
Getting NHS Help Fast

Public Health and Health Integration Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 9th September 2025

Useful information

■ Ward(s) affected: City-wide

■ Report authors: Yasmin Sidyot, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB Deputy Chief Operating Officer – Integration and Transformation

Sarah Smith, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB Head of Emergency Care

Joanne Ryder, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB Senior Engagement and Insights Lead

■ Author contact details: yasmin.sidyot@nhs.net

sarah.smith85@nhs.net

Joanne.ryder1@nhs.net

■ Report version number: V1

1. Summary

1.1 The LLR ICB want to create a service that's easier to use, fairer for everyone, and makes the best use of NHS resources. That means:

- A simpler system where people only need to remember two main contact points: their GP practice and NHS 111
- A consistent offer across the city, including evening and weekend GP appointments
- Reducing unnecessary steps so people spend less time navigating the system and more time getting the care they need

1.1. In Leicester City, same day appointments are available in GP practices, pharmacies and urgent treatment centres. Urgent same-day needs may be seen at a city healthcare hub which are offered at Belgrave, Saffron and Westcotes Health Centres. These are known as 'extended access' appointments.

1.2. We are making changes which will:

- Increase the number of locations across Leicester
- Make appointments face to face, 5 minutes longer and with a GP rather than a mix of different professionals
- The new service will offer fewer GP appointments but introduce a broader variety of appointments across pharmacies, GP surgeries and health centres, meaning you will be directed to help within your own area where possible across weekdays and weekends.

The plan is to increase Pharmacy First to deliver 210,000 appointments across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

1.4 The key messages for our engagement are given in 2 simple steps:

Step 1: Try Self Care First

Step 2: Need more help? If it's more serious, or Step 1 didn't work:

- Contact your GP practice
- Or call NHS 111 (if your GP practice is closed)

1.5 We are focusing engagement, raising awareness and education through:

- collaboration with voluntary and community organisations, Leicester City Council and Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire, focusing on groups with protected characteristics (age, race, disability, etc.)
- Practical workshops and interactive sessions rather than distributing printed materials - First Aid, CPR/ Self-care
- Community groups working consistently and constantly in partnership with local GP's and PCNs to amplify key messages and signposting
- Gathering patient feedback through a questionnaire on understanding of services, increase in same-day access sites and GP service improvements

1.6 The feedback gathered from the engagement, the questionnaire, and the patient experiences of the new service from October 2025 will be independently evaluated and analysed.

The findings will be used to make any necessary changes /improvements to the service (before April 2026).

A report of findings will be published early next year setting out the main themes from the feedback and if changes are made, a further report will detail how we have used the information to inform our decisions.

Any other feedback we receive will help inform and influence future services.

2. Recommended actions / decision

Scrutiny Commission is asked to note:

- 2.1. The plans to create a service that's easier to use, fairer for everyone, and makes the best use of NHS resources.
- 2.2. The changes will:
- 2.3. Increase the number of locations across Leicester.
- 2.4. Make appointments face to face, 5 minutes longer and with a GP rather than a mix of different professionals.
- 2.5. The new service will offer fewer GP appointments but introduce a broader variety of appointments across pharmacies, GP surgeries and health centres, meaning you will be directed to help within your own area where possible across weekdays and weekends. The plan is to increase Pharmacy First to deliver 210,000 appointments across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
- 2.6. The key messages for our engagement are given in 2 simple steps:

Step 1: Try Self Care First

Step 2: Need more help? If it's more serious, or Step 1 didn't work:

Contact your GP practice

Or call NHS 111 (if your GP practice is closed)

Scrutiny Commission is asked to support:

- 2.7. The extensive plans to engage with patients, members of the public and stakeholders on the same day services for Leicester City as well as the wider engagement on how to Get NHS Help Fast.