

14<sup>th</sup> May 2015

1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Billingham Health Centre  
Queensway  
Billingham  
TS23 2LA

Tel: 01642 745982

Dear Colleague,

**Re: Stockton-on-Tees Health Services for Urgent Illnesses and Urgent Minor Injuries**

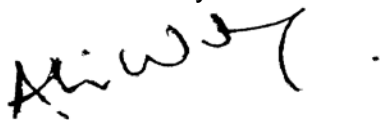
As part of our Urgent Care Strategy, the first phase is to scope an integrated urgent care service both in Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees. Contract end dates for current providers of health services for urgent illnesses and minor injuries in this area present the opportunity for us to achieve service improvements for local patients in line with this strategy in the next twelve months.

We are talking to local people for their experiences of these services, to understand their expectations and to get their views on options for service improvements we are considering and wish to make you aware of this.

Over the next few weeks we will be undertaking on-street surveys to gauge and explore what is important to local people to ensure that the urgent care services we commission are accessible and enhanced for the future. If you receive any enquiries from the public or local stakeholders, please don't hesitate to direct them to us where we will be able to provide a response.

I attach a briefing for your information and would welcome the chance to brief you in person if you would find that useful.

Yours sincerely



**Ali Wilson**  
Chief Officer

## **Briefing paper**

### **Stockton-on-Tees health services for urgent illnesses and urgent minor injuries**

May 2015

*“To commission and develop a simple, accessible, high quality service, managing patients at the point they present in a sensitive and person-centred approach, yet robust and resilient way. Reducing the need for urgent care with better management of long term conditions with primary and secondary prevention.”*

This is the vision for a local urgent care pathway that we at Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group set out in our Urgent Care Strategy 2013-2018 and in our *Clear and Credible Plan Refresh 2014/15-2018/19*, the five-year strategy we published in response to the annual planning requirements in ‘*Everyone Counts: Planning for Patients 2014/15 to 2018/19*’.

Health services in the area must be joined up and make sense if local residents are to have seamless 24/7 urgent care services that meet their needs at the point of first contact.

Building upon the joint vision developed between the Health and Wellbeing partners, the expectation is to commission and develop a simple, accessible, high quality integrated urgent care service that manages patients at the point they present with a sensitive and person-centred approach, yet in a robust and resilient way. This is with a view to reducing the need for urgent care with the better management of long term conditions with primary and secondary care prevention as a focus.

GP walk-in services in Stockton-on-Tees are provided at Stockton NHS Healthcare Centre in Tithebarn House on the Hardwick Estate next to the North Tees Hospital site. Any patient can get an appointment at the centre or walk in and wait to see a doctor or nurse from 8am to 8pm every day including weekends and bank holidays. Out-of-hours GP services (6.30pm-8am daily, and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays) are available by appointment at Crutes House, Stockton-on-Tees and for home visits to patients who cannot travel. Minor Injury services are available via A&E services on the North Tessa Hospital site, 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Contract end dates for current providers present the opportunity to achieve service improvements in the next twelve months. We are talking to local people for their experiences of these services, to understand their expectations, and to get their views on options for service improvement we are considering:

- Combining GP walk-in services and GP out-of-hours services and minor injury services at one centre to expand urgent care services in Stockton-on-Tees to a 24-hour, every day, accessible service; and

- Locating that service alongside the accident and emergency department at North Tees General Hospital to simplify destination choices for the public.

No services will be lost. The service improvements we are considering respond to the feedback patients have given us and will transform the service into a highly responsive, effective and personalised service that is easy to understand and access. This builds on the national direction for urgent care, taking learning from successful models elsewhere in the region and England; and (where appropriate depending upon the symptoms and condition), providing 24 hour access to urgent care, to the right practitioner, in the right place.

We are using on-street surveys to gauge and explore what is important to local people to ensure that urgent care services are accessible and enhanced for the future.

To make sure we secure the views of carers and those who are unable to leave their homes, we will work with local community and voluntary organisations to undertake additional interviews.

In line with population figures and service user demographics, local people in Billingham, Norton, Thornaby, Ingleby Barwick, Yarm, and Stockton will be asked to participate.

We expect to report on the feedback we receive in mid-June.

ENDS