

Issue 5, Spring 2018: This latest edition provides an update on the development of the Local Urgent Care Services (LUCS) in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland.

Improving access to urgent care in Ely

The Local Urgent Care Services (LUCS) Hub pilot has now been running since May 2017. During this time nearly 13,500 patients have used the service which is helping to improve access to urgent care by providing a 'one-stop' service for patients with minor illnesses and injuries.

As with any new service, there is an ongoing review of its performance. This includes capturing patient feedback in a short survey of patients who have used the service over recent months.

Here's how LUCS is doing so far based on patient feedback:

Helping to ease pressure on A&E

Ely LUCS Hub has seen an increase in the number of attendances for minor illnesses and injuries. Ambulance crews can now call the LUCS GP for clinical advice and take patients to the MIU to be assessed rather than to A&E.

Patient feedback:

Two-thirds of the patients interviewed said if the LUCS service wasn't available they would have gone to A&E. The majority of patients were local residents or from surrounding towns and villages.



Providing a 'one-stop shop' for local residents

GPs continue to work alongside MIU nurses. This is helping to prevent patients being referred onto another service for treatment i.e. being sent back to their GP or to A&E.

Patient feedback:

Nearly two-thirds of patients were seen and treated there and then at the Ely LUCS with no follow-up appointment required. Local knowledge of the service has improved with over half of patients making the LUCS service their first point of call for advice and treatment. Other patients attending were either advised to attend by their GP surgery or NHS 111.



Effective use of skills of the MIU nurses

With GP support, the MIU nurses are seeing an increased number of patients and are working towards treating a wider range of conditions.

Patient feedback:

Patients were assessed, treated and discharged within as little as 30 minutes, stretching to two hours for those requiring further treatment such as X-Ray (this can be longer at busy times). All patients felt they were provided with relevant information on their illness or condition alongside the reassurance of contact details should their condition worsen.



During the winter months (December 2017 – February 2018), there was a 6% increase in attends to the Ely LUCS Hub compared to the same period a year ago. 87% of patients 'self-referred' to the service, but some patients were referred by their GP or the 111 service.



Local resident, Nicky Evans, tells us about her experience of the LUCS:

Our family has made several visits to Ely LUCS. I recently attended with breathing difficulties. After seeing a doctor and using a nebuliser, I was given a prescription and advised to see an asthma nurse. I have now been diagnosed as an asthma sufferer. After a fall at home, my son also had to have the skin around his eye glued and the nurses were fantastic with him. It's great to have this service on our doorstep as previously we would have had to go to A&E at Addenbrooke's.



Patients are attending with a wide range of minor injuries and illnesses. The most common are these ones in the table below showing the number of patients seen since May 2017 with these conditions:

Sprains	417
Finger injury	306
Minor eye injuries	197
Minor head injury	192

Wrist injury	170
Earache	126
Chest infection	107
Foot injury	101

Easter MIU opening times

The MIUs in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland will be open over Easter at the following times:

Princess of Wales Hospital MIU	
Monday – Friday: 8.30am-6pm	
Saturday/Sunday: 8.30am-6pm	
Easter Sunday/Bank Holidays: 8.30am-6pm	
North Cambridgeshire Hospital MIU	
Monday – Friday: 8.30am-6pm	
Saturday/Sunday: closed	
Easter Sunday/Bank Holidays: closed	
Doddington Community Hospital MIU	
Monday – Friday: 8.30am-6pm	
Saturday/Sunday: 9am-5pm	
Easter Sunday/Bank Holidays: 9am-5pm	

The range of minor injuries and illnesses which the MIUs can treat can be found at www.cptf.nhs.uk/services/minor-injury-units

Urgent Treatment Centres (UTC) development

In July 2017 NHS England issued new national guidance setting out criteria for designation of Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs).

Urgent Treatment Centres aim to ease the pressure on hospitals. GP-led, UTCs will be open at least 12 hours a day, every day, and be equipped to diagnose and deal with many of the most common ailments for which people attend A&E.

The CCG has been assessing local services, including the three East Cambridgeshire and Fenland MIUs / LUCS Hub, against the national criteria to explore opportunities for UTCs across the county to be developed. Further information on Urgent Treatment Centres can be found [HERE](#).



Wisbech and south Fenland update

Learning from the Ely experience, work continues to develop local urgent care services for Wisbech and for the south Fenland area.

The development of the Wisbech LUCS Hub is now moving forward. Further updates on the development of this service will be shared in due course; in the meantime, local residents should continue to use the Wisbech MIU as normal.

GP workforce and recruitment remains a challenge in south Fenland. To help address these issues the CCG invested in a 'Time to Care' initiative for local practices to help create capacity with nurses and GPs, and to improve access for patients.

A number of successful new initiatives are now in place. For example, a large number of receptionists have been trained as 'Care Navigators', so that patients can be directed to the most appropriate service, and help reduce demand on GPs. New systems have also been introduced for managing correspondence which frees up GP time. All of these initiatives are set to help support a LUCS Hub service in the future.



Have your say!



Patient feedback and experience continues to be an invaluable part of developing the local services in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. Patients can feedback by contacting the CCG at capccg.contact@nhs.net or 01223 725304.

Alternatively, patients can contact Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough who are part of the steering group and would welcome any feedback on local services.

Sandie Smith, CEO of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, said "We're pleased to see that numbers of local people using the LUCS in Ely is increasing. Getting people the care they need closer to home has got to make sense for everyone, and hopefully will help reduce pressures on A&E departments. Healthwatch would love to hear from people about their experiences of using the local services."

Patients can contact Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough at enquiries@healthwatchcambspboro.co.uk or 0330 355 1285.