Lambeth or Lewisham are advised that the 0845 service is no longer available in these areas. The caller is advised that, if they need to access non-emergency healthcare they must hang up and call 111 and the call is then ended.

4.3. As NHS 111 is a national service, patients in Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham who choose to call 111 will get through to the service and their call will be handled within the 111 system.

4.4. This situation is clinically safe for patients - all healthcare services accessible from the NHS 111 service in Southwark, Lambeth or Lewisham are on the local Directory of Services (DoS), which provides the 111 call handler with real time information about services locally available. The patients' GP will receive a notification that the patient has contacted 111 and what the outcome of the call was (patients will be given the choice to opt out of this).

4.5. During the out of hours period, calls from Southwark, Lambeth or Lewisham that are connected to 111 and require GP out of hours service will be

transferred electronically to SELDOC (the local out of hours provider). This link has been in place since 28 March 2013.

- 4.6. Patients are still able to contact SELDOC directly for out of hours GP services, or they will be directed to SELDOC should they call their GP practices (either by direct divert or answer phone message).
- 4.7. The in hours automated message given by SELDOC advises patients to call their practice (or if they are not registered with a practice to go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) to find the nearest one to them).

## **5. Quality assurance of the SEL NHS 111 service**

- 5.1. The quality assurance of the south east London NHS 111 service is overseen by a dedicated clinical lead, Dr Patrick Harborow. Dr Harborow chairs the south east London NHS 111 Clinical Governance Group which has representatives from NHS Direct, GP out of hours (OOH) providers, acute sector, clinical commissioners and patient representatives.
- 5.2. Feedback from Health and Social Care Staff and of patients is vital to help us learn and continually improve the south east London NHS 111 service. A feedback form is available for both healthcare professionals and patients, which asks the respondent to provide information on the call so that the feedback can be applied as call specific. The form for healthcare professionals has been issued by CCGs (and previously by NHS South East London Cluster). The patient version of the form has been distributed via local Healthwatch groups.
- 5.3. The clinical lead receives daily and weekly updates on all feedback, incidents and complaints, and NHS Direct present a monthly report to the Clinical Governance Group with key trends to help shape service improvement.