

# Providing excellent community and primary care in partnership with others

## Integrated Urgent Primary Care Service

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The Integrated Urgent Primary Care service offers urgent care services for residents and visitors of Tower Hamlets. The service is commissioned to provide various models of care bringing together local health services to the Tower Hamlets community. These models are continuously growing and evolving.

As providers of the service, the Care Group works dynamically to meet the growing requirements and needs of the population and the NHS Long Term Plan. The Tower Hamlets Urgent Treatment Centre is amongst the busiest in the country and the only UTC that sees patients referred via an A&E department. We currently treat, diagnose and discharge around 70% of Emergency Department presentations.

### What makes our IUPC service great?

The UTC is positively responsive to change and continues to go that extra mile to meet NHS demands and provide services to local groups at short notice, even prior to approved funding. This can evidence our passion for adequate service provision for the wellbeing of the community we serve.

The service is a co-located 24 hour UTC and work collaboratively with a Major Trauma Centre and shares pathways of care into the speciality teams clinics which is unique. The team has very good relationships with the speciality teams and they have provided teaching for both our nurses and GPs. The learning is taken out of the hospital and into Tower Hamlets practices. It is collaborative learning and GPs from local practices also work at the UTC and OOH.

Around 30% of patients seen at the UTC live out of Tower Hamlets. The fact that the service provides specialist care within the tertiary referral centre attracts patients into the area. The service is always open and accepts patients from the local general hospitals when they are on divert. This is testament to how much the service supports the community. Even beyond its geographical area.

The service is proud to have pioneered the home monitoring service within the borough for COVID-19 patients, helping those most at risk from infection to be safely supported at home through remote self-monitoring of their oxygen saturation levels.



### What do our residents/clinicians say?

An account from a clinician about our Virtual Ward

"A patient had been in hospital with severe pneumonia and wanted to get home for Christmas. Our GP went that extra mile and was able to review them on the ward and coordinate discharge in the community. They dedicated time for frequent checks and support to ensure that the patient was safe and care continued."

An account from a clinician about our NHS 111 Direct Bookings

"I consulted with a patient who was taking a drug for narcolepsy at the weekend which was difficult to source in the UK due to supply problems. I was not able to prescribe it electronically due to it being a schedule 4 drug. The patient was very distressed and worried about withdrawal symptoms as he had been taking it for 27 years. As an Advance Nurse Practitioner I was able to coordinate an urgent neurology review at a specialist centre at St Thomas Hospital where they were happy to provide alternative therapy."

During a peer review visit in May, this is what they said about us:

### How do we support primary care?

#### Single Point of Access (SPA)

This service provides one point of contact for referrals and access into the community health teams such as district nurses, Rapid Response Team and physiotherapy, to name a few. The service is available 24/7 with the objective being to reduce the number of patients who are admitted into hospital. We refer on average 1,700 patient per month.

#### Termination of Pregnancy

(TOPS) service is a referral process for those who require abortion care. On average, there 150 referrals processed monthly.

#### Urgent Treatment Centre

This is a service provided on behalf of Royal London Hospital to deliver patient care that is urgent but not life threatening. The UTC can order urgent investigations like bloods and imaging inline with the NHS Long Term Plan for Emergency and Urgent Care. Minor ailments and injuries are also within the remit of the UTC.

#### Out of Hours

The OOH service is offered from Clinic 1 within the Royal London Hospital. Clinicians are onsite and also offer a home visiting service to patients who are unable to attend in person. This service ensures continuity of care when GP surgeries are closed for Tower Hamlets residents. The Service is operational seven days a week 6.30pm to 8am Monday-Thursday and a 24-hour service from 6.30pm on a Friday to Monday morning at 8am. During bank holidays the service is also available around the clock. All referrals are via 111. The service typically sees 1,600 patients per month with 24% reaching out to us from out of area.

#### 111 Direct bookings

This is a remote provision to support patients who require on the day medical attention. All patients are initially triaged with a telephone assessment by a UTC clinician via 111. The UTC offer an initial consultation to assess the patients' needs and decides on the best treatment. This could mean a telephone diagnosis, a face to face at the UTC or on rare occasions, redirected to a more suitable healthcare provider such as Dentist, Pharmacy or Sexual Health.

#### Virtual Ward

This is a "hospital at home" service and was introduced to shorten a patient's length of stay at the Royal London Hospital. Patients continue to be monitored and cared for by our doctors to free up beds within the hospital wards. The elderly are our largest patient base for this service as it allows support and comfort within familiar surroundings.

### Population served

In Tower Hamlets, the population size has increased by 22.1%, from around 254,100 in 2011 to 310,300 in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England which is 6.6%. The Urgent Treatment Centre has seen almost 100,000 patients in the last year. This amounts to one third of the local population.