

13 March 2025

Healthwatch Rutland (HWR) response to the consultation on same-day treatment services in Rutland

Over the period of the consultation we have taken the opportunity at planned outreach events and meetings to engage with people on the proposals for service re-organisation. As the events were already in the HWR calendar, it should be understood that they are not representative of all communities. The events included a Parkinsons' support group, carers' support group and sight impairment support group.

In total we heard from 50 people and outlined the proposals to a further 48, encouraging them to complete a consultation questionnaire.

Section 1: Themes

The themes from this outreach have been collated with feedback received organically into the HWR office, from our own volunteers and in one case from our social media feed.

Combining the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) and Urgent Care Centre (UCC) services into a single Minor Illness and Minor Injuries (MIMI) service:

People are pleased to see that this is proposed. They consider that it will reduce public confusion about what on-the-day services are offered and when.

'I do think it would be simpler to make it one service available seven days a week as the present system appears to cause a great deal of confusion.'

Revised opening hours:

1. There is concern that there has been a service reduction of 19 hours per week from 75 to 56 hours
2. The proposed opening hours of 1pm to 9pm means that there is no minor injury cover in Rutland in the mornings nor minor injury and urgent care on weekend mornings. This also raises concerns that GP cover for urgent care in the mornings might not be able to cope with demand.

'If we have to rely on GP practices in the mornings, then they have to have appointments to give people.'

'Why are the number of hours covered going down? You can't get a GP appointment urgently in the morning or anytime' (examples given of waiting for 3 days for 'urgent' and 10 weeks for non-urgent appointments).

'However, I do wonder if it should be open earlier in the day, perhaps from mid-morning to provide all day coverage, just a thought'

X ray facilities

There is a lot of concern that the X-ray facilities will only be available for two days a week.

'It's not acceptable to have to drive to Melton or Stamford or Leicester/shire for an Xray'

'I am told that the 'footfall' for x-ray does not warrant supplying the resources for more than two days. However, if the x-ray facility hours of opening are so unreliable, as they have been, it's inevitable that the footfall will be low.'

'The clinical lead [at the MIU] said it is impossible to run a proper minor injuries clinic without an x-ray facility running alongside.'

'In the meantime, we will all have to arrange to fall and break our bones on just those two days of the week. I can sum it up in one word - ridiculous!'

'... only having x-ray on 2 specific days is basically saying "don't break anything on the other days". '

NHS 111

Many have voiced concerns that NHS 111 will be one of the 2 main routes for booking into the proposed MIMI service. These concerns arise from previous experiences and a lack of trust in the NHS111 service:

1. NHS 111 service is inconsistent – sometimes a very swift response and sometimes waiting a long time for a call back.

'We had brilliant care from them in April when [my loved one] collapsed. Less brilliant service at other times. I guess it's a matter of high vs low demand? So, we will have to arrange to have a heart attack etc during times of low demand - if there are any such times?'

2. There have been reports of NHS 111 call handlers not knowing the local geography and sending Rutland patients on long, unnecessary journeys into Leicester.
3. Similarly, a patient talked of being directed to Corby UCC at a time in the evening when it was closed.
4. Frustration about the length of time to get through to NHS 111 on the telephone.
5. There is lack of trust in the NHS 111 medical advice:

One patient, who called NHS111 with a leg ulcer that wouldn't stop bleeding, had a call back from a Doctor who didn't really know what to suggest and said to 'wait and hope it gets better tonight and go to [the] GP tomorrow'.

Told by NHS111 to go to Corby after fell, hit head and glasses smashed with some entering the eye. On arrival at Corby, they said they couldn't treat the eye injury and were worried about head injury from fall, so sent on to Peterborough A&E at huge cost using Taxi..

Walk-in facility

There were concerns about the loss of a walk-in facility:

1. People said they have appreciated the walk-in facility and did not want to lose it, particularly families with children.
2. There were concerns that appointments might be reserved for NHS 111 but not filled by patients and yet not made available for walk-in patients. So, there needs to be 'dynamic booking' of appointments.

Transport

There is an incorrect assumption that everyone has transport readily available. People cannot always reach the services they need such as urgent care or pharmacies.

Long term plans

Concern was voiced that the proposed new facility is for the short term and that the service offer, if not fully utilised, will be curtailed or shut down in the future.

One person said, *'Let us have a proposal that deals with the real issues, not just a change of name and some redecoration.'*

Section 2: Healthwatch Rutland Response

The Healthwatch Rutland response to the proposals is unsurprising, having been informed by the public comments outlined in section 1 as well as the insight we have gathered over the last 2 years through our Enter and View Programme (see section 3).

1. We are pleased that investment is planned to improve the public environment and clinical space to bring it up to modern standards of infection control, patient privacy and comfort.
2. We are equally pleased that signage, both in and around the site, will be improved.
3. We are concerned that demand on Saturday and Sunday mornings is properly factored in and so the proposed weekend opening hours should be carefully reconsidered.
4. The quality and performance of the NHS 111 service should be considered as we have heard that people have low levels of trust that they will be directed to the right place at the right time. Until there is improvement in the patient experience of NHS 111, there should be no cessation of the walk-in service.

5. The X-ray offer at Rutland Memorial Hospital should be extended beyond the current 2 days per week.
6. There should be recognition that people might not be able to easily and affordably reach Rutland Memorial Hospital (or any other venue) at a specific time – especially in the evenings and at weekends, when public transport is much more limited and, very often in the villages, not operating at all. Flexibility with, and choice of, appointment times, are therefore essential - especially if walk-in is not permitted.
7. For the proposed new Minor Illness and Minor Injury offer to be fully utilised, the service must be widely advertised across Rutland and into nearby towns and villages across the county borders.

Section 3: Public insights into existing on-the-day care used by people in Rutland

[Oakham Minor Injuries Unit Enter and View Report | Healthwatch Rutland](#)

[Visit Report: Corby Urgent Care Centre | Healthwatch Rutland](#)

[Visit Report: Stamford Minor Injuries Unit | Healthwatch Rutland](#)

[Experiences of the Urgent Care Centre in Oakham | Healthwatch Rutland](#)