

The image shows the exterior of a modern hospital building. The main part of the building has a grey, perforated metal facade. Large, white, three-dimensional letters spell out 'EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT' across the facade. To the right, there is a large, solid red section of the building. A bright green curved graphic element is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

Urgent and Emergency Care

Croydon residents' journey and experience
Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
24 January 2023

healthwatch
Croydon

About the project

- To support the transformation programme for Croydon in this area, Healthwatch Croydon were invited to provide relevant patient and resident insight on the choice of pathways and their experience of using the urgent and emergency care.
- This report presents the findings of the Urgent and Emergency Care Survey undertaken between 26 and 31 July 2021. We received 1038 completed responses via a text survey.
- The results were first shared at the key transformation meetings in September 2021 and then have been discussed by providers and commissioners at key meetings over the past year informing decisions around all aspects of the Urgent and Emergency Care Pathway.
- Further analysis of the data took place through 2022 and was shared in key meetings before the report was published in December 2022.

What we heard

- **52%** made either GP visit or NHS111 their first choice.
- **40%** who chose 999 or A&E first felt they needed to be seen quickly or had a serious injury; **15%** had difficulty seeing a GP.
- **74%** got seen within two contacts but others have more complex journeys.
- Different age groups choose specific services first time.
- Many understand the difference between emergency care and urgent care, but not that between a GP and GP Hub.
- Overall satisfaction was **62%** but there was significant variance by age, gender and ethnicity.

Our recommendations

- Fully integrate pharmacies and GP Hubs into the pathway and support with positive communications.
- Define NHS111 as the single reliable point of access to direct care to other services and give it capacity to do the job it needs to do.
- Learn more about how condition and situation may affect choice and reflect that in the pathway.
- Understand these services from the user perspective.
- Explore more the differences in satisfaction based on gender, age, ethnicity, and disability.
- Consider some suggested improvements from patients.*

* When we asked patients what could be improved, many did say they had a good experience, but there were still issues concerning NHS111, communication, care and safety, empathy, GP access, listening, prioritisation, process and waiting times.

Impact and influence

“The Croydon Urgent Care team have found the survey and subsequent analysis very useful in understanding patients' experiences and pathways in the Croydon Urgent Care system.

“We learnt that patients who contacted their GP or 111 had a lower number of touchpoints before they were treated. The survey findings supported plans to mobilise an additional Urgent Care Service at the Croydon University Hospital site which was mobilised last week (December 2022).

“The Urgent Care team have done considerable amount of work with NHS 111, therefore, we are very encouraged that patients value NHS 111 and that it is key in reducing the number of services accessed before receiving treatment. There are findings which suggest that more could be done to ensure equality of experience and we will feed this back to system partners in the coming weeks, we will also work hard to improve clarity on what services should be accessed and when.”

Questions

