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FRIADAY 11 MARCH 2022

**GREATER MANCHESTER HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP WEEKLY UPDATE**

This briefing is intended to update stakeholders on how NHS and care services in Greater Manchester are managing an increase in demand. It is split into service areas and provides an update on the latest situation and actions being taken to address issues, as well as public advice and guidance on accessing services, and for specific issues.

NHS England publishes a weekly online report showing verified data across provider organisations including all hospital trusts. You can access the latest reports [here](http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-hospital-activity). Our weekly briefing gives an up-to-date overview of the situation across the whole of Greater Manchester system including primary care, urgent and emergency care, mental health and adult social care, as well as the Covid-19 situation. We are only able to share data that forms part of national data sets in line with NHS England publication dates. There is an exception for data that is unique to Greater Manchester and where the data controller is not NHS England.

1. Urgent and emergency care update and actions
2. Primary care update, data and actions
3. Adult social care and community services update, data and actions
4. Covid-19 update and data
5. Covid 19 vaccination update and data
6. Tackling the waiting list backlog and data
7. Statement from Greater Manchester Health and Care Partnership
8. Public advice and guidance: choosing the right service if you’re ill or injured, attending appointments and contact information for specific issues

**To note, this briefing will be the last in this format. To help consider how we update on system performance, we would welcome your views on how this content has been received. Please can you fill in this short survey, which will take approx. five minutes to complete.**

[**Take the survey**](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/DWMVH7/)

1. **Urgent and emergency care**

This winter has seen significant pressure put on urgent and emergency care. Hospital occupancy in Greater Manchester is around 92%, with patients with a Covid positive diagnosis around 9%, and declining slowly. Rates of Covid-19 have gone up in all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester, likely attributed to increased mixing throughout the half term break. So far, this is not impacting significantly on hospital beds, and staff absences for Covid and Covid related illnesses has plateaued.

The number of people in our hospitals with no reason to reside (people who no longer need hospital care) is still hovering around 900 patients per day, with significant work underway to try and reduce this to allow as much elective work to take place as possible; and support an improvement in patient flow through hospitals. There are site improvements plans in place to address this, though a key barrier is the available health and care workforce, which will take some time to address. Other barriers include complex needs within mental health and out of area placements.

The support provided in recent weeks by army and navy staff has now ended in hospitals though North West Ambulance are still receiving specific support, which will end throughout March.

**Data:**

The weekly sit-rep from NHS England can be found [here](https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/uec-sitrep/urgent-and-emergency-care-daily-situation-reports-2021-22/) and includes staff absences. National data published monthly shows attendances to A&E, ambulance statistics and hospital admissions. Definitions of category types for calls / attendances can be found here: [NHS England » Ambulance Response Programme](https://www.england.nhs.uk/urgent-emergency-care/improving-ambulance-services/arp/).

1. **Primary care**

Sustained pressures continue across general practice with both workload and workforce pressures reported. The number of practices registering a level nine has fallen to three practices across three localities, though some have registered at this level for a while, due to ongoing issues. Across Greater Manchester, 93% of GP practices have so far signed up to the national GP Community Pharmacy Consultation Service, which aims to improve public access to general practice by referring patients who can safely be seen by a pharmacist to them instead. The new scheme aims to get those with ‘minor illnesses’ seen quicker at their local pharmacy and will also help with any urgent requests for (previously prescribed) medication.

Pharmacies have been at the heart of local communities during the pandemic and whilst the benefits of an enhanced pharmacy walk-in service are clear for patients, pharmacies too have been facing pressures not limited to staffing, managing multiple demands and managing expectations. Work is taking place with pharmacy and GP leads to improve ways of working to support patient expectations and engagement, consistency of messages and managing urgent requests.

Due to the pandemic, the provision of dental services had to adapt to take on board the risks associated with the virus and the proximity between a dentist and a patient’s airway. While dental practices are and have been delivering a full range of services to support people’s oral health, our dental teams are still facing challenges due to reduced capacity as a result of continued infection prevention control requirements. In January, NHS England committed an extra £50 million nationally to dentistry, with Greater Manchester receiving £3.1m, until the end of this month, to provide additional urgent care. This money has funded additional sessions, including during evenings, and weekends, to support access to a dentist for people who have not seen one in over two years.

The Greater Manchester dental team also set up the ‘Access Plus’ service. This operates as a referral service via the Greater Manchester Urgent Dental Care Service [information in public advice section]. Patients are either seen at the urgent care service or by an urgent dental centre, and if they require further treatment to stabilise their oral health, a referral is made to a dental practice on the scheme.

The Covid-19 booster vaccination programme continues, and we really urge people to come forward, to protect themselves, others and our health and care services. Staff and volunteers will answer any questions; and there will be no judgement if you come forward now for your first vaccine.

**Data**

The majority of GP practices (64.87%, 277) have submitted a rating of six indicating that they are facing increased demand. The number of practices rated at seven or eight, showing a significant or very significant increase in demand is at 22.48%, 96). 3 (0.7%) practices have shared a rating of 9 or above representing extreme demand and are receiving extra support. 427 practices in Greater Manchester are now using the pulse check.

1. **Adult social care and community services**

The situation in social care in Greater Manchester is gradually improving and stabilising, though the picture is still challenging. Staff recruitment campaigns remain active across Greater Manchester, and where needed agency staff are recruited to support in the short-term.

1. **Covid-19**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Number of Covid-19 cases occupying hospital beds in Greater Manchester | | | |
|  | | 23/02/2022 | 02/03/2022 | **09/03/2022** |
| Weekly admissions to hospitals for Covid-19 | | 106 | 112 | **113** |
| Weekly in-patient diagnoses for Covid-19 | | 194 | 195 | **259** |
| Number of HOU/ITU beds with Covid-19 patients on specified date | | 23 | 17 | **17** |
| Number of beds (excluding HOU/ITU) with Covid-19 patients on specified date | | 531 | 455 | **481** |

* The hospital admission figures are of people who had a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the 14 days prior to admission.
* The weekly inpatient diagnoses are patients who received a confirmed Covid-19 diagnosis after being admitted to hospital.
* Figures only include data for NHS acute trusts.
* The in-hospital data used is a subset of the data that is published monthly by the NHS [here](https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-workareas/covid19-hospital-actiivty.). It will not be made available at an organisational level.

1. **Vaccinations**

**Covid-19**

* 2,137,150 first dose and 1,993,330 second dose vaccinations have been given to Greater Manchester residents as of 10/03/22. 1,454,393 booster vaccinations have also been given.
* Uptake among 12–17-year-olds is c.54.1% across Greater Manchester.
* Booster uptake (in the eligible population who had second dose at least 90 days ago) is 77%.

**Under 18s** are also now eligible for the Booster dose. Following updated [JCVI Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/jcvi-issues-new-vaccination-advice-for-children-and-young-people), the NHS is now offering boosters to all 16 and 17 year olds, and 12-15 year olds who are in a clinical risk group or who are severely immunosuppressed or who are a household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed.

Sites can be found via the [NHS online walk-in finder](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/find-a-walk-in-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-site/) and appointments can still be booked via the [National Booking Service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/).

The NHS is offering coronavirus vaccines to **children aged 5 to 11 years**. Experts have advised that parents of all children aged 5 to 11 years should be offered the chance to have their child vaccinated. Vaccination is particularly important for children who have health conditions that put them at high risk from Covid-19 and those with a weakened immune system, as the benefits are greater. These children and those who live with someone who has a weakened immune system should already have been invited for vaccination.

Parents will receive information offering them the chance to make an appointment for their child to be vaccinated. These appointments will be available from April over the Easter holidays and further slots will become available later.

Find out more about the Covid-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11: [A guide for parents of children aged 5 to 11 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-resources-for-children-aged-5-to-11-years/a-guide-for-parents-of-children-aged-5-to-11-years)

**Vaccine as a Condition of Deployment**

On 31 January, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) paused the rollout of mandatory Covid-19 vaccination for health and social care staff.

Following a short consultation on the subject to get feedback, DHSC have now confirmed that health and social care staff will not need a Covid-19 vaccination in order to work with patients.

The legislation that required mandatory vaccination will be repealed (cancelled) from 15 March 2022. The legislation requiring Covid-19 vaccines for care home staff and anyone who does any work in a care home will be repealed at the same time.

As the requirement for care homes has already been rolled out, care homes are being advised to continue to require vaccination up to 15 March, so until this date, people may still be asked to prove their vaccination status.

We will continue to offer information and advice to support decision making around the choice to have a covid vaccination as it continues to be the best way to protect yourself, family, colleagues and patients from the virus.

1. **Tackling the waiting list backlog**

A range of initiatives are being used across Greater Manchester to reduce the number of people on waiting lists, these include the use of specialist orthopaedic hubs, community diagnostic centres, and ‘a walk-in-walk-out’ model of surgery – meaning where appropriate patients can be treated without the need to stay in hospital. We are also working on developing some new roles to bolster the workforce, such as physician associates.

Anyone waiting for treatment can find advice and support on the [Greater Manchester While You Wait website](file:///C:\Users\james.morrison\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\NYD67Z4L\whileyouwait.org.uk) (whileyouwait.org.uk). There they will find information and advice on how to manage their physical and mental wellbeing while waiting.

We would urge anyone with health concerns to continue to come forward for help and treatment in the usual way, using their local emergency department only for serious illnesses or injuries. A reminder that NHS 111 can help if you have an urgent medical problem and aren’t sure what to do. You can call 111 or visit [111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk).

1. **GMHSC Partnership statement**

**Sarah Price, interim chief officer of Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, said:**

“We continue to experience high levels of demand for care across Greater Manchester. Our health and care staff have shown exceptional resilience this winter and gone above and beyond to help people access the care they need.

“We have faced considerable pressure this past two years and we have to be upfront and honest that it will take time to recover; and that we have to balance competing demands and pressures, making the best decisions we can.

“Our priority is to bring down the overall waiting list, with particular emphasis on those who have waited the longest for treatment. A wide range of work is underway in Greater Manchester to reduce waiting times and provide support for patients who are waiting for operations, surgery, and hospital appointments.

“If you are waiting for treatment, you can find advice and support on the [While You Wait website](https://whileyouwait.org.uk/). And remember, everyone can help us make sure those with the most urgent need get the treatment they require by thinking about how to access NHS services. If it’s not a life-threatening emergency please use NHS 111, either by phone on online - their trained advisors will be able to direct you to the best place to get the hep you need.”

**Spokespeople available on request include but are not limited to:**

* Sarah Price, interim chief officer of Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership
* Dr Tom Tasker, GP and interim Greater Manchester Medical Executive chair
* Dr Chris Brookes, A&E consultant, joint interim Greater Manchester Medical Executive lead for acute care and local medical director
* Silas Nicholls, Greater Manchester Gold command chair and hospital chief executive

**Contacts for more information**

Please contact Jim Morrison, communications and engagement manager for Greater Manchester Health and Social care Partnership: james.morrison2@nhs.net

1. **Public advice and guidance**

**How to choose the right NHS service if you are unwell or injured**

Lots of illnesses can be **managed safely at home, or with a trip to a local pharmacist**. Your local pharmacist can give advice on lots of health issues and there’s no need for an appointment. Over 95% of community pharmacies now have a private consultation room from which they can offer advice to patients and a range of services. Almost 90% of the population has access to a community pharmacy within a [20-minute walk from their home](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy).

**GP practices are open** and have remained open throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. People often seetheir GP about minor short-term problems that have lasted longer than they expected or keep coming back; as well as support to manage long-term conditions. Many GPs are now working in a different way, asking patients to get in touch online initially (where possible) and operating a triage (order of treatment) system to ensure patients with more urgent concerns are prioritised, including for a face-to-face appointment. Online services don’t replace contacting your GP by phone rather they are another helpful, fast and convenient way to get in touch.

**Dental practices are open and providing services**. Practices are working hard to see as many patients as possible while ensuring that services are safe for the public. They can be contacted by phone or online for advice, or to book an appointment if needed. The Greater Manchester dental helpline (0333 332 3800) is available from 8am to 10pm every day, including weekends and Bank Holidays for those who need help urgently when their practice is closed, or do not have a regular dentist.

**People can seek help in the community to avoid a visit to hospital for accident and emergencies related to eyes**. A service has been set up so patients can access free urgent NHS care at some optometry practices locally. Some optometrists have equipment to take scans of the eye and others have had additional training to allow them to prescribe eye medications. Optometrists can share information with the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital to get an extra opinion when required. Sometimes patients may be sent onto the hospital if further care is needed. You can find more information here [Find a Practice - Search for your nearest participating optical practice (primaryeyecare.co.uk)](https://primaryeyecare.co.uk/find-a-practice/) or if you live in Salford, call 0161 2590595.

**The emergency department (A&E) is for life-threatening emergencies** including but not limited to severe chest pain, stroke, difficulty breathing, bleeding you can’t stop, possible broken bones, severe allergic reactions, severe burns, loss of consciousness and other major conditions. 7 trusts provide accident and emergency services across 10 sites. The NHS has a service finder on its website and a link is provided [here](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/services-near-you/).

**Anyone who has an urgent medical need and isn’t sure what to do can contact NHS 111 online (**<https://111.nhs.uk/>**) or call for free**. It’s available around the clock, seven days a week. Around half of those who call 111 speak to a clinician such as a GP, nurse, or pharmacist. The NHS 111 service can provide self-care advice, signpost to an appropriate local service, or book people in to be seen at their local pharmacy, GP practice or emergency department. NHS 111 can book you an appointment at your local A&E or emergency department. This means you will have an allocated time to attend hospital and be treated, so you don’t have to wait a long time to be seen and can also help services avoid becoming overcrowded.

**Attending appointments**

* In healthcare settings, we need to do all we can to help protect our staff and patients and reduce the risk of infection for those working in our services and those who need our care - therefore we are reminding people that staff, patients, and visitors will all be expected to continue to follow social distancing rules when visiting any care setting as well as using face coverings, mask and other personal protection equipment.
* NHS visitor guidance remains in place across all health services including hospitals, GP practices, dental practices, optometrists, and pharmacies to ensure patients and staff are protected.

**Advice for specific issues**

**RSV / bronchiolitis advice for parents/carers:**

Respiratory Syncytial Virus is a common seasonal winter virus which causes coughs and colds and is the most common cause of bronchiolitis in children aged under 2 years. Most case of bronchiolitis are not serious, but you should contact your GP or call NHS 111 if:

* You’re worried about your child
* Your child has taken less than two or three feeds, or they have had a dry nappy for 12 hours or more
* Your child had a persistent high temperature of 38°C or above
* Your child seems very tired or irritable

A public awareness campaign, [**Little Lungs Need Big Protection**](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/littlelungs/)**,**  informs parents and carers about the symptoms of bronchiolitis, and learn when and how to seek help.

**Childhood immunisations:**

* You'll usually be contacted by your GP surgery when your child is due for a routine vaccination. This could be a letter, text, phone call or email.
* Vaccines are given at eight weeks, 12 weeks, 16 weeks and 1 year then less frequently after this. Call your GP practice to make sure your child has any vaccinations they've missed, whatever the reason.
* Please make sure your child has had both doses of the MMR vaccine, so they are protected against measles, mumps and rubella.
* More information [here](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/booking-your-childs-vaccination-appointment/).

**How to book a Covid-19 vaccination:**

* Appointments can be booked online [here](https://www.nhs.uk/book-a-coronavirus-vaccination/do-you-have-an-nhs-number) or by calling 119 between 7am and 11pm
* More information can be found here: Book or manage your coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination - NHS (www.nhs.uk)
* Details of walk-in vaccination sites in Greater Manchester can be found [here](http://www.england.nhs.uk/north-west/grab-a-jab/).
* Useful information on the NHS Covid pass can be found [here.](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-covid-pass)

**How to register with a GP:**

* Anyone in England can register with a GP surgery. It's free to register
* You do not need proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number
* [How to register with a GP](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/)

**Mental Health**

* Mental Health support can be found at: <https://hub.gmhsc.org.uk/mental-health/covid-19-resources/>.
* **Greater Manchester crisis phone helplines** provide support 24 hours a day, seven days a week to people of all ages, including children, who need urgent mental health support. Our crisis lines aim to help people who need urgent mental health support because they are experiencing emotional distress and are struggling to cope.
* The crisis helplines also take calls from family members, carers or anyone who is concerned that someone they know is experiencing a mental health crisis.
* The crisis helpline phone numbers are as follows:
* **Bolton, Manchester, Salford, and Trafford:** 0800 953 0285 (freephone)
* **Bury, Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale, Oldham, Stockport, and Tameside & Glossop:** 0800 014 9995 (freephone)
* **Wigan:** 0800 051 3253 (freephone)

**Healthwatch**

* Healthwatch information and signposting services can support you to make choices about the health and care services you may need. This service will help you to find out what information is available and how to access the support you need to live well within your local area.
* Healthwatch can provide help over the phone, by email and in some circumstances face to face.
* Healthwatch also listens to feedback about patient experience so that they can help providers of health and social care improve services.
* You can find useful guides and contact details about your [Local Healthwatch here](https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/your-local-healthwatch/list).