

NHS Wales 111 Update

Introduction

111 is the 3 digit number allocated by Ofcom for urgent non-emergency healthcare in the UK. Devolved administrations are not required to adopt the number, however, where used, it must be free to call and available 24/7.

The NHS Wales 111 service brings together the existing NHS Direct Wales service with GP Out of Hours call handling and triage, into one single service.

It provides real opportunities to:

- support the delivery of the Primary Care Plan;
- sit at the heart of the unscheduled and urgent care system;
- delivers strategic change by improving and co-ordinating access to out of hospital services and
- can provide effective signposting to other national and local telephone helplines.

It strengthens and support the wider community and out of hours services and seeks to drive improved patient experience and quality of care by delivering more defined and consistent pathways of care (and improvements in local directory of services).

What does 111 provide

In keeping with the prudent healthcare principles, the 111 service enables people to access the most appropriate level of care.

In-hours

When GP surgeries and primary care services are open, the 111 service takes calls, provides information, and signposts people with appropriate advice on their health care needs.

Out of hours

When GP surgeries and primary care services are closed, the 111 service acts as a GP OOHs service providing clinical triage, assessment and opportunities for face to face treatment at Primary Care Centres in the locality, with escalation to 999 and Emergency Departments, if necessary.

What is different in the 111 service

The 111 service hosts a Clinical Support Hub to support and manage the OOH service. The Hub only operates during the peak periods of GP OOH demand (6.30pm to 11pm Monday to Friday, and 8am to 6pm Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays).

It currently uses the skills of GPs, nurses and pharmacists, working together with call handlers and nurse triage, within the clinical contact centre.

- The GP within the Hub has both a direct clinical and management role in the Out of Hours service. They manage complex calls where assessment via an algorithm is not appropriate, and crucially act as a ‘flight controller’ ensuring oversight of the 111/GP OoH queues
- The pharmacists within the Hub proactively manage patients with minor ailments and a quicker response to requests for repeats prescriptions.

The Hub also provides support to the wider unscheduled care system and to help manage patients with complex needs. Ambulance crews and care home staff can also call the Hub, bypassing the 111 number to get direct get advice enable them to treat patients effectively in the community without being transported to hospital unnecessarily, which is helping to relieve pressure on emergency departments.

Pathfinder Launch in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB

The 111 Pathfinder is currently only available in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg UHB (ABMU). It launched on 4 October 2016, in a phased way - by 21 October the service was operational across the whole AMBU area.

➤ Performance

Since October 2016, over 31,000 calls have been answered through the 111 service. The following table shows the activity by month since launch in October:-

Table 1: Demand & Activity

Month	Calls Offered <small>note 1</small>	Calls Offered to Queue <small>note 2</small>	Calls Answered <small>note 3</small>	Abandonment Rate <small>note 4</small>	Comment
October	6,839	6,344	5,665	6.5%	2,635 calls were also answered by Primecare <small>note 5</small>
November	11,637	10,635	9,921	4.75%	There were 2,894 callers from ABMU who used 0845 number
December	15,533	14,116	12,969	6.03%	There were 2,354 callers from ABMU who used the 0845 number
January (9 th January)	5,347	4,880	4,515	N/A	Not yet available
Total	37,047	33,835	31,099	5.7%	

Notes:

note 1 These are the total calls made to 111 and will include callers who listen to the messaging and decide that they do not want their call to be answered, for example, choosing to access information on the website. They also could include multiple callers who decide not to wait to be presented for answer but to try and re-access the service by dialling again

note 2 These are callers who have listened to the message and decide that they do want to speak to the service and are therefore presented to the queue for answer

note 3 These are calls that are answered within the service

note 4 The rate is calculated based on the number of calls answered after 60 seconds following the end of the welcome message

note 5 Primarecare is a commercial OOH service which operates in the ABMU area prior to the implementation of the 111 service . It operated in tandem to the 111 service for part of October.

➤ Quality Measures

One of the main quality measures for the service is the abandonment rate. This measured as the percentage of calls abandoned 60 seconds after the end of the welcome message. Table 1 above shows the abandonment rates for October – December 2016.

The overall year to date performance is 5.7% and whilst this is higher than the agreed standard of 5%, call volume over the winter period is typically higher. .Work on developing improved 'demand and capacity modelling' will begin shortly which will enable LHBs to better match their resources to short term peaks in demand. .

There have been no adverse patient safety incidents, no formal complaints and positive comments from patients.

➤ Outcomes

Table 2 summarises the dispositions for the period 4 October 2016 to 8 January 2017: **Table 2: Front End Dispositions**

Outcome	Percentage
999	3.9%
Emergency Department (including MIU)	6.3%
Dental	0.7%
GPOOH	67.5%
Health Information	7%
Other	5.1%
Other Professional	0.3%
Primary Care Service – Routine	1.8%
Primary Care Service – Same Day	1.6%
Primary Care Service – Urgent	2.1%
Pharmacist	1.2%
Self Care	2.5%
Unassessed as per policy	0

Around 10% of callers are re-directed to 999 or emergency departments. This is in line with comparisons against previous NHS Direct Wales outcomes which is encouraging, particularly given this now includes OOH patients.

Continued roll out

The continued roll out of the pathfinder sites has been planned. Hywel Dda University Health Board will see its Carmarthen area 'go live' in March 2017 with the remainder of the LHB coming on board in early 2017-18.

By the end of 2017-18 the intention is to have the 111 service operational in around 50% of LHBs.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This paper has provided a position statement on the newly implemented 111 service in ABMU, which over the first three months of the new pathfinder service in ABMU has been positive.

The service has demonstrated its ability to support the wider unscheduled care system, and the potential for this to become a 'lynchpin' of a modern, effective 24/7 unscheduled care system is already apparent.

As the roll out of 111 covers greater geographical areas of Wales the opportunities to make this a pivotal service also grow – enabling better co-ordination of national and local helplines, statutory services such as the Information, Advice and Assistance service, Homelessness Information and Advice as well as managing the dissemination of key message such as 'dealing with flu' etc.

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