

Resetting healthcare in Corby

What you told us about navigating and accessing the 'Same Day Access Hub'

NHS Corby CCG has been engaging with local people since early 2017 about challenges facing the local NHS and how to address them.

The latest stage was to give an opportunity to shape the access and navigation aspects of a new service called the Same Day Access Hub. This service is designed to improve access to GP services (primary care) and to take up the work of Corby Urgent Care Centre, whose contract expires in March 2019.

Engagement took place over eight weeks between Monday 12 February and Sunday 8 April this year – feeding directly into the contract specification for the new service.

This is a summary of the results. You can read the full report, which includes much more detail about the engagement undertaken and the background to it at: www.corbyccg.nhs.uk/current-conversations.

We are grateful to everybody who gave up their time to share their views, experiences and opinions of healthcare services.

The CCG would also like to thank the organisations, partners and businesses which supported the programme.

In planning and delivering this engagement, we have paid due regard to the need to gain the views, opinions and insight from members of all groups within the Corby community.



This will help us understand the likely impact of any changes to local NHS services on disabled people, the elderly, racial minorities or any other group which has a protected characteristic as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

The numbers – a summary

Engagement reach

- The programme reached more than 43,000 people online – around 1,500 via the CCG website and almost 42,000 through social media.
- More than 1,800 people were engaged face-to-face
- The CCG's engagement team visited 39 different venues (an average of 6.5 per week)
- 20 people attended the workshop
- 21 people were engaged via MP letters and 11 by direct email/letter

Questionnaire responses

- 513 people completed the questionnaire
- 90% of respondents support the extension of access to primary care to 12 hours a day, 365 days a year
- 69% of people support (30% strongly, 39% to some extent) the use of trained phone navigators to help people access the right care – but 21% do not support this
- Opinion is evenly split between having a centralised phone number (43%) or calling individual practices (40%)
- 45% of people are happy to wait 1 to 2 minutes for their call to be answered, while 31% would rather it was answered in 30 to 60 seconds
- 95% people thought it important (67% very important, 28% to some extent) to have flexibility around when they called
- 59% support the option to book a hub appointment online
- 73% were confident (47% very confident, 26% to some extent) that an appointments system would guarantee on-the-day access – but 24% were not

How did we engage?

3,000 copies of an engagement document, with a pull-out questionnaire to be returned via a Freepost address, was produced and distributed. All but 200 were distributed across the town and surrounding areas and were available in a range of locations including all Corby GP surgeries, the 'TA' Centre and the Corby Cube.

Promotional posters were put up in pharmacies, shops and cafes in Corby town centre, and at all the community venues and supermarkets we visited.

The questionnaire and all associated information were also accessible on the CCG's website.



The CCG's engagement team visited 39 different venues across the eight weeks. These included most of the locations and community groups involved in the previous engagement programme at the end of 2017. Other groups and meetings were added to enhance community reach, with a particular focus on people with protected characteristics as defined under the 2010 Equality Act.

Presentations followed by question and answer sessions were made at the Corby HART Club, Corby Rotary Club, U3A and Corby Business Club.

Finally, the CCG held a public workshop on Tuesday 3 April at the Best Western Hotel in Corby. A second afternoon event was cancelled prior to this due to lack of public interest.

All activity was supported by comprehensive media and social media promotion, as well direct e-mail to interested groups and stakeholders.

How many people did we engage with?

Questionnaire

531 people completed the questionnaire either online or using the paper version.

Online

NHS Corby CCG website: www.corbyccg.nhs.uk/current-consultations:

- Page views for Current Conversations page: 1,003
- Page views for Engagement Document: 296
- Page views for Get Your Views Heard: 175

Total number of page views for all engagement pages: 1,474 (The CCG's website has had an average of 5,397 page views per month this year across ALL pages)

Social media

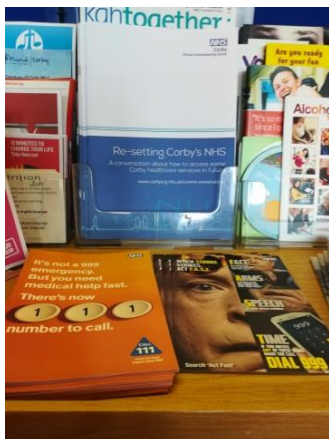
Twitter:

- Tweets posted: 92
- Impressions: 29,648 (The NHS Corby CCG Twitter account has had an average of 23,433 impressions per month this year)
- Engagement (link clicks, retweets, likes): 440

Facebook:

- Posts: 81
- Reach: 12,183 (The NHS Corby CCG Facebook account has had an average reach of 12,289 per month this year)
- Engagement (Post clicks, reactions, comments, shares): 645

During this period, our total reach across Twitter and Facebook was 41,831.



Face to face

We spoke to approximately 1,841 people face-to-face.

Workshops

We held one workshop in April. 20 people attended from a cross-section of stakeholders, patients and the public and invitees included:

- Corby Patient Representative Group
- GP practices' Patient Participation Groups
- General public
- Stakeholders and community group reps

Responses to questions

A direct email address was promoted as a way for people to raise issues or ask questions. Each contact received a tailored response. Responses were also given to correspondence forwarded by the local MP, Tom Pursglove, from his constituents.

Stakeholders

Alongside the public, we also ensured health and social care colleagues, statutory bodies and politicians were informed and involved.

What you told us

The questionnaire

90% of respondents support the extension of access to primary care to 12 hours a day, 365 days a year 

- The majority of respondents support the extension of access to primary care to 12 hours a day, 365 days a year (90%)
- The majority of people either strongly support (30%) or support to some extent (39%) the use of trained phone navigators to help people access the right care; however, 21% do not support this
- People are fairly evenly split between having a centralised phone number (43%) or calling individual practices (40%)
- 45% of people are happy to wait one to two minutes for their call to be answered; 31% would rather it was answered in 30 to 60 seconds
- The majority of people thought it was very important (67%) to have flexibility around when they called and 28% thought it was important to some extent
- There is support for being able to book a hub appointment online (59%)
- 47% were very confident an appointments system would guarantee on-the-day access; 26% were confident to some extent; 13% are not confident in an appointments-based system and 11% are not at all confident

When asked if they wanted to expand on their answer relating to confidence in the service, a range of comments were made.

Comments

Online access

Comments reflect the data – some people are happy and confident using an online booking service and prefer it to calling, others are not. There were suggestions that some navigation would be helpful online. Concerns included people using it to avoid navigation and abusing the system, and the disenfranchisement of those who can't/won't use the internet.

59% support the option to book an appointment at the Same Day Access Hub online 

73%

are confident an appointments system would guarantee on-the-day access



The change to an appointments-based service

Positive comments:

Some of these came from people who had experienced long waits to be seen at the Urgent Care Centre. They supported the idea of appointments as likely to reduce the anxiety felt as a result of delays. Many people said they wanted to wait and see how the new system worked before judging it. People also stated there was less chance of the system being 'misused' if navigation and appointments were introduced.

Negative comments:

There is concern that the move to an appointments-based system will put further pressure on Kettering General Hospital's A&E department. Respondents also have concerns about potential delays in the telephones being answered, delaying care. Again, there were requests for a walk-in service to be retained and a couple of comments referred to the service being 'down-graded'. There were a couple of queries from carers about how they would be able to access appointments for those they are caring for.

Current experiences at GP practices

People's current experience of accessing appointments at their GP surgery is reflected in their confidence in a telephone-based appointments system. Most comments referred to negative experiences, long telephone queues and not getting appointments when they got through to reception. In contrast, those who found it easier to get a GP appointment on the same day they needed one were more confident that the new system would work.

Comments about the navigation and navigators

People were generally happy with the idea of navigators as long as they were well-trained – possibly with clinical expertise – and there were adequate numbers of them.

69%

of people support the use of trained phone navigators to help people access the right care



Other concerns raised

- There was some confusion resulting from misinformation. Some people thought the UCC had already closed or was going to, others that the appointments system was already in play.
- A key issue raised was by residents (both of Corby Borough and elsewhere), who are not registered with Corby GP practices and therefore fear not being able to access the new Hub. This was of particular concern to people in Gretton, whose surgery is a branch of an Uppingham-based practice.
- People questioned whether there would be enough appointments and if they would run out at some point during the day.
- Some respondents cited examples of when they had used the UCC in the evening. They were concerned a telephone-based system would mean they would not be able to do this as the appointments would already have gone.
- There is some concern that a telephone-based system would delay care.

Respondents' demographic information

- 64% have lived in Corby for over 10 years, 10% do not live in Corby
- Most had a NN17 (37%) or NN18 postcode (47%). 7% were from the LE16 area, 5.5% had a NN14 postcode and 1% a PE8 postcode – all geographical neighbours to Corby. There were also responses from people in the NN9, NN12, NN15, NN16 and MK44 areas.
- 55% are registered with Lakeside, 15% at Great Oakley, 15% at Woodsend, 5% with Dr Kumar's Studfall practice and 3% at Dr Sumira's Studfall practice. 11% stated they are registered with other practices.
- 25% of respondents were aged 60-69, 20% were 70-79, 3% were 20-29.
- 68% were female and 30% were male
- 93% considered themselves as white British
- 83% did not consider themselves disabled, 14% did
- 14% are carers
- 9% work for the NHS

Respondents were also given the opportunity to express an interest in receiving updates from the CCG about healthcare in Corby. We have contacted these people.



The workshop

Workshop attendees were asked to consider in three groups what a 'good' healthcare service would look like, by thinking about the following questions. The groups' responses have been collated under the questions/headings:

What should be the standard time you should wait for your call to be answered?

Answers ranged from 1 to 5 minutes

How long before your call to your practice transfers to the Hub?

Responses also ranged from 1 to 5 minutes. One group believed the call should not auto-transfer to the Hub, with the caller having the option to stay on the line if they want to see their own GP.

How comfortable are you with the idea of phone triage?

People were comfortable with phone triage, but less so with explaining in person at a reception desk. There was concern about the ability of navigators to spot difficult conditions and the risks attached to this. It was suggested that if navigators were medically/clinically trained, it would give people confidence.

What time should phone lines open?

Responses ranged from 6-7am, for appointments starting at 8am. There was also a suggestion that lines should open late evening (post 8pm) to allow people to book for the next day.

Do you want to access appointments online as well as by phone?

There were mixed feelings about online booking. One group stated they would prefer the immediate response and feedback of a phone call and asked if an online chat was possible. There was concern about equity of access for people without internet access, and questions about how online booking would work alongside telephone triage. It was also suggested that this could enable people to avoid telephone triage and navigation.

Would you rather call your GP or a central number?

The response was mixed. Two groups preferred a central contact number, one suggested a system where patients could pick from a menu depending on what service they required (eg GP; urgent service; minor injury; advice).

Should some patients be directed to specific places?

Of the groups that discussed this question, it was thought people could be directed to pharmacy, physiotherapist or mental health services.

What else?

- The telephone number should be free or local call charge only
- An equality impact assessment needs to be carried out and consideration given to patients who don't recognise their symptoms as serious.
- If people get an appointment within a few hours [of calling], it would help patient behaviour and expectations
- People need to be educated about what is a reasonable time to wait
- Concerns about how people visiting Corby will access healthcare and how test results/feedback from investigations will be managed
- The needs of vulnerable users must be addressed
- Data protection concerns about attending the Hub , over patient records and consent for sharing information with GP practices)

Face to face engagement

Key comments and issues raised in conversations with people reflected those expressed in written responses:

- A mixed response to the move from a walk-in facility to an appointments-based system – some against (delays in care; currently can't get through on phones at GP) and some in support (gets rid of people who are misusing the centre; you don't have to wait around for hours to be seen)
- Corby Borough residents registered with GP practices under neighbouring CCGs not having access to the new Hub
- Rumours the UCC had been closed and the service was being 'downgraded'
- Triage by receptionists a concern in case they get it wrong.



At the visits to the Teamwork Trust, MIND, and the travellers' site on Dunlop Road, it was found it was more appropriate to talk to people as a group, rather than just hand out copies of the document.

What happened to the information we received?

Information from the April workshop has been fed directly into the contract specification for the procurement of the Same Day Access Hub.

A full report into the findings from the engagement work was produced and presented to NHS Corby CCG's Patient and Public Engagement Assurance Committee on Tuesday 15 May 2018 where it was accepted with a few minor changes to the recommendations.

The Committee's minutes are as a matter of course considered by the CCG's Governing Body.

Conclusions

This engagement confirmed strong public support for extended access to primary care and recognised the need for consistency of access across Corby.

The majority support navigation (both online and on the telephone), to help people get the right care in the right place. However, there are some reservations around the level of training care navigators will have.

Other concerns are practical ones – how easy will it be to get through on the phone, how likely am I to get an appointment? The nature of people's responses is clearly linked to their current experience of booking appointments at their GP practice.

There is still some opposition to the switch from walk-in to appointments, but there is support for it too. Many want to wait and see how it works before commenting. A smooth implementation of the new service, care navigation and booking systems is essential, if the population is to be reassured that the CCG's plan will benefit them.

Recommendations

These recommendations are a direct result of the engagement findings. They have been formally accepted by the CCG's Patient and Public Engagement Assurance Committee:

- A comprehensive communications and engagement programme in the run-up to the launch of the new service is a must. There are too many misconceptions, too much misinformation and some confusion over how this will work in practice.
- On-going engagement and communication from post-purchase up to mobilisation is also needed to demonstrate the CCG has listened – not only to the comments/data from the questionnaire, but also to the additional concerns raised in relation to primary and urgent care access.
- People essentially want and need to know how to access healthcare for themselves, their families and loved ones, in the future.
- There are particular sectors of the community that will need additional communication and engagement prior to launch: travellers, carers, parents of young children, people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities, people with physical disabilities and their carers. (We have made further inroads into engaging with Eastern European communities locally, but this remains work in progress.)
- East Leicestershire and Rutland (ELR), Nene and Cambridge and Peterborough CCGs will need to communicate clearly to their patients where they can access care once the new Hub service is launched. Joint, consistent messaging for these patients will be essential.