

NHS111

Briefing : Walsall Overview & Scrutiny Committee

November 2013

The NHS111 service was introduced on an out of hours basis mid-March 2013 with NHS Direct delivering the service, however a number of technical and operational issues arose as the service was switched on which led to the decision to underpin the service through other out of hours providers. This model continued whilst we sourced an interim solution.

We can now confirm that West Midlands Ambulance Service will step-in and provide the service from 12th November 2013 until April 2015.

The West Midlands NHS111 Project Board, and the Lead Commissioner – Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group - is monitoring the service on a daily basis to ensure that it is safe and robust, and that it meets patients' needs and expectations.

NHS 111 remains a statutory requirement for each Clinical Commissioning Group to provide to their patients. Where it is working well, the benefits of the urgent care system are really being highlighted including in the North East where the service is going from strength to strength.

The system is working well within the West Midlands region. Calls are currently being answered in the required timeframe, and there have been no significant increase in attendances at Accident & Emergency or in ambulance despatches.

Be assured however that our priority is to bolster the urgent care system as we approach the busy winter period, and that we see NHS111 as crucial support to the Acute sector. We are making sure that these plans are in place before the winter pressures begin, to support our local urgent care systems and to support busy Accident & Emergency Departments and 999 services.

The NHS111 service model is supported by the West Midlands NHS 111 Project Board and Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG as Lead Commissioner; it provides crucial support to the Urgent Care System and we are all committed to the future of the NHS111 service within the West Midlands.

Rachael Ellis, West Midlands Project Lead

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