



## Greater Manchester Weekly Winter Stakeholder Briefing

7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Issue 2

This weekly briefing is intended to update stakeholders on how services in Greater Manchester are performing and how we work together to manage demand and provide care and support to the public.

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## Media statement

### **Mark Fisher, chief executive of NHS Greater Manchester:**

“Locally, across the NHS and social care, seasonal pressures including cold and icy weather and winter sickness have contributed to a challenged week. The cold and damp weather can worsen existing health problems, increase the risk of a fall, and make us more vulnerable to respiratory winter illnesses. Keeping warm, both indoors and outdoors can help prevent colds, flu, and more serious health problems.

“We welcome the announcement this week that Greater Manchester will benefit from over £6 million pounds of investment to help try and ease expected winter pressures on the NHS and the wider health system. This national investment will strengthen services already in place and be used to help get people home quicker, and for additional social care provision. It also means where appropriate, people can receive the care they need without needing to be admitted to hospital.

“This week further strikes by junior doctors were confirmed for dates in December and January. We will do our best to minimise disruption and as with previous rounds of industrial action, our priorities will be ensuring patient safety and making sure people know how and where to get care and support from during strikes.”

## Weekly narrative

Demand continues to very high across both urgent and primary care. Ambulance performance has been very challenged this week with some handover delays. We are working with partners to address these delays as well as reduce waiting times for those needing an emergency ambulance response in our communities.

## Interview requests

- 📌 Interview opportunities available on request.

## Campaigns

- 📌 NHS Greater Manchester’s seasonal campaign helping families and people who are vulnerable to stay healthy during winter is back to support people to find the right treatment and care throughout the colder months: [Get to know where to go | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(gmintegratedcare.org.uk\)](https://gmintegratedcare.org.uk).

Please tag NHS GM in your social media posts – X @NHS\_GM and Facebook @NHSGreaterManchester.



## Primary care data

There are approximately 1,800 primary care providers, with a workforce of around 22,000.

We recently launched our [blueprint](#) for primary care to improve access to GPs, dentists, optometrists, and pharmacists.

- ✚ Dentistry – of 217 practices reporting, 31% of dental practices are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 21% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ General practice - of 259 practices reporting, 32% of GP practices are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 1% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ Optometry - of 71 practices reporting, 7% of optical sites are feeling a significant or very significant increase in demand, with a further 1% of practices facing extreme demand.
- ✚ Pharmacy – of 94 pharmacies reporting, 23% of sites are feeling significantly challenged and 7% are feeling challenged but coping.

Note, work is underway to encourage more practices to use the pulse check so that support can be provided where appropriate.

## Case study

### **New ways of working are boosting patient experience and improving staff wellbeing at Hawkley Brook practice**

This practice in Wigan introduced a single point of access – ‘Ask My GP’ - with all patients requested to contact the practice this way. For those that are unable to use the online consultation system, patients can ring the practice for support, and a member of the administrative team completes the online form on their behalf.

Appointments are allocated equally to each GP partner who manage the referrals to determine their urgency; and book an appointment with the relevant professional – this could be a GP partner, trainee or with another service such as social prescribing or pharmacy.

The practice guarantees that all patients will have contact from the practice on the same day and/or see a doctor for all routine and urgent requests, with an average turnaround time of 37 minutes from the point of patient contact to receiving a message from the practice.

Patients with multiple health issues have time to discuss their health needs without being limited



to a ten-minute appointment.

The new system has allowed for more flexibility, with partners able to stagger start and finish times and spend more time on staff development, with learner tutorials taking place every Friday. They won Employer of the Year at the 2023 Greater Manchester Health and Champions Awards for their commitment to staff wellbeing and career development.

In the 2023 national GP Patient Survey, Hawkley Brook received the second highest overall patient satisfaction result in Greater Manchester at 98%.

### Urgent and emergency care data

- ✚ For the week 27<sup>th</sup> November to 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023, there were 26,824 attendances; of which type 1 attendances were 18,294. This is slightly lower than the previous week and the six-week average.
- ✚ Hospital bed occupancy across Greater Manchester (acute trusts) has remained around 92% for most of the week except for one day at 93%.
- ✚ Paediatric services remain pressured and bed occupancy is still around 90%.
- ✚ Attendances at emergency departments for mental health conditions have remained stable; however, the system is significantly constrained by a lack of mental health bed capacity in Greater Manchester, a position reflected nationally.
- ✚ Ambulance activity has been high with 4,388 ambulances attending Greater Manchester hospitals.
- ✚ Definitions on types of attendance can be found using this [link](#).

### Hospital discharge data

The discharge figures are a snapshot in time provided for the weekly brief to illustrate both demand and pressure. These figures will be shared weekly.

- ✚ There were 699 people medically fit for discharge from acute trusts as of 5<sup>th</sup> December. We will report on acute trusts in subsequent briefs.
- ✚ This week (28<sup>th</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December) there were 852 admissions to hospital across Greater Manchester and 905 discharges.

Reasons for delayed discharges are complex and vary from person-to-person. It is often the case that there is not sufficient capacity to provide appropriate care outside of a hospital setting to meet a specific level of need required. Other reasons include but not limited to waiting for rehabilitation services, further diagnostic testing, community equipment, medicines etc.

As demand for hospital beds increases over the winter months, a timely discharge is important both for an individual's ongoing recovery; and to make sure that people attending at emergency departments who need to be admitted do not have a lengthy wait.



## Winter funding to support urgent care and adult social care

Local authorities within integrated care systems identified by NHS England as experiencing the greatest challenges with urgent and emergency care were invited to put forward proposals for access to funding.

The Government shared the allocation of the [£40 million fund](#) for local authorities to strengthen urgent and emergency care resilience and performance this winter.

<b>Authorities to which grant is to be paid</b>	<b>Amount of grant to be paid</b>
Bolton	£652,199
Bury	£383,179
Manchester	£1,250,840
Oldham	£526,579
Rochdale	£520,013
Salford	£618,215
Stockport	£602,051
Tameside	£541,443
Trafford	£443,700
Wigan	£747,029

## Industrial action

Junior doctors in England have announced dates for industrial action after talks between the British Medical Association and the Government broke down.

The strikes dates are as follows:

- ✚ 7am on 20<sup>th</sup> December to 7am on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2023
- ✚ 7am on 3<sup>rd</sup> January to 7am on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

More information will be shared on our dedicated industrial action webpage: [Information for the public on industrial action \(strikes\) | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(gmintegratedcare.org.uk\)](#).

Regardless of any strike action taking place, it is important that people who need urgent medical care continue to come forward as normal, especially in emergency and life-threatening cases – when someone is seriously ill or injured, or their life is at risk.

The NHS will contact you if your appointment needs to be rescheduled due to strike action. Please attend any appointments as normal unless you are contacted.

## Useful information

- ✚ There are lots of foodbanks across Greater Manchester. Many of these services offer more



than just food. Some may offer support around mental health and wellbeing, food parcels, financial advice, community-run groups and much more. For support in your local area, visit: [www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/helping-hand/food](http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/helping-hand/food).

- ✚ Loneliness and social isolation support known as Chatty Cafes. The Chatty Café Scheme is a non-profit organisation tackling loneliness and offers three services designed to reduce loneliness and/ or social isolation. They include face-to-face meet ups at venues offering ‘Chatter and Natter’ tables where customers can get together and have a chat, virtual sessions, and a telephone service. For more information or to find your local Chatty Café visit: [www.thechattycafescheme.co.uk](http://www.thechattycafescheme.co.uk).
- ✚ Greater Manchester Bank Holiday Pharmacy Opening Hours: [Bank Holiday pharmacy opening hours | Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership \(gmintegratedcare.org.uk\)](http://www.gmintegratedcare.org.uk). People should plan ahead and order repeat prescriptions as soon as possible before the Bank Holidays. During the festive period, people should try and order 7 – 10 days before a prescription is due to run out.