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FRIDAY 26 NOVEMBER

**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. We have highlighted areas with added detail since last week.

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

1. **Urgent and emergency care**

The entire health system, both acute hospitals and community are under sustained pressure. Pressures are compounded by rising Covid-19 cases. Emergency departments continue to operate separate pathways of care for Covid and non-Covid patients which places additional strain on staffing and space available.

The NHS typically experiences higher pressure in winter due to the onset of cold weather, seasonal illnesses and weather-related accidents and injuries. However, in recent years, this additional pressure is now being felt year-round. Forecasting and planning action to mitigate these additional pressure points and sustained demand is a key part of the Partnership’s work.

A new public awareness campaign called [Little Lungs Need Big Protection](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/littlelungs/) has been launchedto inform parents and carers about the symptoms of bronchiolitis and learn when and how to seek help away from the emergency department. See more information [here](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/news/little-lungs-need-big-protection-know-the-signs-of-bronchiolitis-in-children-this-winter/).

The Partnership works as a whole system, including with North West Ambulance Service, to tackle a number of issues such as improvements in hospital handover times, better access to mental health support, admission avoidance and improvements to alternative care options and other services. Winter planning helps to ensure that everyone who needs treatment can get it and that the elective waiting list and backlog of appointments is worked through.

**To note:** A Greater Manchester wide survey to develop our understanding of why some people inappropriately access urgent and emergency care and how best to support them to access the right services is currently taking place. Everyone can share their views here: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PY5MEH/>.

**Data:**

* In October 2021, there were **65, 989** calls to 999 (September figures = 61, 256, which is a difference of + 4733).
* In October 2021, there were **36, 645** incidents resulting from calls to 999 (Sept figures = 35,699, which is a difference of + 946).
* Greater Manchester traditionally has the highest call activity in the North West due its size, with calls and incidents almost 40% of the total in comparison to Cheshire and Merseyside, and Cumbria and Lancashire.
* Greater Manchester has consistently achieved the 90th percentile response time target for category 1 calls to 999. Activity has risen since February 2021, with calls above pre-pandemic levels.
* Category 1 and Category 2 activity equals to over 70% of ambulance activity. North West Ambulance Service like other trusts prioritise Category 1 and Category 2 responses which can impact wait times for both Category 3 and Category 4.
* Performance for Category 2 is off target and varies week on week.
* Activity for Category 3 and Category 4 calls has reduced and is now under pre-pandemic levels. There has been a shift in acuity to higher category calls.
* There were **116,881** emergency department (A&E) attendances across Greater Manchester in September. This is 1% of England’s total emergency department attendances for that month.
* Performance against the four-hour target in September was 67.4% for Greater Manchester.
* 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. **Discharge**

Once people are admitted to hospital, their treatment plan, including details for discharge or transfer, will be developed and discussed with them individually. A discharge assessment will determine whether people need more care after leaving hospital. Each hospital has their own discharge policy and planning for discharge should include the patient and where appropriate, and with permission, family members/ carers.

Once people no longer need dedicated hospital care, being at home or in a community setting is the best place to continue to recover. However, it’s natural for families, carers and patients to sometimes perceive that hospital is still the right place to be – even when this is not the case.

**Data:**

* The number of people who are ready for discharge decreased from February to July from around 700 people to circa 550 people a day. However, this has been increasing since August with around 800 people ready to leave hospital in October, and higher numbers reported in November.
* The daily number of discharges have increased from around 800 to approx. 1,100 a day across Greater Manchester
* This number of discharges drops at the weekend, particularly on a Sunday.
1. **Primary care**

Pressures remain high across primary care. This rise in demand has partly been driven by ill health as a result of Covid-19, unmet health needs as a consequence of the pandemic, the backlog of elective care procedures and new demand created by fully opening a digital front door (general practice).

GP surgeries are working hard to cope with additional demand which includes as in previous years bringing in more staff in different professional roles to support people. Our bid to NHS England as part of the [Winter Access Fund](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/10/BW999-our-plan-for-improving-access-and-supporting-general-practice-oct-21.pdf) to support with pressures, better access for patients creating additional capacity is due to be signed off imminently.

**Data**

The majority of GP practices (61.24%, 256) 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 has remained static (27.75%, 116). 10 (2.39%) practices have shared a rating of 9 or above representing extreme demand and are receiving extra support. 418 practices in Greater Manchester are now using the pulse check.

1. **Mental health services**

High pressures are reported in mental health services.

Work is taking place between mental health trusts, North West Ambulance Service and Greater Manchester Police to look at improving integration between mental health helpline services.

Mental health support across Greater Manchester can be found at <https://hub.gmhsc.org.uk/mental-health/in-your-area/>

1. **Adult social care and community services**
* All care home workers and anyone entering a care home to provide a service are now required to be fully vaccinated, unless [medically exempt](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccination-of-people-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes-operational-guidance) or exempt via a very limited number of other reasons.
* We have worked closely with local authorities and care home providers to support take up rates. Across Greater Manchester, 4.2% (925) of care home staff have not had a first dose of the Covid-19 vaccination and 6.5% (1,429) are yet to have their second dose of the vaccination. The total figure does include a number of staff who are exempt from vaccination.
* The impact of mandatory vaccination on maintaining staffing numbers has been less than anticipated and we continue to work in partnership to ensure there are enough staff with the right skills to deliver high quality care. The efforts undertaken by local authorities and care home providers has been outstanding, and we have welcomed their support to increase uptake as the mandatory deadline approached.
* Pressures are building in home care services particularly due to increases in self-isolating staff and those leaving the profession for other sectors. This is having a knock-on impact on our ability to support those needing care coming home from hospital, as well as ensuring we can keep people in their own homes for as long as is appropriate.
1. **Covid-19**

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| --- | --- |
|  | Number of Covid-19 cases occupying hospital beds in Greater Manchester |
|  | 08/11/2021 | 15/11/2021 | **22/11/2021** |
| Weekly admissions to hospitals for Covid-19 | 151 | 113  | **116** |
| Weekly in-patient diagnoses for Covid-19 | 175 | 170 | **152** |
| Number of HOU/ITU beds with Covid-19 patients on specified date | 55 | 55 | **49** |
| Number of beds (excluding HOU/ITU) with Covid-19 patients on specified date | 412 | 362 | **362** |

* 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**

* 2,060,301 first dose and 1,864,096 second dose vaccinations have been given to Greater Manchester residents as of 23/11/21.
* Uptake among 12–15-year-olds is now c.35% across Greater Manchester - and 21 sites across the city-region are now providing a ‘complimentary out-of-school offer’ – which allows parents to book appointments if their child has not received a vaccination at school.
* Uptake within the 16-17-year-old programme is 52.8%. We would urge parents and carers to complete the consent forms and support their children’s health and education.

The [JCVI recommended](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-in-children-and-young-people-aged-16-to-17-years-jcvi-statement-november-2021/joint-committee-on-vaccination-and-immunisation-jcvi-advice-on-covid-19-vaccination-in-people-aged-16-to-17-years-15-november-2021) on Monday 15 November that those aged 16 and 17 should become eligible for a second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine from 12 weeks after their final primary dose. The NHS will contact people in this age group directly to let them know when it is their turn to get their second dose, and there are plans to open the National Booking Service to enable second dose bookings by 16–17-year-olds, no later than Monday 22 November.

* Booster uptake is 62.7% across all eligible cohorts.

Everyone aged over 40 and all those most at risk from Covid-19 should get a booster 6 months after their second dose.

Booster jabs can now be pre-booked one month in advance if it has been 152 days (5 months) since a second Covid-19 vaccine was given.

Booster jabs are available at some walk-in sites in Greater Manchester. 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/) or can be booked via the [National Booking Service](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/) (NBS). People aged 40-49 who are due a booster jab will be able to book though the NBS from 22 November.

* More information on how to get your Covid-19 jab can be found [here](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/news/flying-start-for-greater-manchester-covid-19-booster-programme/), broken down according to age, dose and booster.
* The Government has announcement that it will be compulsory for all frontline NHS staff to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 by the beginning of April. We are awaiting operational direction around the implementation of this announcement and will provide updates about the predicted impact on the NHS in Greater Manchester in future briefings.

**Flu**

The flu vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine. It's offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of getting seriously ill from flu. Flu symptoms can appear very quickly and include a high temperature about 38C, an aching body, feeling exhausted, sore throat and runny nose and loss of appetite. Children may also become less active and get ear pain.

Some people may be eligible for both the flu and the Covid-19 booster vaccines. If you are offered both vaccines, it's safe to have them at the same time. If you get flu and Covid-19 at the same time, research shows you're more likely to be seriously ill.

Around 35 million people in England are eligible for a free flu vaccine. For most people, the flu vaccine will be offered via GPs, midwives, and schools. Eligible patients can also book an appointment at a pharmacy.

Uptake of the flu vaccination in Greater Manchester is broadly in line with the national average. Though the percentage of 2-and-3-year-olds is slightly behind the national average.

Flu can be a very unpleasant illness for children. It can lead to serious problems, such as bronchitis and pneumonia. Parents of eligible children will receive an invite for vaccination and should speak to their GP if they have any concerns. More info can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/>.

In England the flu vaccine is being offered free to:

* All children aged two and three (nasal spray)
* All primary (reception to year 6) and secondary school pupils up to and including year 11
* People with certain long-term health conditions such as but not exclusively Diabetes, respiratory and heart conditions, chronic kidney or liver disease, neurological conditions such as motor neurone disease or Parkinson’s and those aged six months to under 50 years in other clinical risk groups
* Close contacts of people with weakened immune systems
* Carers including unpaid carers
* Pregnant women
* People in residential care
* People with a learning disability (a nasal spray can be offered as a reasonable adjustment)
* Those aged 50 years and over
* People who are very overweight – a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above
* Health and care staff
1. **Tackling the waiting list backlog**

Across Greater Manchester all NHS organisations are working together to make sure patients receive the care they need in the right place, as quickly as possible.

In Greater Manchester, outpatient activity continues to be above pre-Covid-19 levels and recovery of both day case and elective activity levels is around 92 and 95% of pre-Covid levels respectively. We are undertaking more first and follow-up operations than before the pandemic. The total number of patients waiting continues to incrementally increase though the number waiting over 52 weeks has stayed stable and makes up less than 8% of the total waiting list.

Realistically, long waiting lists for hospital treatment will be with us for some time, but we are working hard to clinically prioritise patients and see those who have been waiting the longest, and supporting everyone to stay as well as possible while they wait.

Anyone waiting for treatment and can find advice and support on the Greater Manchester While you Wait website ([www.whileyouwait.org.uk](http://www.whileyouwait.org.uk)) and the latest publicly available statistics can be found [here](https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/rtt-waiting-times/).

1. **GMHSC Partnership statement**

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

“Staff are working flat out to deliver the best possible care for patients in circumstances which remain challenging across acute and community services. When bed occupancy in our hospitals is over 90%, it doesn’t take much extra demand for staff and services to feel the pinch. We are working tirelessly to make sure people can get discharged safely, so we can support people who are acutely unwell arriving at the hospital front door.

“I know that sometimes it may have felt difficult to get in touch with your GP practice or that people have had to wait for an appointment, and I recognise that it can feel frustrating; but I want to reassure the public that practices are doing all they can to get through to and see as many patients as possible.

“Patient safety is our top priority. If anyone needs help, they should always seek it and consider using 111 for advice and support.”

**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
* Professor Jane Eddleston, consultant in intensive care medicine, joint interim Greater Manchester Medical Executive lead for acute care and local medical director
* Mohsan Ahmad, dentist and chair of Greater Manchester Local Dental Network
* Silas Nicholls, Greater Manchester Gold command chair and hospital chief executive
* Luvjit Kandula, pharmacist, Greater Manchester Local Pharmaceutical Committee
* Dr Cath Munro, co-chair of the Greater Manchester elective care reform and recovery board and GP clinical chair for Stockport CCG

**Contacts for more information**

For more information from the GMHSC Partnership team, please contact Jim Morrison, communications and engagement officer on james.morrison2@nhs.net or on 07973 833777

1. **Public advice and guidance**

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

There are high levels of demand across all services. We want to make sure that people choose well to get the help they need. The NHS is always there for anyone who needs it, but we are asking people to think about the best way they can get the help they need. Our staff are working incredibly hard to care for everyone who needs our help.

Greater Manchester has large numbers of people living with complex, chronic, or multiple conditions such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and dementia. People who live in Greater Manchester continue to experience higher levels of ill health and early death than other major cities and towns in England due to long-standing economic and social inequities[. Build back fairer](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Main-report-GM-report_final.pdf) in Greater Manchester report includes a framework setting out how to reduce inequalities.

**Looking after yourself** means knowing how to keep fit and healthy, maintaining good mental health, knowing how to manage self-treatable conditions and when to seek further help. Self-care is recommended when people have a minor condition which doesn’t need someone to be seen by a doctor.

Lots of illnesses can be **managed safely at home, or with a trip to a local pharmacist**. This includes things like nappy rash, hay fever, head lice, dandruff, oral thrush, teething and warts. 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. **Practice nurses** can also help with lots of different problems and most practice nurses carry out cervical screening (smear tests) and childhood immunisations (vaccinations).

Reasons to contact your GP may include concerns regarding ongoing conditions such as diabetes or asthma, ear discharge / pain, unexplained rashes and skin conditions, persistent stomach-ache, and any cancer symptoms such as a lump in your breast, changes in bowel habits, blood in your wee or poo, unexplained weight loss, moles that appear to change or cough that you’ve had for three weeks or more. GPs, or calling 111, can also help parents and carers if their child suddenly becomes unwell.

**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/).

Choosing well helps keep A&E free for emergencies and those who are critically ill. Anyone attending who is considered by a health professional to be a non-emergency will instead be supported to access an alternative, more appropriate service such as a pharmacist, minor injuries unit, community service such as nursing, long-term condition support and therapy services, or other primary care service.We want to ensure that people aren’t unnecessarily waiting for long periods of time in our emergency departments when they could have been seen and treated more appropriately and quicker elsewhere. This is something we have always done though it is becoming more frequent. This is to manage demand, access and service provision across Greater Manchester and ensure all hospitals are acting consistently and giving the same message to patients.

**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.

**Urgent and Emergency Care – winter pressures survey.** A Greater Manchester wide survey to develop our understanding of why some people inappropriately access urgent and emergency care and how best to support them to access the right services is currently taking place. Everyone can share their views here, <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PY5MEH/>

**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 new public awareness campaign was launched in Greater Manchester this week, [**Little Lungs Need Big Protection**](https://www.gmhsc.org.uk/littlelungs/)**,** to inform 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.
* More information [here](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/booking-your-childs-vaccination-appointment/).

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

* All adults are now eligible for Covid-19 vaccine.
* 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).