A&E attendances fall following GP minor injuries service launch

Fewer South Gloucestershire residents are going to A&E for minor injuries since the area’s new GP-based minor injuries service launched, new figures suggest.

Patient data for April to September 2016 show that the number of local people going to A&E with minor injuries such as cuts, sprains and broken bones was 0.5% lower than in the same period in 2015.

The slight decline – in contrast to a 4.5% increase in A&E attendance rates nationally – coincides with the launch of the new GP practice-based minor injuries service in April 2016.

In total, 22,805 South Gloucestershire residents attended A&E for minor injuries between April and September 2016, compared with 22,924 in 2015.

CCG clinical lead for urgent care and local GP, Dr Ann Sephton, said: “One of the primary aims of the GP minor injuries service was to offer people a convenient local alternative to A&E for less serious conditions that can be treated outside hospital.

“This slight decline in local A&E attendances, although very modest, does suggest quite strongly that people may be opting for the minor injuries service instead of A&E and is quite remarkable when we consider that nationally the overall trend for A&E attendances is upwards.

“Obviously these figures only relate to the first six months of the service, but the evidence so far is very promising.”

Feedback on the service has been overwhelmingly positive with many patients indicating that they have used the service instead of going to A&E.

Among the patients using the service since it was launched, 65% said they would have gone to A&E if it had not been there.

The service is believed to be one of the first of its kind in the country and offers patients a comprehensive range of treatments for minor injuries, delivered by practice nurses with GP support.

The service is available at all GP practices in South Gloucestershire during normal practice hours and complements the Minor Injuries Unit provided at Yate Westgate Centre.

For more information see: www.southgloucestershire.nhs.uk/minorinjuriesservice.
New chief officer for three CCGs
Julia Ross has been appointed as the new Chief Officer for the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Currently Chief Executive of North West Surrey CCG, Julia will lead the three CCGs as they continue to implement plans for a single commissioning ‘voice’ for the BNSSG area. She is expected to take up her new post from June.

Julia said: “I am delighted to be joining the BNSSG CCGs at a key point in their development as they move towards a shared commissioning approach for the local area.

“Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire have a vibrant and dynamic health and care system and I look forward to working with local health and care leaders, patients and the public to deliver the high-quality, sustainable services that local people need, both now and in the future.”

Clinical chair of South Gloucestershire CCG, Dr Jonathan Hayes, said: “The single chief officer role is an important step forward in the plans we announced last year and will help to ensure the continued strong leadership of commissioning within our collective area, while also supporting greater use of our shared resources.”

At North West Surrey, Julia set up the new CCG, bringing three GP localities together into a single organisation.

As senior responsible officer for Surrey Heartlands Sustainability and Transformation Plan, she also built a coalition of 11 organisations across the Health and Local Authority sectors and produced a shared plan with the full support of member organisations.

Prior to this, Julia was Associate Director, Commissioner Development (East) for NHS South of England on a full-time secondment basis from January 2011 to August 2012.

She was responsible for core elements of commissioning delivery including leadership of the planning round and oversight of service reconfiguration across the region.

Commissioning priorities for 2017-2019
We are continuing to work with Bristol and North Somerset CCGs on our shared commissioning priorities for 2017-19.

Following initial consultation, we presented a summary of our commissioning intentions to the CCGs’ governing bodies in January and we’re now developing detailed plans for the next two years.


Over this period our focus will be on delivering the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Sustainability and Transformation Plan. Our commissioning priorities set out our shared strategic aims of:

- transforming care to provide better outcomes and value for money
- ensuring a financially sustainable health and care system and tackling the CCGs’ financial deficit
- promoting better health through prevention and self-care
- improving access to good-quality services.
Hundreds of local people to get help to tackle rising diabetes levels

South Gloucestershire is one of 13 areas across the country that has been selected to take part in the second wave of the Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme – the world’s first nationwide programme with the aim of stopping people developing type 2 diabetes.

The programme aims to support 100,000 people a year across the whole country by 2020 by offering tailored, personalised help to reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes.

Patients who are at risk will be invited to attend a group session locally.

Sessions will include education on healthy eating and lifestyle, help to lose weight and bespoke physical exercise programmes, all of which have been proven to reduce the risk of developing the disease.

In the meantime, anyone worried about the risk of diabetes and what they can do to reduce their risk can find out more at NHS Choices, which includes a tool to help people assess their own level of risk.

For more information about diabetes care see: www.nhs.uk

Hundreds of people at risk of Type 2 diabetes in South Gloucestershire will be offered tailored support to avoid the potentially life-threatening condition.

The area has been chosen to take part in a pioneering national NHS programme, due to start in April, which will see those at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes offered education and lifestyle coaching to reduce this risk.

Type 2 diabetes can cause serious health issues such as kidney disease, nerve damage, eyesight problems, heart disease and strokes.

Such conditions could ultimately lead to kidney failure, amputations, blindness and even death.

It is estimated that diabetes costs the NHS around £10 billion a year, which is 10% of the total NHS budget.

CCG Clinical Lead for Long Term Conditions, Dr Jon Evans, said: “We know from the evidence that people who are supported to make lifestyle changes can dramatically reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

We are really pleased to be working up plans with NHS England to bring the NHS Diabetes prevention programme to the area for next summer.

“The organisations responsible for health care locally are keen to focus on preventative measures to help people live well and avoid diabetes and other life-limiting conditions wherever possible.

“This approach makes sense for the health system, which continues to face increasing financial pressures, but more importantly it is good for the health of local people.”

South Gloucestershire is one of 13 areas across the country that has been selected to take part in the second wave of the Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme – the world’s first nationwide programme with the aim of stopping people developing type 2 diabetes.

The programme aims to support 100,000 people a year across the whole country by 2020 by offering tailored, personalised help to reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes.

Patients who are at risk will be invited to attend a group session locally.

Sessions will include education on healthy eating and lifestyle, help to lose weight and bespoke physical exercise programmes, all of which have been proven to reduce the risk of developing the disease.

In the meantime, anyone worried about the risk of diabetes and what they can do to reduce their risk can find out more at NHS Choices, which includes a tool to help people assess their own level of risk.

For more information about diabetes care see: www.nhs.uk
The contract for children’s and young people’s counselling services for Bristol and South Gloucestershire has been awarded to Bristol-based, young people’s mental health charity ‘Off The Record’.

Clinical Lead for Children and Maternity and Named GP for Safeguarding Children, Dr Kate Mansfield, said: “We are delighted to award the contract to the committed, highly experienced local charity Off The Record. We recognise the fantastic work that Off The Record do in the local community which can be seen from the ongoing positive feedback of the young people in their care.

“Their clear model of care and flexible access across geographical areas will be hugely valuable to the children and young people of Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Off The Record also showed strong evidence and commitment to working with other services such as child and adult mental health services, which is key to ensuring children get the support they need, when they need it.”

Off The Record will deliver the counselling services as a subcontract to the main Children’s Community Health Services contract provided by Sirona care and health.

They will be working closely with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership who provide child and adolescent mental health services to provide an integrated care service.

The contract will begin in April 2017 in line with the main Community Children’s Health Services contract.

Sirona care & health was awarded the contract for children’s community health services in Bristol and South Gloucestershire in December 2016. Sirona is already providing services alongside other partners as part of an interim contract until the new contract starts.
New contracts for patient transport services

Contracts for patient transport services in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG) have been awarded to E-Zec Medical Transport. V Cars Streamline Black and White Taxis will provide renal patient transport services as part of the new arrangements.

The new contracts were awarded following consultation with patients and a competitive tender process carried out by the BNSSG CCGs and will be effective from 1 April 2017.

The patient transport service provides planned, non-emergency transport to and from NHS hospitals and clinics, including outpatient departments, inter-hospital transfers, renal dialysis and oncology centres.

It is only available for patients with certain medical conditions and does not provide transport to primary care services such as GP practices.

Commissioners from the three CCGs are now working with the new providers to ensure a seamless transfer of services for patients and staff from the current provider South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, which did not bid for the new contract.

Staff currently working in the patient transport service will be given the opportunity to transfer their employment to the new provider, under their current terms and conditions.

South Gloucestershire CCG chief financial officer, Sharon Kingscott, said: “E-Zec Transport is an experienced provider of patient transport services and has proposed service improvements and value for money throughout the procurement process. We will be working with the new provider to ensure a smooth transfer of services for patients.

“V Cars Streamline Black and White Taxis has a strong track record in providing the transport service for renal patients.”

Learning disability service’s health and wellbeing programme

Sirona’s Learning Disability Service in South Gloucestershire is running a special health and wellbeing programme.

Referrals are made from both within and outside of the team as well as being open to self-referral with the aim of promoting and maintaining good health for service users.

Sarah Denton, Sirona Hydrotherapy Pool Manager, said: “The main aim is to offer information on healthy eating and access to exercise for those who may need some extra guidance. This is on top of dietetic or physiotherapy advice for those who need the specialist intervention.”

“We follow this up with a refresher 12 week course to repeat and expand on the information given. The service users can be weighed if they choose but the emphasis is more on keeping fit than weight loss.

“We also offer a weekly therapeutic fitness group at our hydrotherapy pool where service users who have been referred for physiotherapy can attend to maintain their strength, mobility and exercise tolerance that was achieved whilst undergoing their initial physiotherapy intervention.”

The initiative began in April and features a 12 week, one-hour session, programme with a maximum of four people per group.

To refer to the service, please contact: Sarah Denton, Hydrotherapy Unit Manager, South Glos CLDT, Sirona care & health email: Sarah.Denton@sirona-cic.org.uk
South Gloucestershire’s community healthcare provider Sirona care & health has joined forces with the national company, Appello, to run a pilot project to use technology to support people at home following a spell in hospital.

The initiative is run from Elgar Ward at Southmead Hospital, and provides free, for six weeks, a range of technology to help keep people safe once they are medically well to go home. This includes activity sensors, wrist-worn fall detectors and personal alarms.

Non-permanent sensors are installed in an individual’s home that are linked to a co-ordination centre which alerts Appello if someone falls or isn’t seen to be moving around the home when they would usually do so. Appello staff can then call an agreed contact such as a neighbour or family member or request professional help.

This round-the-clock support system will also provide valuable information about an individual’s daily living to enable professionals, carers and family members to be more informed about the person’s needs and to work together to develop a truly personalised care plan.

An example might be where a sensor identifies that someone is spending longer in the kitchen; this could mean that they are in need of assistance at meal-times and this can be discussed with them.

Appello already provide this technology in a number of centres across the UK to more than 160,000 people but this is the first time it has been linked directly with people being discharged from hospital.

Julie Sharma, Sirona’s Business Development Lead who is overseeing the pilot, said: “This is a great example of where the use of technology can support people to return home from hospital quicker and be kept safe.

“The information generated will not only help the individual but also help our teams to reduce the risk of unplanned admission to hospital and/or support them to come home earlier if they do need to spend time in hospital.”

Cathy Daffada, Sirona’s Lead for Patient Flow and Discharge, said: “We know people recover better at home and in familiar surroundings and this system gives peace of mind for individuals and their loved ones that there is support in place and it also allows us to provide them with more personalised care based on a detailed understanding of their needs.”

After six weeks, if an individual wants to continue with the service, they can purchase or rent some or all of the equipment from Appello.
Take up the challenge for No Smoking Day

Time to stop smoking?

No Smoking Day is 8 March 2017

The CCG and South Gloucestershire Council are urging people who smoke to kick the habit as part of National No Smoking Day.

Despite local and national decreases in smoking, it is estimated that around 26,000 adults in South Gloucestershire still smoke, spending a staggering £47 million on tobacco each year.

South Gloucestershire Council’s Adults, Housing and Public Health lead member, Cllr. Ben Stokes, said: “If you smoke, the single best thing you can do for your health is to quit. Even if you have been smoking for many years, the health benefits will start as soon as you stop.

“We with all the support available to help you stop smoking, there has never been a better time to kick the habit. So why not take up the challenge to improve your health and save some money on No Smoking Day?”

Macmillan Cancer Lead at South Gloucestershire CCG, Dr Alison Wint, said: “One in two people who smoke will die as a result of illnesses related to smoking and smoking is also associated with a number of conditions which can cause disability such coronary heart disease, stroke, heart attacks, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and multiple types of cancer.

“People are also more likely to smoke in deprived areas with lower incomes and smoking can play a big role in increasing the financial burden in these communities.”

For smokers who would like to quit, the NHS Smokefree website has wealth of resources to help you ditch cigarettes for good. South Gloucestershire Council’s Smokefree service is also hosting group sessions as part of No Smoking Day to give you the chance to join other people trying to quit.

You can contact the service on 01454 865 502, email: smokefree@southglos.gov.uk and book an appointment.

Those who take up the challenge can also join in on Twitter using #NoSmokingDay.

Plan ahead for the bank holiday

- Pick up repeat prescriptions while pharmacies are open.
- If you need to see your GP before the bank holiday, book now.
- Be prepared for minor ailments - keep a well-stocked home medicine cabinet.

We’re encouraging people to plan ahead for their healthcare needs over the long Easter weekend (14-17 April), as part of our ongoing Right Care, First Time campaign.

Many GP practices will be closed over the weekend and this can lead to an increase in the number of people using A&E for minor conditions, increasing pressure on busy services.

To help relieve the pressure, we’re reminding people of the wide range of local services that will continue to be open and available throughout the bank holiday weekend – such as NHS 111, emergency pharmacists, local minor injuries and urgent care units and the out-of-hours GP.

We’re also encouraging people to take steps to look after their own health needs by ensuring, for example, that if they have a repeat prescription, they have enough medication to last the weekend.

Information about services, including emergency pharmacies open over the Easter weekend, is available on our website.

We’re encouraging people to plan ahead for the bank holiday and this can lead to an increase in the number of people using A&E for minor conditions, increasing pressure on busy services.

We’re reminding people of the wide range of local services that will continue to be open and available throughout the bank holiday weekend – such as NHS 111, emergency pharmacists, local minor injuries and urgent care units and the out-of-hours GP.

We’re also encouraging people to take steps to look after their own health needs by ensuring, for example, that if they have a repeat prescription, they have enough medication to last the weekend.

Information about services, including emergency pharmacies open over the Easter weekend, is available on our website.
Have your say

Gluten free food prescribing

We’re asking for people’s views on gluten-free (GF) food prescribing as part of a consultation running until 17 March.

Comments are especially welcome from people who have coeliac disease and currently receive GF food on prescription.

Like other CCGs, we pay for GF foods on prescription for people diagnosed with coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis, a skin condition linked to coeliac disease. The prescriptions cost us about £175,000 per year.

GF food prescribing was introduced 40 years ago at a time when the foods were expensive and hard to find. These days, however, GF foods are widely available in supermarkets at lower costs than that paid by the NHS through the prescription system.

With demand for healthcare rising and growing pressure on NHS budgets, our preferred option is to stop prescribing GF foods to people aged over 18 and offer a limited list of ‘staple’ foods such as bread and pasta to people aged under 18.

Head of medicines management at South Gloucestershire CCG, Mel Green, said: “We believe that modern improvements in gluten free options in supermarkets have made it possible to eat a gluten free diet without foods being specially prescribed them on the NHS.

“Our preferred option would be to stop prescribing to people aged over 18, while offering a limited list of staple foods to people aged under 18.

“We would continue to provide support and advice to patients with coeliac disease through our GP practices, community dieticians and gastroenterology departments in local hospitals.

“No decisions have been taken yet and we want to hear people’s views before we approve any changes, whether they live with coeliac disease or not.”

The consultation can be found by visiting the GF consultation page on the ‘Get Involved’ section of the South Gloucestershire CCG website. Feedback will be used to inform decisions on the services which will be provided across South Gloucestershire and North Somerset for patients with coeliac disease.

Key dates this quarter

- 29 March 2017- Governing Body meeting at Emersons Green Village Hall (1-3pm)
- 12 April 2017 – Dementia roadshow at Hanham Community Centre (2-4pm)
- 18 April 2017- Macular degeneration roadshow at UBHT Education Centre (11am-3pm)
- 26 April 2017- Governing Body meeting at Emersons Green Village Hall (1-3pm)
- 24 May 2017- Governing Body meeting at Emersons Green Village Hall (1-3pm)

See our website for further events and updates at www.southgloucestershireccg.nhs.uk/events