

Cheviot Medical Patient Group – Wooler



Question and Answer Session 14th November 2015

**NEAS (North East Ambulance Service) Attendees: Amanda Tonkinson,
111/999 Contact Centre Section Manager and Karl Walker, 111/999 Call
Taker**

1. When did 111 service begin.

The 111 service began as a Single Point of Access (SPA) pilot in County Durham and Darlington in 2008-2009. Once successfully completed, the pilot evolved into the 111 service which NEAS successfully tendered for and have provided for the North East of England ever since.

2. What medical training do 111 staff receive.

Our Call takers receive in-depth 6 weeks full time training in using the NHS Pathways assessment system which has been developed and is maintained by NHS clinicians including GPs, specialists, dentists, paramedics and nurses. The NHS Pathways assessment tool is additionally governed and regularly reviewed by the UK's Medical Royal Colleges.

Our call takers are supported 24/7 by onsite and remote clinicians for any cases that require further investigation or clinical intervention.

We have a robust unsafe call process in place which helps us to quickly identify, address and learn from any concerning patient experiences. We additionally ensure that call quality in general is maintained at a good standard via a structured Quality Assurance framework that includes at least 4 calls are audited for each call taker each month.

3. Where are our nearest walk in centers and are they 24 hr.

Alnwick Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) – No appointment required, 24/7. 15.5 miles

Berwick Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) – No appointment required, 24/7. 15.6 miles

Wansbeck Walk In Centre (WIC) – No appointment required, 24/7. 31.1 miles

The above services additionally offer evening/weekend GP appointments via 111

4. How many calls have there been in the North of the County in the last year and do you have any information on patient outcomes/satisfaction

Wooler January 2015 to date: 405 calls into 999

361 calls into 111



We collect Patient feedback every month from users of our 111 and 999 services with September headlines as follows:

Emergency Care – 999

92.1% of patients are likely to recommend us to friends and family

111 Service

91.8% of patients are likely to recommend us to friends and family

Top positive themes: Quality of staff/professionalism, Quality of Care/Service, Timeliness and access to care

5. What is the average time between contacting 111 and the problem being dealt with.

Our Service level agreements are: call answered in 60 seconds via 111 and within 5 seconds via 999. We consistently achieve results well above the national average.

Average Handling Time:

999 - 320 to 340 seconds

111 - 480 to 540 seconds

We have the following emergency/ambulance resources available in the Wooler area:

- A Community paramedic at Wooler
- A 24/7 Ambulance vehicle at Berwick
- A second vehicle available between 10:00 and 22:00 at Berwick
- A 24/7 Ambulance vehicle at Belford
- First Responders at Wooler and Berwick
- PAD sites at Brewery Road and the Glendale Middle School in Wooler

It is worth mentioning that a significant proportion of our on the road resources support patients who have been recommended ambulance travel into hospital or other care centres via ambulance for non-emergency reasons. While our absolute emphasis is on ensuring patient safety, we will explore other transport options such as taxis, own transport etc with patients if we have concluded that it is clinically safe to do so.

6. Are there any particular issues to 111 calls made at the weekend in the North of the County.

No – the MIU's/WIC's/Urgent Care Centre's listed above offer support/appointments around the clock. While Ambulance response times may be stretched during busy periods, this is consistently managed across the region.

7. Will 111 continue in its present form.

The 111 service is constantly evolving in response to patient requirements, seasonality and other trends. Recent enhancements to the service we offer include:

GP In Hours appointment bookings

Telehealth – Liaison service between COPD patients and GPs (Pilot)

GP Advice service including home visits and out of hours appointment bookings (NDUC provide the service for Wooler)

8. Being near the Scottish Border, some patients would want to go to Borders General, which Ambulance Service should we ask for.



Your call for both 111 and 999 (via a BT operator) is routed according to your location at the time of the call – callers ringing from Scotland will then be supported by the Scottish Ambulance Service whereas callers in England will receive help from NEAS.

NEAS transport patients to NSECH, the Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Cramlington (Wansbec hospital in Ashington no longer offers A&E services) whereas Scottish Ambulance will direct patients to Borders General. The only exception would be unless specifically requested otherwise eg: for a doctor from another hospital requesting to see a named patient with a specific care plan.

Callers are unfortunately not able to choose which service they would prefer to use if requesting help via 111/999 however may self-present at any hospital they choose.

Borders General Hospital – 38 miles from Wooler
NSECH – 40 miles from Wooler