Improving NHS Lanarkshire’s Primary Care Out Of Hours Services

This document sets out proposals to provide an urgent primary care service that will deliver safe, high-quality, urgent assessment and treatment for the people of Lanarkshire when their own GP practice is closed.

Have your say

Let us know what you think during the consultation which runs from 6 January to 6 April 2015.

See the back cover to find out how to submit your views.

www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk
**Introduction**

NHS Lanarkshire is proposing changes to the way the Primary Care Out Of Hours Service is provided in order to overcome significant challenges to its safe delivery. The proposals are aimed at delivering a safe, high-quality and sustainable service that better meets the needs of those who make use of the out of hours service in Lanarkshire.

This summary consultation document sets out:

- The reason for the proposed changes
- How the proposals were developed
- What the proposals are
- How you can have your say on the proposals.

The full consultation paper is available at: [www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH](http://www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH).

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**What is the Lanarkshire Out Of Hours Service?**

NHS Lanarkshire's Out Of Hours Service operates 365 days a year when your GP surgery is closed. That includes overnight (6pm to 8am) during the week and all day and night at the weekend. It also operates when GP practices are closed for public holidays.

The service is for urgent health issues - the kind that cannot wait until your GP surgery is open. Most people will use the service rarely, or not at all.

You can request an appointment by calling NHS 24 on 111. Depending on your circumstances, you may receive:

- Telephone advice from a GP or nurse
- A home visit if this is clinically necessary
- An appointment to see a GP or nurse at an out of hours centre.

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**What the Out Of Hours Service is not**

The service is not:

- An emergency service - If it is an emergency, you should call 999 or visit Accident and Emergency.

- A replacement for an in-hours GP appointment - The Out Of Hours Service is only for urgent appointments. You should contact your own GP for routine appointments.

- NHS 24 - You call NHS 24 on 111 to access the Out Of Hours Service, but they are different services. The first is run by NHS 24, the second by NHS Lanarkshire.
Why does the service need to change?

The current service is under consistent pressure due to the lack GPs available to work out of hours. This causes delays in appointments for patients and disruption throughout the service. Ultimately, the service becomes unsafe to operate.

The pressures are at their worst during holiday periods when there are high levels of demand causing real difficulties in providing a safe service.

Staffing has been very unpredictable. At times, low staff numbers have led to centres being closed in order to ensure patient safety.

GPs have a nationally agreed contract, which is called the General Medical Services contract. Since 2004, the terms of this contract do not require GPs to provide out of hours cover.

NHS Lanarkshire actively encourages GPs to work in the service. However, working out of hours is optional and fewer and fewer GPs are choosing to do so. One of the reasons for this is changes in GP in-hours working practice.

As a result, there are significant challenges in safely staffing the current out of hours service. Other health boards in Scotland are also facing the same difficulties.

How were the proposals developed?

Patients, carers and staff have been heavily involved in the review process, helping to develop and assess alternative service models. Members of the Public Partnership Forums, carers, and representatives of the Scottish Health Council also sit on the review board and working groups.

The review has included a survey of people using the service, focus groups with staff, patients and GPs and presentations to a wide range of local committees and community groups, including carer organisations.

At a stakeholder engagement event on 27 June 2014, 59 people representing the public, patients, carers, and a range of health staff met to discuss potential service models. A follow up event on 4 November 2014 was attended by 62 people representative of the key stakeholders.

The events included detailed information on each service model to allow participants to score the proposed service models against clear quality criteria to judge how safe, effective, person centred, efficient, equitable and timely each were.

Stakeholders identified the two proposed service models to go forward to public consultation.
NHS Lanarkshire is consulting on two proposed service models that were identified following a comprehensive review:

- **either one primary care out-of-hours centre at Douglas Street Community Health Clinic in Hamilton;**

- **or two primary care out-of-hours centres one at Airdrie Community Health Centre and the other at Douglas Street Community Health Clinic, Hamilton.**

Douglas Street Community Health Clinic opened its doors on Monday 20 April 2009 following a £4.6 million refurbishment. The clinic provides modern, high-quality facilities for a range of primary care services. For patients and staff, it offers a greatly improved environment that allows services to modernise and work in new ways. The accommodation is modern and provides full access to a range of clinical rooms, consulting rooms and waiting areas with good parking. The Hamilton location has easy access to all major roads making it very accessible for those coming by car and also provides access via public transport links by bus and train.

Airdrie Community Health Centre, in Graham Street, Airdrie town centre, is a new £27 million facility which opened in 2013. It has significantly improved patient access to healthcare. The health centre is the location of nine different GP practices and a number of primary care services. Locating the out-of-hours service in this state-of-the-art facility would add value to the service. This out-of-hours proposal would provide access to people living in North Lanarkshire.

The one centre model at Douglas Street would offer a central location allowing more GPs to work together in a team providing peer support and greater safety. This would provide the greatest level of flexibility and opportunities for team working. By adding an a second site in Airdrie the two centre model would reduce journey times for some people and improve access particularly in North Lanarkshire. As staff would be split between two sites, this would reduce some of the flexibility and responsiveness of the service. Both models would offer a safe, person-centred and effective service and this would improve recruitment and retention of staff.
Travel and transport to the Out Of Hours Service has been taken into account when planning the proposed service models. This included detailed mapping and analysis of both travel times and distances to potential locations to ensure they were accessible from all parts of Lanarkshire. Population flow, rurality, deprivation and workforce were considered.

We recognise that the proposed changes would mean a longer journey for some users of the service. It is important to stress that the Out Of Hours Service is for urgent care, not emergency care. If you call NHS 24, the soonest you will be given an appointment at one of the out of hours centres is in one hour's time. This ensures people have plenty of time to travel to their appointment.

We carried out a survey of people using the service which found that 97 per cent made their own travel arrangements to the centres - 83 per cent using their own transport. For those who cannot travel by car or other means, transport can be arranged when the person is otherwise genuinely unable to get to their appointment. A home visit can be carried out where there is a clinical need for one.

These arrangements are already in place for the current service and work well.

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**Services that will not be affected by the proposals**

The following services will not change as a result of the proposed service models and are not included in this consultation process:

- Accident and Emergency Services
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- NHS 24
- Out Of Hours Dental Services
- Out Of Hours Mental Health Services
- Out Of Hours District Nursing Services
- Lanarkshire Eye-health Network Service (LENS)
- Pharmacy
- Home visits by the Primary Care Out Of Hours Service
- Telephone advice from the Primary Care Out of Hours Service
- In-hour GP services.

For more information on our services and advice on when and how to access them visit:

www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/Services/Know-Who-To-Turn-To

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**Travel to the out of hours centres**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Service</th>
<th>Proposed Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Primary Care Out of Hours Centres at Wishaw General Hospital, Monklands Hospital and Hairmyres Hospital. One or two of the main centres are closed on many occasions due to lack of GPs. There are also two part-time satellite centres at Central Health Centre, Cumbernauld, and Lanark Health Centre. Both have been closed since June 2014 due to lack of GPs.</td>
<td>Either:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patients waiting longer to be seen both for appointments at the centres and for home visits.</td>
<td>A) One primary care out-of-hours centre at Douglas Street Community Health Clinic in Hamilton.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>or</td>
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<td>Current working conditions affecting staff morale and not attractive to staff which has contributed to the current challenges.</td>
<td>B) Two primary care out-of-hours centres one in Airdrie Community Health Centre and the other in Douglas Street Community Health Clinic, Hamilton.</td>
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<td>GPs working alone across too many locations without the support and supervision of colleagues. This impacts on patient safety.</td>
<td>Regular predictable service with increased regularity and predictability of the service.</td>
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<td>Accommodation within busy emergency departments in acute hospitals designed for hospital services, not GP consultations.</td>
<td>Improved response times with patients given earlier appointments and receiving home visits sooner.</td>
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<td>Staff stretched across numerous sites leading to changes at short notice causing disruption and longer waits for patients.</td>
<td>Service model more attractive to GPs making it easier to recruit and retain staff.</td>
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<td>Location in emergency departments creating the impression the out-of-hours service is an emergency service rather than an urgent primary care service.</td>
<td>A survey of GPs indicated they would be more willing to work out of hours if we can provide a more reliable and predictable service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated accommodation purposely designed for GP consultations and other primary care services enabling person-centred improvements.</td>
<td>Clinically safer for patients as greater number of staff on site working as a team. Staff on one or two sites allows greater flexibility to enable a more consistent service for patients.</td>
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<td>Staff on one or two sites allowing a more flexible and consistent service for patients.</td>
<td>Dedicated accommodation purposely designed for GP consultations and other primary care services enabling person-centred improvements.</td>
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<td>Located in health centres reinforcing that the out-of-hours service provides urgent care and treatment.</td>
<td>Staff on one or two sites allowing a more flexible and consistent service for patients.</td>
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What are the benefits to patients of the proposals?

The proposed models and locations for the delivery of out of hours services in Lanarkshire would overcome the current challenges and provide:

- A clinically safer service for patients as they would allow for a greater number of staff on site working as a team.
- Increased potential for timely access to patient care with patients seen sooner.
- Accommodation that is vastly better and fit for purpose, including comfort and familiarity.
- Better working conditions ensuring staff would be more willing to work in the service.
- Increased peer support for GPs including multi-disciplinary and team working that would offer a greater skill mix of staff to see a range of patients.
- Added security as a result of staff working together in teams.
- Improved recruitment and retention of staff.
- A more person-centred service as a result of consistence of service, improved availability of staff and improved rota management.
- Operational stability through better staffing models, utilisation of cars, improved logistics.
- Improvements through standardisation of practice, protocols and clinical governance.
- An education and awareness message that the out-of-hours service is an urgent primary care service and not an emergency acute hospital service.

How will the final decision be made?

NHS Lanarkshire will consider all feedback received during the consultation period. Your response will help inform and shape the final service model to ensure it best meets the needs of the Lanarkshire population.

Following the consultation, NHS Lanarkshire will prepare a report taking into account the outcome of the options appraisal exercise, the public consultation process, affordability and any practical issues. We aim to submit this to the board of NHS Lanarkshire in May 2015.

The Scottish Health Council will independently verify the consultation process and submit a report to the Scottish Government and NHS Lanarkshire. The final outcome of the process will be considered by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing following the submission of NHS Lanarkshire's Board's final proposal.
NHS Lanarkshire welcomes your views and comments:

- Online - complete the feedback questionnaire at [www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH](http://www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH)
- Email - send your comments to OOHReview@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
- By post - send your comments or paper copies of the questionnaire to FREEPOST RTEJ-HZLK-AETZ, NHS Lanarkshire, Kirklands, Fallside Road, Bothwell, GLASGOW, G71 8BB

Open public meetings will be held at 6.30pm with refreshments available. The formal meetings will start at 6.50pm and end at 8.30pm:

- Motherwell/Wishaw - Tuesday 20 January, Wishaw General Hospital, Ronald Miller Education Centre, Lower Level, 50 Netherton Street, Wishaw ML2 0DP
- Hamilton/Larkhall/Lesmahagow - Thursday 29 January, South Lanarkshire Council Banqueting Hall, Almada Street Hamilton, ML3 OAA
- Cambuslang/Rutherglen - Monday 2 February, Rutherglen Town Hall, 139 Main Street, Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire G73 2J
- Airdrie/Coatbridge/Bellshill - Wednesday 25 February, Airdrie Town Hall, Stirling Street, Airdrie, North Lanarkshire ML6 0AS
- Cumbernauld/Kilsyth - Tuesday 10 March, Cumbernauld Town Hall, Bron Way, Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire G67 1DZ
- Lanark/Biggar/Carnwath - Monday 16 March, Lanark Memorial Hall, Bonnington Auditorium, Saint Leonard Street, Lanark, South Lanarkshire ML11 7AB
- East Kilbride/Strathaven - Tuesday 24 March, The Village Centre, 12 Maxwell Drive, East Kilbride, Lanarkshire G74 4HG.

There will be an additional meeting 2-4pm, Thursday 12 February, Kirklands Hospital, Ken Corsar Medical Education Training Centre, Fallside Road, Bothwell G71 8BB.

We are also holding two consultation roadshows:

- Coatbridge Quadrant Shopping Centre - 11am-1pm, Saturday 7 February
- East Kilbride Shopping Centre - 11am-1pm, Saturday 14 March

For copies of the full consultation paper, which includes the consultation questionnaire, or this summary document, or if you need either document in another language or format:

- Go to [www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH](http://www.nhslanarkshire.org.uk/involved/consultation/OOH)
- Email OOHReview@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
- Telephone 01698 858268